



**Inter-Departmental and Agency Group**  
**Consideration of Report of Working Group to Examine Defects in Housing**

**Note of meeting held on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**In Attendance:**

Feargal Ó Coigligh	Chair, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Jim Baneham	Housing Agency
David Brophy	Office of the Attorney General
Clare Costello	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Paul Cotter	Department of Finance
Alan King	Department of Justice
Claire Manifold	Building Standards Advisory Unit, DHLGH
Paul McDermott	Building Standards Advisory Unit, DHLGH
Sarah Neary	Building Standards Advisory Unit, DHLGH
Maeve O'Brien	Building Standards Advisory Unit, DHLGH
Mary O'Brien	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Dublin City Council
Derek Rafferty	Governance & Rental Standards Unit, DHLGH
John Wickham	Building Standards Advisory Unit, DHLGH
Eamon Woulfe	Chief Fire Officer, Louth County Council

**1. Note of last meeting**

The note of the meeting held on October 18 was agreed

It was noted that since the last meeting the Minister met with representatives from the Construction Defects Alliance and the Apartment Owners Network which was followed up with a letter in which the Minister agreed to keep them informed of progress.

It was also noted that some bi-lateral discussions have taken place between the DHLGH and certain group members since the last meeting.

**2. Update on recommendations**

Members provided a short update on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Working Group's report.

**3. Discussion on deployment options**

A discussion paper on deployment options was circulated and discussed. Key discussion points included the following:



- The complexity of establishing a scheme to remediate apartments with tenants of mixed tenure was noted.
- The policy objective of any remediation scheme should be to make buildings safe and to prioritise work based on risk.
- In line with the Working Group's recommendation it was noted that apartments/duplexes should, where practicable, be remediated to the standard that applied at the time of their original construction. The Code of Practice should consider providing appropriate guidance where this approach may not be practical.
- Only the OMC has a legal right to undertake remedial work in common areas and so the OMC must be central to the remediation process. OMCs' obligations under the Multi-Unit Development Act and the Fire Safety Act were noted.
- If State-funding is to be provided, a strong governance framework would need to be developed. This may require a central agency to administer a scheme and to establish a framework of assessors, contractors and programme managers.
- While lessons should be learned from the Pyrite Remediation Scheme and the Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme, it was acknowledged that a scheme to support the remediation of defects in relation to fire-safety, water ingress and structural defects will need to be different for a range of issues but fundamentally due to the nature of apartment ownership and the potential variation of scope in remediation works between each building.
- There will be resource implications and training required for local authority fire services and for other construction and fire safety professionals.
- It is likely that there will be a requirement for primary legislation.
- Further consideration is required on how to encourage OMCs to continue to undertake required remedial work in advance of any scheme becoming operational.
- The request of homeowner representative bodies for retrospective measures for those who have already undertaken remedial works was noted. Possible options to implement this recommendation were discussed along with the difficulties of implementing such a measure.

It was agreed that a working paper would be drafted for discussion at the next meeting of the group.

#### **4. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Group will take place in the Custom House on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 with an online option if required.