



We welcome the statements made by Secretary of State Michael Gove with cautious optimism. Mr Gove's comment on pausing the forced loans scheme is a step in the right direction; however, we must see this unfair attempt at a solution consigned to history rather than simply paused. Equally, it sounds positive that he will endeavour to ensure that those responsible for this crisis are the ones who are made to pay to put things right.

Our experience over the years dictates that these positive noises must be taken with a caveat - there have been four different secretaries of State in as many years, with Mr Gove's predecessors all having broken promises that the innocent homeowner will not be held liable for the failings of others.

Leaseholders across the country are now all too aware that it is deeds and decisive actions that matter and not solely kind words - until Mr Gove delivers a solution that truly ends this scandal for once and for all, leaseholders will continue to suffer and will continue to consider bankruptcy and potential forfeiture amidst the wider mental health crisis we are still facing.

The Consolidated Advice Notes must be withdrawn but this must be done in conjunction with a holistic risk-based assessment process to make buildings safe, including central grant funding of risk mitigation measures, where required. Key stakeholders, such as mortgage providers, insurers, surveyors, and fire experts must be brought into this process to ensure there is a coordinated and consistent approach.

Mr Gove must also work to provide immediate relief to the pressures we face right now: whether the cladding or building safety remediation charges many are already being forced to pay, hugely inflated buildings insurance premiums or the extortionate costs of largely ineffective waking watch interim measures.

We thank Mr Gove for his initial comments and the constructive nature of the recent meeting he held with us – he must now ensure he does all he can to live up to the commitments made to leaseholders since the tragic events at Grenfell and provides a comprehensive solution to this ever-worsening crisis.

Mr Gove has a mandate from Prime Minister Johnson to deliver an end to this living nightmare – we recognise that there will be battles ahead with Chancellor Sunak and HM Treasury but, as Mr Gove knows, the current Module of the Grenfell Inquiry will lay bare the failure of successive governments to ensure the regulatory system was fit for purpose, particularly following the Lakanal House fire in 2009.

Simply put, Mr Gove's words must now be the beginning of the end of our cladding scandal and not only the end of the beginning.