Council welcomes further tests on high-rise building cladding

SWANSEA Council has welcomed a UK Government decision to call for further fire safety tests on high-rise building cladding in the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster.

The government announced yesterday it intends to call for new ‘whole system’ tests to give further reassurance to residents living in high-rise blocks of flats.

Materials identical to those used by Swansea Council in four high-rise blocks in the city have already passed the tests and Clive Lloyd, Deputy Leader of the Council, welcomed the UK government decision to follow suit.

Cllr Lloyd said: “We welcome the UK government’s decision to order the tests. We’ve been calling for them be done for two weeks. In the end we didn’t wait for the government. Our suppliers had the ‘whole system’ test carried out on June 29 and it showed the cladding system identical to the one used on blocks in Swansea meet building regulation standards.

“It means we can offer further reassurance to our tenants it is safe to continue to live in their homes.”

He said: “Our number one aim has always been to ensure the safety of the tenants who live in high-rise blocks and to provide them with reassurance following the terrible events of Grenfell Tower. The situation has been fast-moving and we’ve kept our tenants informed every step of the way.”

The cladding system applied to high-rise blocks in Swansea at Clyne Court and Jeffreys Court is not the same as that used at Grenfell Tower. The system used in Swansea is the most fire-resistant available in the UK.

However, initial tests carried out on UK government orders only involved the outer cladding material attached to high-rise buildings known as Aluminium Composite Material (ACM). Like all other local authorities cladding from four Swansea high-rise blocks failed the test.

Despite this, Swansea Council continued to lead calls for tests of the whole cladding system which includes insulation, specialist metal firebreaks as well as the outer cladding material.

The specialist test on identical materials set up in exactly the same way as they are in the four blocks in Swansea demonstrated that they more than met building regulations. The test was carried out by the British Research Establishment, the organisation which also conducted the original tests.
Cllr Lloyd said: “On the basis of the whole-system tests, we’re now satisfied we can reassure our tenants the materials cladding their homes meet the standards and, in the event of a fire, they will not contribute to its spread.

“But we have already gone further than that with a range of extra fire safety checks being done in collaboration with the Mid and West Wales Fire Service.

“We’ve reassured our tenants that fire doors fitted to every flat front-door will keep a fire at bay for at least an hour and similar fire doors in communal areas in our high-rise flats have been checked and are also in working order.

“We have staff on patrol overnight, communal areas received regular checks to ensure they are free from obstruction and combustible materials.

“As well as these prudent steps, the council is also committed to introducing sprinkler systems in our flats which have proven ability to limit the impact of fire and prevent its spread.”

Note to editors:

Information on the government decision to call for further testing can be found at this link:


For further information please contact: Patrick Fletcher on 01792 636092
patrick.fletcher@swanse.gov.uk