



Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tuesday 5 December 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

I'm writing today on behalf of GMB members employed in the brick industry in the Midlands.

Across the UK, this is a sector sustaining almost 8,000 direct jobs with countless thousands more in the supply chain.

It is also an industry on the brink of collapse, and I write today to warn that time is running out for the Government to act.

The crisis facing the industry is twofold; lack of demand due to broken housebuilding promises and spiralling energy costs squeezing manufacturers.

Your Party pledged a target in its 2019 General Election manifesto of 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s.

Last year this target was missed by over 65,00 homes and your Government look set to miss housebuilding pledges by a country-mile.



This clearly has a devastating impact on families, communities and those looking for housing.

Likewise, the impact this failure has had on the brick industry and manufacturers of construction materials cannot be overstated.

Forward planning is key to a sector which must anticipate demand for bricks and materials months and years in advance. The words of politicians have a real-world impact of the jobs and workload of these companies.

Here in the Midlands, we're seeing vital manufacturers such as Weinerberger anticipating reorganisation and potential job losses due to the sluggish pace of housebuilding projects in the UK.

On energy, the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining recently noted that 70% of manufacturers in the sector are expecting a significant increase in energy costs, with 54% adjusting business practices to reduce consumption.

Time is running out for Britain's brick industry and your Government must act now to safeguard jobs.

That's why I'm writing to ask if you will meet with GMB members in the brick industry and hear firsthand the pressures in industry is facing.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stuart Harrison'.

Stuart Harrison
GMB Union