



December 2021.

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your on-going correspondence in relation to the Defective Concrete Block scheme. I fully appreciate the volunteer spirit and hard work that has characterised the contribution of homeowner representatives to the process.

The changes agreed by Cabinet on November 30th set out a €2.2bn scheme to assist homeowners. A 100% remediation grant is a core part of the measures. My department is currently engaging with the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) on terms of reference to set an independent evidence basis for the appropriate rate and format of the cost of remediation and future revaluations in line with inflation. The goal of this process is to ensure a fair and reasonable remediation rate for homeowners is set. I want to assure you that the SCSI are completely independent in this process and will submit their advice accordingly. The appropriate rates and format of the costs of remediation and rebuilding set out by the SCSI will be made available to homeowners.

It is my role as Minister to set the final rate and format which will be based on and informed by the engagement with the SCSI.

While primary legislation is needed to bring into effect the majority of measures I am eager to assist homeowners as quickly as possible. To this end, following engagement with the Attorney General I intend to introduce regulations in January to allow Homeowners who are currently in the process to be re-paid their testing and sampling costs in line with the changes announced on November 30th. It is not envisaged that full Stage 1 approval is required for this refund. Instead, acceptance onto the scheme, with documented evidence of payments for testing and assessment costs, will be sufficient.

Emergency works will also be an allowable cost and I have asked Donegal and Mayo County Council to engage affected homeowners on this matter. A process will be set up that allows for expedient identification, completion and payment for emergency works. I expect that these two measures will be up and running by the end of January 2022.



We are continuing to expedite the roll out of the Housing Agency presence in the affected areas, ensure the primary legislation is in place as soon as possible and homeowners are given certainty over the rates and format. We understand that the Housing Agency will engage with homeowners' engineers regarding the appropriate remediation option in each case.

I hope this addresses your immediate concerns.

Happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

**Darragh O'Brien, TD,
Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage.**