

Government launches biggest cladding removal scheme

2 years ago



The government has announced its biggest building safety intervention to date as part of a wider package of measures to help end the building safety crisis across England.

The full opening of the [Cladding Safety Scheme \(CSS\)](#), announced in a speech by Housing Secretary Michael Gove, means that costs associated with removing unsafe cladding in mid-rise buildings will now be covered by government funding, protecting leaseholders from costs where the responsible developer cannot be made to pay.

It is estimated that thousands more mid-rise buildings will qualify, giving tens of thousands of residents across England a pathway to a safe home, with no cost whatsoever to leaseholders in the building.

The CSS will be funded by both the £5.1 billion allocated by government to fix the most dangerous buildings and through revenue from the Building Safety Levy on new development.

The scheme will be available to all medium-rise buildings between 11 and 18 metres across England and high-rise buildings over 18 metres outside of London where fire safety professionals have recommended that works must take place. The scheme will also be available to the social housing sector.

All building owners who believe they are eligible for funding need to apply through Homes England Cladding Safety Scheme [application portal](#).

Any leaseholders or residents living in a building they think is eligible for funding will be able to provide further information about their building using Homes England's 'Tell Us tool'.

Peter Denton, Chief Executive of Homes England, said:

“The Cladding Safety Scheme pilot was an important step in removing the cost burden on leaseholders trapped in unsafe homes and built on the progress made on building safety.

“The full rollout of the programme allows us to go even further. Our team is ready to go, and we expect thousands of buildings to benefit over the next decade.

“We will continue to work with DLUHC to ensure the pace we’re working at is maintained, so we can bring peace of mind and protection to the millions of people whose lives have been affected by unsafe cladding.”

The opening of the CSS means that costs of fixing dangerous cladding for all buildings in England over 11 metres will now be covered either by government funding or by developers who built them.

Earlier this year, the Secretary of State secured the [signatures of 49 of the country’s biggest housebuilders on his developer remediation contract](#) – a major step toward ending the building safety crisis.

The developers all put pen to paper on the legally binding document and committed themselves to fix unsafe buildings they developed or refurbished in England over the 30 years to 5 April 2022. The government has now written to eligible developers to invite them to join the Responsible Actors Scheme giving them 60 days to respond. Eligible developers who choose not to join, or who join the Scheme but then renege on their commitments, will be prohibited from carrying out major development or obtaining building control approvals.

While funding is a major part of solving the crisis, it is also important that residents see swift progress once work has been deemed necessary. The government has been clear that there is no excuse for unsafe cladding to be left unmanaged. Building owners must meet their legal obligations to fix fire safety defects in their buildings and make homes safe quickly.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Building Safety Regulator, the Local Government Association, and the National Fire Chiefs Council have today published a [joint statement committing to work together to enforce the remediation of fire safety defects](#), underlining their commitment to see buildings made safe faster. Building owners who continue to stall can expect to face robust enforcement action from regulators, with the full support of government behind them.