

Grenfell Fire Response News

The Grenfell Fire Response Team was set up on Friday 16th June to support people affected by the fire. The team includes London-wide local councils, the Mayor of London, central government, British Red Cross, Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and many different local and national voluntary groups.

John Barradell, Head of the Team, said,

The thoughts of everyone working for the Response Team are with the friends and family of all those who have been affected, as well as the local community. We are doing all we can to bring in additional support and coordinate to help local people who have suffered so much, but know we have so much more to do and won't let up on our efforts.

As well as looking to deliver much more and effective practical and emotional help, we are listening very closely to the community so they can direct help to where it is needed most. I would also like to take this opportunity to pay enormous tribute to the local people and volunteers from the neighbourhood and beyond who have flocked to the scene to help out in the aftermath of the fire and we are privileged to be working alongside them.

What is this newsletter for?

This is the first edition of the Grenfell Response Team newsletter. We want to keep you up to date with all the latest information about what is happening and the services that are available to help. If there is anything you wish to know, please speak to one of the response team who will be wearing high viz jackets, talk to staff at the assistance centre or contact us by phone or e-mail. All the contact details are in this newsletter. You can also keep up with the latest information about help and support available at www.gov.uk

For up to the minute info please follow us on Twitter [@grenfellsupport](https://twitter.com/grenfellsupport) and on Facebook at facebook.com/grenfellsupport

What help is on offer?

If you come to the Assistance Centre at **Westway Sports Centre, Crowthorne Road, W10 6RP** you will be able to access services and support provided by the team 24 hours a day.

A Red Cross helpline is in action to help give practical or emotional support to anyone who needs it.

The number is

0800 4589472.

This is available 24 hours a day.

Any family and friends concerned about their loved ones are asked to contact the Metropolitan Police on **0800 032 4539.**

If you have been affected and have any other questions about the support available, please email **support@grenfellresponse.org**

Please do not send any personal data like bank details or your address to this email account – rest assured when we contact you, we'll get any additional information we need.

What's the latest with rehousing people?

It is our priority to get people who have lost or can't get access to their homes in to good accommodation as soon as possible. We have offered emergency hotel rooms in the local area to everyone who needs it, to those people from Grenfell Tower, Grenfell Walk and the cordon area.

Here's the latest information about housing:

- In total there are 364 households in emergency accommodation.
- 140 hotel placements have been made for people living in Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk.
- There are also 109 additional households now in hotels from the wider affected area.
- 137 keyworkers are supporting people affected.

We are now working with affected families to find longer term properties. We start by understanding people's needs and then try to match them with the most suitable home. We will only be offering homes in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and neighbouring boroughs, such as Westminster.

- So far 146 assessments have been completed so we can understand what each household or family needs and then try to get the best property that suits them.
- Whilst all households should now have been contacted, twenty one households from Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk have not had their housing needs assessed yet. We continue to work with families with the help of amazing volunteers.
- Twenty eight viewings are taking place for families to look at properties and for them to decide whether they are suitable. If they like the property, they can move in.
- Sixty eight new build flats as part of the Kensington Road development in the borough will be provided to re-house residents from Grenfell Tower. These will be ready by the end July 2017.

Financial support for Grenfell Tower residents

The government has announced details of the emergency £5 million Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund for households who have lost their homes as a result of the fire.

Every household whose home has been destroyed as a result of the fire will receive a guaranteed £5,500 minimum down payment from the fund. This will be made up of a £500 cash payment and £5,000 delivered through the Department of Work and Pensions into bank accounts or similar in a single payment.

The £500 cash payment has already begun to be made available to those affected from the Westway Sports Centre or through the Post Office in Portobello Road - including those who do not have bank accounts.

The fund is also being made available to meet funeral costs, and to top up payments for those households with complex or additional needs.

So far, £1,193,916 has been distributed to affected families and 97 households have been given the £5,000 payment.

The government has set up a dedicated benefit enquiry line for people affected by

the fire at Grenfell Tower. The following numbers will be staffed between 8am and 6.30pm, Monday to Friday:

020 7941 6661

020 7941 6634

020 7941 6671

Help with bills

The Government and utility companies have announced a package of support for Grenfell victims across energy, water and telecommunications. This includes suppliers agreeing to cancel outstanding utility bills for victims of the fire.

Working with community groups

We have been amazed and humbled at the incredible response from the community, both locally and from much further afield, and the support they have given to people in desperate need in the aftermath of the fire. There's now a single point of contact for voluntary and community sector organisations that wish to discuss community engagement issues and concerns. Please contact this email address if you would also like to be added to the update bulletin:

Communityengagement@grenfellresponse.org

Hot water update

A new temporary boiler is also being fitted over the weekend. Residents will see this temporary boiler being constructed between the Hurstway Walk and Testerton Walk and on a hard standing next to Whitchurch Road. The construction of the hoarding to house this boiler will commence tomorrow.

How can we help?

We are here to help people with all the support we can offer. This means everything from getting bereavement counselling, health advice, what is happening to people's post, signposting where to get free legal advice and many other practical and emotional support services that are on offer to those affected by the fire. If you are concerned about someone and don't feel they are being properly supported, then please let us know so we can help.

Frequently asked questions

Are people in emergency housing being put in tower blocks?

No. People are being temporarily housed in hotel accommodation in or close to the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

Are people living in parks?

We are not aware of anybody living in parks and there is no need for people to be living in parks. If you know of someone who you don't think is getting help then please let us know.

Are people been forced out of the borough, or being made intentionally homeless?

This is simply not true. No one is being forced to move out of London, or being threatened with being made homeless. We're working to find the right accommodation for those affected residents, either in Kensington and Chelsea or neighbouring boroughs.

Are people affected by the fire being asked for ID at the assessment centre?

People affected by the fire were issued letters informing them of the process to access funding and we have asked them to show this letter as some people may have had their IDs destroyed

in the fire. This is to ensure those who need support get it. They should not be asked for their ID.

Concerns about cyanide released in the air from the fire?

Public Health England air quality tests over the past week following the Grenfell Tower fire shows no detectable deterioration in air quality. They have advised that smoke from any fire is toxic and can contain a range of chemicals such as carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, irritant gases such as hydrogen chloride. The amounts of toxic products will vary with the materials involved in a fire, its temperature and the amount of oxygen.

What will happen to anyone who isn't documented but lived in the tower?

We will not use this tragic incident as a reason to carry out immigration checks on those involved and those providing vital information to identify victims. We will also make sure that all victims, irrespective of their immigration status, will be able to access the services they need, including accommodation and healthcare.

Bereavement support

Freephone helpline **0808 808 1677**

24 hours a day.

helpline@cruse.org.uk

Replacement UK passports, visas or immigration queries

0300 222 0000
(outside the UK
+44(0)300 222 0000)

24 hour advice line

Air quality and smoke exposure

People who have concerns about any symptoms should seek medical advice or call **NHS 111**.

More to come on air quality in tomorrow's update

NHS Mental health support

0800 0234 650

24 hours a day.

cnw-tr.spa@nhs.net

VICTIM SUPPORT

Free emotional and practical support for anyone affected.

0808 1689 111

24 hours a day.

victimsupport.org.uk