

Scottish Government news – Building and fire safety group meets

The first meeting of a Ministerial Working Group, convened to examine building and fire safety regulatory frameworks, has taken place.

The meeting was chaired by Communities Secretary Angela Constance with Housing Minister Kevin Stewart and Community Safety Minister Annabelle Ewing. They were joined by officials from fire and rescue, building standards, local government and housing.



This group will oversee a review of building and fire safety regulatory frameworks with an initial focus on high rise domestic buildings, following the Grenfell Tower fire in London. It will agree any improvements or actions identified.

Initial actions agreed by the Group include:

- The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to carry out additional operational assurance visits to high-rise buildings. Since the Grenfell Tower fire, over 200 visits have been carried out by the SFRS to residents in high-rise buildings.
- Work already underway to develop a common standard of housing quality across both private and social rented housing, as well as to consult on and review standards for fire and smoke detectors, will be expedited.
- The Working Group will also consider current regulations and evidence base for sprinkler systems to determine if further action should be taken.

Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities Angela Constance said: "While we're confident that in Scotland we have stringent building and fire safety regulations which contribute to keeping people safe, following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower it is imperative that we undertake a thorough and critical review of our regulations.

"Public safety is of paramount importance and, while the cause of the Grenfell Tower fire remains unknown at present, there can be no room for complacency. Communities across Scotland rightly want to know that we are taking all appropriate action and can provide them with the necessary reassurance required.

"That is why Ministers have instructed Scottish Government officials to work closely with local authorities and the fire service to review all of Scotland's high-rise domestic buildings, construction work that has taken place, the materials of any cladding and whether further action needs be taken as precautionary measure to prevent fire.

"Initial responses from local authorities suggests the type of aluminium composite material cladding reported to have been used on the Grenfell Tower, has not been used on their high rise blocks and this would be consistent with our current building standards regulations.

"We will continue to gather information from our local authorities and we will take a proactive and safety-first approach to this issue while we wait for information from the investigation in London."