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**Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government**

**Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP**  
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and  
Local Government*

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5<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Sadiq,

Thank you for your letter of 19 September. I am grateful to you for taking the time to meet with me following the serious fire at Worcester Park and for offering the support of your office on the urgent issue of fire safety. I am also grateful to the National Fire Chiefs Council and the London Fire Brigade for their valuable and continuing contributions.

I apologise for the delay in providing you with a substantive response. The recent publication of the first stage of the Grenfell Inquiry reinforces the importance of this work. Building safety is a personal priority for me as Secretary of State and this government's commitment to legislative reform was highlighted by its inclusion in the recent Queen's Speech. Progressing this legislation will, of course, now be subject to the outcome of the forthcoming general election.

I appreciate that residents must be safe now and we cannot wait for legislation to provide this assurance. That is why Home Secretary and I have worked with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to establish the Protection Board, which will provide expert and consistent inspections across the country to ensure we are identifying, managing and properly recording risks. My expectation is that this will significantly increase the pace of inspection activity across high-rise residential and other high-risk buildings to make sure building owners are acting on the very latest safety advice. I expect that the Board will complement the existing enforcement powers that local authorities have to ensure swift remediation.

Turning now to identifying building safety issues, my department has also launched a data collection exercise on the external wall systems of high-rise residential buildings that are 18m or above. This covers private and social stock, hotels and student accommodation. The data collection exercise is part of an ongoing programme to build a more complete picture of high-rise residential buildings and the variety of external wall systems in use. I have made £4 million of New Burdens funding available in order to support local authorities with the data collection exercise.

In terms of high-rise residential buildings with ACM, as you will be aware, as of 12 September, eligible private sector building owners have been able formally to submit their applications for the removal and replacement of the cladding. There is no excuse for building owners to delay. We appreciate the GLA's partnership in delivering the fund in London.

Finally, buildings over 18 metres in height are subject to tougher building regulations restrictions, as set out in Approved Document B, including tougher restrictions on the types of material that can be used on external wall systems.

I want to thank you again for the offer of support. I found our meeting a productive and positive one.

Yours,  
Robert

**RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP**