



CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS
ALLIANCE

Apartment Defects Campaign Update, 31 March 2021 – PLEASE SHARE

Defects Working Group Up and Running

After years of lobbying and campaigning by apartment owners, which led to strong commitments in the Programme for Government, a formal State process – the Working Group to Examine Defects in Housing – has now gotten underway. The Construction Defects Alliance welcomes this development and we hope that it will lead to a Government remediation and redress scheme being put in place for owners of defective apartments – as similar processes did for those home owners affected by Mica and Pyrite.

The Working Group, which is chaired by former Donegal County Council CEO, Séamus Neely, met for the first time last Friday (26 March) and it includes people with a range of experience relevant to resolving the defects issue including an architect, building surveyor, Chief Fire Officer, financial expert, lawyer and a few engineers. Crucially, there are two apartment owners on the Working Group – nominated by the Construction Defects Alliance and the Apartment Owners' Network – who have direct personal experience of living in defective homes and paying for their remediation out of their own pockets.

In broad measure, the Working Group's task is to establish the nature and scale of fire and structural defects in Ireland's apartments and duplexes, assess the cost of remediating these defects and then recommend to Government financial solutions for the remediation process.

While there doesn't appear to be an explicit timeline in place for its work, the Programme for Government commits that a review of defective homes (which is the Working Group process) would be undertaken within the first 12 months of the Government (by 27 June next). In addition, the Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien TD, is on the record a number of times in committing to having a package of financial proposals for owners of defective apartments in Budget 2022 (which will be announced on 12 October next).

The Construction Defects Alliance will be watching this space with interest!

Your Input Will Be Required

The Working Group to Examine Defects in Housing is in the process of finalising its Terms of Reference and is likely to be developing its work programme in the coming weeks.

Based on previous experience with the Mica and Pyrite working groups, there is very likely to be a consultative process – at the very least we will be expecting that submissions will be invited from the public. If and when such submissions are requested, it is vital that as many apartment owners affected by defects, as well as OMCs and the professionals working with them, make such submissions and share them with the Working Group as well as their local public representatives.

We will keep you posted on this front over the period ahead.