

Mr. Damien English  
Minister for Housing and Urban Development  
Customs House  
Dublin  
DOI W6XD

April 27, 2018

Dear Mr. English

Re. REP37/DE/18

Thank you for your correspondence of April 11, 2018. We in MAG are cognisant of the work being done through your office and NSAI committee and our 800 members are intently following all developments.

When MAG met with you in December 2017, we were given definitive timelines for the next 6 months. We were told that the work by the National Standards Authority of Ireland in developing a protocol, would be completed at the end of January 2018 and following a public consultation period (circa 6 weeks) and some final revisions, it would be completed by April/May timeframe. On this basis, you made a promise to the delegation in attendance that evening (which we passed on to our members) that a decision on redress – and specifically who would fund it - would be made by the end of May 2018. We are now almost in May 2018, and it would appear that the milestones, as promised, are way behind schedule. In the meantime, as you can appreciate, and following another very hard winter, the homes of those affected by the defective blocks issue continue to deteriorate at an exponential rate. We are receiving reports of more and more homes being unfit for habitation and are truly fearful for the lives and safety of our members. Many of these homes have bison slabs which present a real hazard to families, considering the friable nature of the supporting blocks containing high mica content allied with the cement deficit.

Within this context, and whilst MAG and its membership welcomes the development of such a protocol, we are also aware that the NSAI is not dealing with the issue of a redress scheme. The decision around the establishment of any redress scheme is entirely yours Minister, being entirely separate and independent of the work currently being undertaken by the NSAI and the committee currently in the latter stages of developing said protocol. A redress scheme does not hinge on the development/completion of this protocol. The protocol when adopted, will operate whether there is a redress scheme or not, forming the basis for a National Standards of Ireland Document, when engineers will be required to assess affected dwellings in accordance with the protocol.

We would therefore ask you Minister, that given the significant delays to this process, and the increasing concerns for the safety of our members in the interim, to;  
Make a decision on the issue of redress without further delay

Confirm that you will be making a submission to the exchequer for funds required to establish a redress scheme in this year's end of year budget?

We welcome your feedback on the matters outlined and look forward to a substantive reply.

Kind regards

Ann Owens – Chairman

Eileen Doherty – PRO