



BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
Councillor Sharon Thompson
Cabinet Member – Homes & Neighbourhoods
The Council House
Victoria Square
Birmingham B1 1BB
Telephone: 0121 303 1077
Sharon.Thompson@birmingham.gov.uk
[@SThompson_JP](https://twitter.com/SThompson_JP)

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21st March 2019

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June 2017, you will be aware that a number of local authorities identified the need to retrofit sprinkler systems in their high-rise tower blocks.

There is now growing support for this work, with the All-Party Parliamentary Fire Safety and Rescue Group, National Fire Chiefs Council, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Fire Brigades Union, the Association of British Insurers, the Fire Protection Association, London Fire Brigade and the Fire Sector Federation all calling for the retrofitting of sprinklers.

In June last year the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee recommended that 'The Government should make funding available to fit sprinklers into council and housing association-owned residential buildings above 18 metres'.

While there have been growing calls for sprinklers, a number of local authorities have either consulted residents or drawn-up programmes to retrofit and work is already underway in many parts of the country.

Clearly this work comes with a sizeable price-tag, but our tenants and residents have a fundamental right to feel safe in their own homes and, in line with recommendations from both the Hackitt Report and Government, we have listened to their concerns.

We are therefore writing to urgently request Government makes funding available, as per the recommendations of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee in June 2018, for sprinkler retrofitting for local authorities to complete sprinkler retrofitting programmes and/or areas where tenants have requested work to be carried out. This would be vital to safeguard and reassure many thousands of tenants across the country.

Where councils have started sprinkler retrofitting programmes, we also request that those councils should be able to apply for funding retrospectively.

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Twenty one months after the Grenfell tragedy, tenants are still seeking reassurance that lessons have been learned and we now call upon the Government to prioritise the safety of residents living in tower blocks by funding this essential fire safety work.

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this matter at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Ian Ward
Leader of Birmingham City Council
Birmingham City Council



Councillor Sharon Thompson
Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods –
Birmingham City Council

Councillor Alison Butler - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services,
Croydon Council

Dr Fiona Twycross AM - Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, City of London

Councillor Judith Blake CBE - Leader of Leeds City Council

Councillor Nick Forbes - Leader of Newcastle City Council

Councillor Joyce McCarty - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing Newcastle City
Council

Councillor Paul Smith - Cabinet Member for Housing, Bristol City Council

Councillor Linda Woodings - Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Heritage,
Nottingham City Council

Councillor Jon Collins – Leader - Nottingham City Council

Councillor Jim Steinke - Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety,
Sheffield City Council

Councillor Joe Anderson, OBE - Mayor of Liverpool City Council

Councillor Suzanne Richards - Executive Member for Housing & Regeneration, Manchester
City Council

Councillor Tony Diccico - Cabinet Member - Environment & Housing, Solihull Metropolitan
Borough Council

Councillor Peter Bilson - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing,
City of Wolverhampton Council

Councillor Qadar Zada - Leader of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor Keiran Casey - Cabinet Member for Housing, Dudley Metropolitan Borough
Council

Councillor Ed Ruane - Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities, Coventry City Council

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael - Cabinet Member for Housing, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough
Council