

[Quality assurance for All Lane Running motorways](#)

We use some essential cookies to make this website work.

We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services.

We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services.

[ASRU stakeholder newsletter, 9 April 2021](#)

We use some essential cookies to make this website work.

We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services.

We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services.

[Establishment licence holder newsletter, August 2018](#)

We use some essential cookies to make this website work.

We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services.

We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services.

Independent experts to review safety of construction materials

- Experts appointed to lead independent review into system of testing the safety of construction products
- Action taken as Grenfell Tower Inquiry exposed evidence of potential gaming of the system by some manufacturers
- Measures form part of the biggest improvements to building safety standards in 40 years

Residents across England will be better protected as the government takes the next step to ensure materials used to build the nation's homes are safe and tested properly.

Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick has today (20 April 2021) appointed two experts to lead an independent review of the system for testing construction products. Former government adviser and construction expert Paul Morrell OBE will be the chair of the independent panel, along with legal expert Anneliese Day QC.

The review, announced earlier this year, will examine how to strengthen the current system for testing construction products to provide confidence that these materials are safe and perform as marketed.

The review forms part of the government's ongoing programme of work to reform and strengthen building safety regulation and comes after testimony to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry exposed evidence of testing irregularities and potential gaming of the system by some manufacturers.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has heard deeply concerning suggestions that some construction product manufacturers may have gamed the system for testing these materials and compromised the safety of residents.

We are taking these allegations very seriously and will await the Inquiry's final recommendations – but it is clear that action is needed now to ensure products used on buildings always meet the highest safety standards.

I am pleased to appoint Paul Morrell OBE and Anneliese Day QC to lead this independent review of the system for testing construction products that will build on the significant progress we have already made to make buildings safer.

The panel will engage with a wide range of stakeholders to seek their views

on how the system of safety testing of construction products could be improved and will report later this year with recommendations.

The government has already announced that a new National Regulator for Construction Products will be established within the Office of Product Safety and Standards and be given powers to remove any product from the market that presents a significant safety risk; and prosecute and fine any company that breaks the rules.

These measures form part of the government's wider, ambitious reform of the sector, which includes the draft Building Safety Bill, that will bring the biggest improvements to building safety standards in 40 years and strengthen the regulation of construction products.

The Independent Review of Construction Products Testing Regime

Paul Morrell OBE – appointed as chair of the Independent Review of the system for testing Construction Products.

Paul served as the government's Chief Construction Advisor (2009–12) and is a former senior partner at construction consultancy, Davis Langdon. Paul brings extensive experience in the construction sector and has previously led major government reviews, including the Low Carbon Construction Strategy in 2010 and the government Construction Strategy in 2011, as well as a review on industry training boards in a report published more recently in 2017.

Anneliese Day QC – Anneliese is a legal expert in the construction sector, having received a wide range of prestigious awards, including 'Construction and Energy Silk' of the Year 2018 at the Legal 500 UK Awards; 'Construction Silk of the Year' at the Chambers and Partners Bar Awards in 2018 and 2014; and 'Barrister of the Year' 2014 by The Lawyer.

The National Regulator for Construction Products

In July 2020, the government published in draft the Building Safety Bill. The Bill set out the biggest reforms to building safety regulation for a generation and included provisions to strengthen and extend the scope of the powers available to government to regulate construction products.

On the 19 January 2021, the Housing Secretary announced that government will establish a National Regulator for Construction Products to enforce these rules and ensure the materials used to build homes are safe.

The regulator will be based in the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), which will receive up to £10 million in 2021-22 to set up this new function.

The announcement follows recommendations in the Dame Judith Hackitt Review that industry and the government must ensure that construction products are properly tested, certified, labelled and marketed.

Together, the Fire Safety Bill, Fire Safety Order and the Building Safety

Bill will revolutionise safety and oversight for residents in all buildings.

The government has published an update of the progress and steps being taken since the Grenfell fire.

Preparing for future pandemics

Thank you Sir Patrick – and good morning everyone.

I think this is an incredibly important meeting and an incredibly important process and I'm very grateful to everyone for their time.

It was Melinda Gates – who will close this conference tomorrow – who once said:

Goals are only wishes, unless you have a plan.

And so at the UN last September, the Prime Minister set out a plan: the Five Point Plan to Prevent Future Pandemics.

At its heart is the drive to get better and quicker at developing and deploying what we might need in a future crisis, and especially the life-saving vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. But not limited to those things.

And as hard as it might be to focus on a future crisis while we're still facing down COVID-19, the WHO estimates we face a pandemic threat every 5 years.

So we must be better prepared. And we must start that process now.

And if you think about it, the structures we've put in place, from the ACT-Accelerator to COVAX, we're in a stronger place than we were and we've been stronger when we've worked in partnership.

And there's a couple of important points that I think are critical to what this partnership means.

Firstly, I think it's very important we recognise that whether it's public or private, or from academia or industry, we must draw on expertise and resources wherever we find them, and we're more than the sum of our parts.

And that is at the core of what this Pandemic Preparedness Partnership is all about. And looking at the part that all of us can play in improving and streamlining vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics, so we're better prepared for future pandemics.

Let me turn for a moment to the role of the G7. And I can see Sir Patrick sitting in front of the G7 logo there.

The UK as President of the G7 will be ensuring that we use that institution to drive forward the project that we call building back better, and we're determined to make it count.

I'm so grateful to our G7 colleagues joining us today.

I'm sure you agree: at a time like this, the G7 can't be anything but ambitious.

And our G7 health track reflects that ambition. We want health security for all, working on international leadership on clinical trials, action on antimicrobial resistance, and to embrace the vast opportunities in digital health we've seen come to the fore over the last year.

And the PPP can be instrumental in this agenda – especially in those first 2 strands: global health security and clinical trials.

And there really is no better place to start than the G7.

The reason we use the G7 is that that group represents two thirds of the global pharmaceutical market, the majority of the world's genomic capability, a huge proportion of global research and development, and it leads the world in life sciences and clinical trials.

So at our G7 meetings this summer, both at the health track and then the leaders, I want us to declare to the world how we can take this forward, how we can make vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics available and accessible in the vast quantities that we're going to need to make the world safer.

And responding to the call that has already been made to slash the time that's need to develop and deploy vaccines by two thirds to just 100 days – and being equally ambitious about ensuring high-quality and effective therapeutics and diagnostics are available quickly after a new disease threat is identified.

That's the goal. But it remains just a wish, unless we plan.

So I'm incredibly grateful to Sir Patrick and our 6 expert leads, for the work they're going to do shaping advice and developing policy recommendations across the 3 workstreams. And if I just briefly touch on the 3.

First, to Sir Andrew Witty and Sir John Bell, who will look at how we can accelerate research and development for new vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics and the technologies that are going to help us manufacture and deploy them across the globe.

And in that mission, we need look no further than organisations like CEPI to see what is possible when we embrace new and dynamic types of partnership.

CEPI's mission – to find new vaccines for a safer world – is one the UK is

firmly behind.

Because vaccines of course are one of the most powerful tools we have.

The UK will continue to support CEPI, and today I'm pleased to confirm a further £16 million investment.

The funds are there to support CEPI's work to boost manufacturing capacity around the world, all with the goal of making sure no one is left behind and taking us ever closer to the model of responsiveness that we need to prevent future pandemics.

And that sort of model is one where we get the rapid adaption of vaccines to new diseases or new variants – within that 100-day goal – and deployment where they're needed.

Beyond vaccines, it is also imperative that we significantly enhance our speed of response to pick up new technologies, and in particular I want to mention the supply of novel antiviral treatments which later today the Prime Minister will be setting out the details of how we will be driving forward the deployment and development of antivirals here in the UK.

A second team I want to give a shout out to and touch on is the work that Dame Anne Johnson and Professor Martin Landray are going to be doing on how we can improve clinical trials and data sharing.

For me the pandemic has shown beyond measure the value of robust clinical trials. And, critically, the value of sticking with the clinical trial even when there is this incredible imperative to get treatments out fast.

Finding what works, and, crucially, ruling out what doesn't work. I'm sure all of us in our heads can think of treatments that have been trumpeted, sometimes from the highest office, as solutions, but clinical trials are the answer as we know to finding out what works.

But we've got to get quicker. And if trials aren't working to shared standards across borders, we risk losing precious time – and precious ingenuity.

I've been struck by the fact that if clinical trials aren't designed right with set standards at the start, then the data within them is not interoperable or not easily interoperable and therefore it takes longer to get a robust signal. This is something we can and must fix.

Faced with another pandemic, those aren't risks any of us should be prepared to take.

We've got to hold onto these precious commodities – ingenuity and time – and use data and insights as fast as possible flowing freely across borders so the whole world can benefit.

Here in the UK, the MHRA worked really hard to overcome some of the obstacles within the structure of clinical trials taking place in different

jurisdictions.

And that was one of the reasons we were able to license vaccines here in the UK faster than anywhere else in the UK, because of the flexibility yet robustness shown by the MHRA.

And making sure that in future we have clinical trials that can get the power of all of the data used everywhere in the world is incredibly important. It requires set standards that we agree on in principle before those trials are structured.

I know it's possible. But it will take focus and it will take leadership – and that's what the G7 can provide.

And then the third point I want to briefly touch on is, of course, the money.

I'm incredibly grateful to Baroness Minouche Shafik and Lord Jim O'Neill, who are working, along with the finance ministers' track, on sustainable finance.

Now let's face it, the pandemic has been painfully expensive, not just in how much we've had to spend, but the hit to our economies too.

Confronted with the same level of preparedness, we would risk being in the same boat.

But in future, when we're better prepared, we'll be able to do it differently and do it better – with more targeted, more inventive and more sustainable financing initiatives.

And here, crucially, it is absolutely vital that in peacetime, when there is not a pandemic on the horizon, we can bring in the financing that can ensure we stay prepared.

So today is a fantastic chance to draw on the unmatched experience of this incredible group of people and put forward some big, bold ideas.

Ideas that drive the plan that we're working towards putting before G7 leaders in June and, ultimately, the plan that we'll then put before the whole world.

We've got to bring everyone with us as much as is possible on this vital mission and with the plan that we will develop through this team, with our plan – with your plan – I know that we can make it.

So thank you very much for what you're going to do and for the work that you're doing in putting these plans in place and then to turn these plans into actions.

It's incredibly important and the work starts now.