

## **Resource Pack (work-in-progress)**

# **Lessons from Grenfell Policy Think Tank**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017  
Trafford Hall

LSE Housing & Communities produced this Resource Pack for the purpose of the Lessons from Grenfell Policy Think Tank taking place at Trafford Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> December 2017. It provides participants with some statistics, basic fire safety advice and other resources relevant to the topic of the Think Tank. The Pack includes web-based information found between 15<sup>th</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017. We take full responsibility for any inaccuracies or mistakes we might have made. Please note that this pack is a work in progress as we aim to produce a complete resource pack by the end of the project which will be sent to the think tank participants at a later date.

### About the Housing Plus Academy

The Housing Plus Academy is a partnership between 15 leading housing associations and local authorities, the National Housing Federation, the Chartered Institute of Housing, the University of Manchester, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, the National Communities Resource Centre at Trafford Hall and LSE Housing and Communities. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation also supports work of the Housing Plus Academy.

The Academy has been developed to promote knowledge exchange and participative learning among frontline staff and tenants of social landlords. The Academy tackles burning problems affecting social landlords today, particularly welfare reform, financial pressure, energy saving, work and skills, community enterprise, and resilience.

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## Key statistics on fires<sup>1</sup>

### Fire Door Safety Week Research 2017

1. Since the Grenfell fire tragedy, almost seven in ten (67%) apartment renters say their landlord hasn't been in touch at all to discuss/reassure them about fire safety measures in their rented accommodation. (Atomik Research 2017<sup>2</sup>)
2. Since the tragedy, just 17% of landlords have been in touch in person to discuss fire safety measures and 16% got in contact via email or letter. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
3. Those renting through a local authority are significantly less likely to have had faceto-face reassurance (10%) than private renters (23%). (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
4. Over two thirds (69%) of council renters have not had any reassurance from their landlord. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
5. A quarter (24%) of adults surveyed feel more nervous/anxious about living in a rented apartment since the fire and the issues it exposed with regard to fire safety measures. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
6. This rises to a third (33%) of those living in London feel more anxious. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
7. Over half (55%) of those renting a flat do not feel fully prepared on what to do in the event of a fire in their building. This includes 16% of respondents that feel they would make a good guess at what to do but have never been formally told. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
8. One in ten (10%) of those renting in London feel completely under-prepared as they have never been told what to do. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
9. Four in ten (40%) renters say there is not a clear fire escape route displayed somewhere in their building and 9% do not know. Those renting through local authority are most likely to be without these displays or to be unaware of whether they are there (53%). (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
10. Just over one third (39%) of those with fire doors admit they have seen one propped open in their building. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://firedoorsafetyweek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/101-facts-about-fire-doors-Fire-Door-Safety-Week-2017.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Survey of 1001 tenants living in flats was conducted from 23 August – 1 September 2017 by Atomik Research on behalf of Fire Door Safety Week.

11. One fifth (20%) have noticed that there are damaged doors in their building, such as holes, cracks chips, won't open or close fully etc. This includes 12% which reported the damage and 8% that didn't report the problem. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
12. Almost one fifth (18%) of renters have reported a fire safety infringement or concern to their landlord. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
13. Three in ten (31%) of those who made a report were left waiting for several weeks before the landlord answered or rectified the issue. Furthermore, 13% said the landlord never even replied or sorted out the issue. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)
14. 12% of renters, rising to 16% of private renters, have contacted their landlord to ask for fire training. Those living in London are the most likely to have requested training (20%).
15. In the majority (88%) - but not all - instances the landlord came back with the training or a date proposed. Six in ten (57%) had to wait up to a week for this, while 13% were left waiting for more than a week. (Source: Atomik Research 2017)

### **Great Britain**

16. In 2015-16, there were 614 dwelling fires per million people in Great Britain<sup>3</sup>.
17. In 2015, fire accounted for 16% of domestic property insurance claims. (Source: Association of British Insurers<sup>4</sup>)

### **England**

18. There were 303 fire-related fatalities in England during 2015-16. (Source: Home Office<sup>5</sup>)
19. From April 2015 to March 2016 there were 7,661 casualties in fires in England. (Source: Fire Statistics<sup>6</sup>)
20. Dwelling fires are the most common type of primary fire, accounting for 43% of primary fires in 2015-16 and almost a fifth of all fires. (Source: Home Office)

### **Scotland**

21. In 2015-16, the SFRS attended a total of 26,613 fires, an increase of six per cent compared to 2014-15. (Source: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)

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<sup>3</sup> Fire 0201: Dwelling fires attended by fire and rescue services by nation  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.abi.org.uk/globalassets/sitecore/files/documents/publications/public/2016/keyfacts/keyfacts2016.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Fire Statistics Monitor: April 2015 to March 2016:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/545927/fire-statistics-monitor-1516-hosb0916.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/545927/fire-statistics-monitor-1516-hosb0916.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Fire Statistics: England April 2015 to March 2016:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/611182/fire-statistics-england-1516-hosb0517.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611182/fire-statistics-england-1516-hosb0517.pdf)

22. In 2015-16 there were 45 fatal casualties from fires in Scotland. (Source: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)

23. Just over half of all primary fires were in dwellings (52%) and 23% were in other types of buildings. (Source: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)

### **Wales**

24. There were 19 total fire fatalities in Wales in 2015-16. (Source: Welsh Government<sup>7</sup>).

25. There were 13 fire related fatalities in dwellings in 2015-16. (Source: Welsh Government)

### **Northern Ireland**

26. In 2015-16 there were 843 accidental dwelling fires in Northern Ireland. (Source: NIFRS Annual Report 2015-16<sup>12</sup>)

27. In 2015-16 there were 16 fire fatalities - 12 (Please note: 2 of these deaths are subject to State Pathologist's report to confirm cause of death) of these were in accidental dwelling fires. (Source: NIFRS Annual Report 2015-16)

## **Basic Fire Safety Advice<sup>8</sup>**

### **Fire safety for tenants**

If you live in a purpose-built maisonette or flat your landlord needs to make sure that it is well maintained and fire safe. Landlords must provide you with fire safety information, including an evacuation plan.

If any building refurbishment or redecoration work is done to your flat or building, or defects are identified that could enable fire spread, your landlord must update your evacuation plan, and let you know about any changes.

Under the 2004 Housing Act, landlords must make sure there are adequate escape routes in the property you are renting out.

Depending on the size of the property, they may also have to fit smoke alarms and provide fire extinguishers.

By law, a landlord must:

- Make sure that all the gas appliances provided are maintained in good order and that a Gas Safe engineer carries out a safety check each year
- Maintain all electrical installations (fixed wiring etc.) and any electrical appliances provided (cookers, kettles etc.) and make sure they are safe to use
- Make sure any furniture and furnishings provided meet the fire resistance regulations

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<sup>7</sup> Fire statistics Wales, 2015-16 <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2016/160727-fire-statistics-2015-16-en.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/staying-in-or-going-out.asp>

Here are some questions to ask your landlord about fire safety:

- Has the electrical wiring in the property been checked lately?
- Are sockets, switches, light fittings and so on checked every year?
- Is there a regular maintenance programme for gas heaters and appliances?
- Are the chimneys and flues cleaned and checked regularly?
- Is the house registered with the local authority as being lived in by more than one household (multiple occupation)?

What to look out for in your building?

Fire safety in all buildings is also dependent upon good maintenance and housekeeping.

In maisonettes and blocks of flats:

- all flat front doors and doors on corridors and staircases must be 'self-closing' fire doors
- fire doors must 'self-close' properly, and not be held or wedged open. They are designed to stop the spread of fire
- things aren't stored in corridors or staircases. This can block escape routes and stop firefighters doing their job. They can also feed the fire
- storage on balconies is kept to a minimum
- everyone who lives in the building knows the evacuation plan. Are there signs that show you how to escape fire?
- Emergency vehicle parking areas should be kept clear to allow firefighters access to fire hydrants and the building quickly in the event of fire<sup>9</sup>.

If you're concerned about any of these things, contact your landlord. You may not be able to force your landlord to do the necessary checks but, if you have any concerns, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or your local authority for further advice. Your local authority can give you more details about landlord obligations and can force landlords to provide adequate fire precautions.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/public-safety/home-fire-safety-advice/high-rise-homes/high-rise-homes>



**Practice checklist:  
Fire safety for housing organisations**

- ✓ nominate a competent person or competent persons to carry out a risk assessment
- ✓ a comprehensive risk assessment should identify fire hazards, identify people at risk, remove, reduce and protect from risk, provide information to plan and train to minimise risk and should be continuously reviewed
- ✓ prioritise action in response to your risk assessment
- ✓ devise a schedule which prioritises remedial work which needs to be done in response to fire risk assessments and set time-scales for improvements to be made
- ✓ the way in which buildings are used and adapted can affect the way in which they are affected by fire: do not assume over the course of its lifetime that a building can withstand fire
- ✓ place fire safety information into all tenancy handbooks or tenancy start-up packs
- ✓ provide fire safety information for leaseholders
- ✓ liaise with your local Fire and Rescue Service to raise awareness of fire safety in the communities with which you work and to offer free home fire safety checks to tenants and residents
- ✓ work in partnership with Fire and Rescue Services to support tenants who want to have a home fire safety check where this is possible
- ✓ in blocks of flats or maisonettes make sure all residents are aware of appropriate action to be taken in the event of fire
- ✓ take particular care to make sure residents whose first language is not English have access to clear and understandable fire safety information
- ✓ take account of the needs of vulnerable residents in relation to fire safety
- ✓ install working smoke alarms in all properties
- ✓ consider installing domestic sprinklers into homes.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Marketing%20PDFs/CIH0156-PDF-A\\_RV\\_22062017\\_Fire%20safety%20in%20housing%20final%20for%20public.pdf](http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Marketing%20PDFs/CIH0156-PDF-A_RV_22062017_Fire%20safety%20in%20housing%20final%20for%20public.pdf)



### **Practice checklist: Carrying out a risk assessment**

- ✓ landlords have responsibility for carrying out a fire safety risk assessment
- ✓ ensure that all relevant persons in your organisation at all levels and tenants and residents understand and co-operate with the fire risk assessment process and its implementation and review
- ✓ a risk assessment is a dynamic process and it should be regularly reviewed
- ✓ landlords should nominate a competent person or persons to carry out a risk assessment
- ✓ risk assessments should consider that a building may have been subject to alteration and changes over the course of its life which can have an impact on its ability to withstand fire
- ✓ to help you complete a risk assessment, consider using an approved proforma (see proforma contained in the 'Sleeping Accommodation Guidance' for an example)
- ✓ ensure actions are carried out in response to the risk assessment and that defects are remedied.



### **Practice checklist: The legal framework and following key guidance**

- ✓ refer to relevant codes of guidance referenced in this section to make sure your organisation is in compliance with the statutory requirements outlined in the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (or relevant legislation for Scotland outlined in section 2 above)
- ✓ identify a person (persons) in your organisation with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and for assessing fire risk (or relevant legislation for Scotland outlined in section 2 above)
- ✓ all building work including extensions, provision of services, alterations and insulation, should be fully compliant with the Building Regulations 2010 (see relevant legislation for Scotland in section 2)
- ✓ where gas services are supplied, ensure that your organisation acts in full compliance with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998: that gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition; and that gas appliances are serviced and subject to an annual safety check
- ✓ make sure that all electrical equipment supplied to tenants is safe and all electrical appliances are supplied and maintained according to the Electrical Equipment (Safety) regulations 1994
- ✓ where furniture and furnishings are provided, make sure they are fully compliant with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1998
- ✓ ensure that your organisation is following the correct fire safety guidance for the correct building type.



### Practice checklist: Working in partnership with Fire and Rescue Services

- ✓ establish a relationship with your local Fire and Rescue Service
- ✓ with your local Fire and Rescue Service consider developing information sharing protocols
- ✓ help build relationships between your local Fire and Rescue Service with tenants and residents so they can offer, where appropriate, individual home fire safety support e.g. home fire safety checks; and community support such as education and advice.



### Practice checklist: Working in partnerships with tenants, residents and communities

- ✓ develop customer insight information to supplement and enhance your fire risk assessment process
- ✓ positively engage with tenants, residents and communities in relation to fire safety
- ✓ liaise with your local Fire and Rescue Service to raise awareness of fire safety in the communities with which you work
- ✓ place fire safety information into all tenancy handbooks or tenancy start-up packs
- ✓ in blocks of flats or maisonettes make sure all residents are aware of appropriate action to be taken in the event of fire
- ✓ take particular care to make sure residents whose first language is not English have access to clear and understandable fire safety information
- ✓ consider the needs of vulnerable residents in relation to fire safety
- ✓ in conversation with your tenants and residents, develop a clear and comprehensive policy on mobility scooters and make sure that tenants, residents and visitors adhere to it
- ✓ consider providing safe and secure storage areas for mobility scooters
- ✓ install smoke alarms in all properties
- ✓ consider installing domestic and residential sprinklers into homes
- ✓ develop strategies for working in partnership with private sector landlords to ensure fire safety.





#### **Practice checklist: Tackling fire related anti-social behaviour**

- ✓ engage with schools and young people in communities to identify the risks of fire related anti-social behaviour and to identify positive alternatives
- ✓ ensure a zero-tolerance approach to fire related anti-social behaviour is communicated to tenants and residents
- ✓ provide smoke alarms to households
- ✓ facilitate or take part in community events in partnership with Fire and Rescue Services around key dates such as Bonfire Night to raise awareness in neighbourhoods of fire safety
- ✓ ensure that within neighbourhoods there are no environmental fire risks such as fly-tipping or un-collected refuse
- ✓ liaise with relevant statutory and voluntary partners in the community such as mental health teams, older person's teams or drug and alcohol teams to identify people who may be at risk of perpetrating or being the victim of fire related anti-social behaviour.

## Safety checks following Grenfell Tower fire from Government<sup>11</sup>

### **Annex A: EMERGENCY FIRE SAFETY REVIEW**

If it is determined that the insulation within Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) 1 is unlikely to be compliant with the requirements of the current Building Regulations guidance, it is essential that you immediately implement the following interim mitigating measures to ensure the safety of residents, pending replacement of the cladding.

#### **Interim measures recommended by independent panel of experts**

Notify Fire and Rescue Service.

Inform your local fire and rescue service fire safety/protection department. Failure to do so may put fire-fighters as well as residents at risk. The fire and rescue service will carry out an urgent inspection with the 'responsible person' to ensure that they are identifying and introducing appropriate interim measures, as set out below. The fire service will carry out a further inspection once the interim measures have been completed:

- Check that the fire risk assessment has been carried out within the previous 12 months and that the recommendations within the action plan of the assessment have been completed; also, confirm that there have been no material changes (to the building, the fire safety measures or the occupancy) that could, potentially, undermine the validity of the fire risk assessment. If no fire risk assessment has been carried out, you must immediately arrange for a fire risk assessment to be carried out by a competent person (eg by a person who is listed on a register of fire risk assessors operated by a professional body or certification body, or, preferably, by a company that is certificated by a third party certification body, that is, itself, accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service to operate the certification scheme). Guidance on choosing a competent assessor is here <http://www.cfoa.org.uk/19532>
- Engage with residents to ensure they fully understand the emergency fire procedures in the building, particularly the meaning of "stay put". Ensure that fire procedure notices are accurate.
- Check that, at ground level, or on any balconies, there are no combustible materials (eg storage of refuse) in the vicinity of the cladding. Ensure that there are measures to prevent combustible materials in such locations (eg by temporary barriers or instructions to residents). Instruct residents that they must not have any barbeques on any balcony.

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<sup>11</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/621449/170622\\_letter\\_to\\_LAs\\_and\\_HAs.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/621449/170622_letter_to_LAs_and_HAs.pdf)

- Check that all flat entrance doors, and doors that open onto escape corridors and stairways, are fire-resisting and effectively self-closing against any resistance of a latch (or, for example, in the case of plant rooms or cupboards, are kept locked shut.)
- Check all walls that separate flats, plant and store rooms, etc from escape routes to ensure there are no obvious routes for fire or smoke spread (eg, holes where services, such as pipes and cables, pass through walls).
- Check that any smoke control systems, including associated fire detection systems, are operating correctly.
- Check all facilities provided for fire-fighters, including fire-fighting lifts and dry or wet rising mains. If you have ANY concerns you should contact your local fire and rescue service, who will, if they have not already done so, carry out an inspection to ensure functionality.
- Ensure that there is sufficient roadway access and hardstanding for firefighting vehicles attending incidents and to be set up to fight any fire externally.
- Check that insulation or other materials that form the façade meet all relevant standards.

If the building is protected by an automatic sprinkler system (or equivalent fire suppression system) you might not need to take any further interim measures before replacement of the cladding.

If the building is not protected by a suitable suppression system you must consider the need for interim measures. The measures adopted need to be based on an assessment of the risk by a competent person, but the following must, at least, be considered:

- Residents to be advised to ensure all smoke alarms are present and working in their flat; to report concerns about fire safety measures in the building (eg presence of combustible materials in escape routes) to their landlord and, understand the purpose of any interim measures begin taken.
- Closure of car parks in which a vehicle fire could impinge on cladding.
- Provision of a temporary communal fire alarm system, comprising smoke detectors in circulation areas and plant rooms, and fire detectors (possibly heat detectors, rather than smoke detectors) in conjunction with fire alarm sounders in each flat. This will enable the entire block to be evacuated simultaneously in the event of fire. This option is unlikely to be suitable for tall blocks, in which a large number of

people would need to use escape routes at the same time. The system may comprise a wireless system, using radio to link devices.

- Provision of a fire watch by appropriately trained patrolling security officers/wardens.
- In the case of the most serious risk, consideration must be given to moving all residents out of the block until satisfactory remedial work has been done.

## Housing Health and Safety Rating System

### What is HHSRS?<sup>12</sup>

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a new risk assessment tool used to assess potential risks to the health and safety of occupants in residential properties in England and Wales. The legislation came into effect in England on 6 April 2006 and will come into effect in Wales later in 2006. HHSRS replaces the Housing Fitness Standard, which was set out in the Housing Act 1985.

### Why is it needed?

The new assessment method focuses on the hazards that are most likely to be present in housing. Tackling these hazards will make more homes healthier and safer to live in. The Fitness Standard does not deal with, or deals inadequately with, cold and falls for example.

### Who does it affect?

All owners and landlords, including social landlords.

The private sector contains some of the worst housing conditions and owners and landlords should be aware that any future inspections of their property will be made using HHSRS.

Private landlords and managing agents are advised to assess their property to determine whether there are serious hazards that may cause a health or safety risk to tenants. They should then carry out improvements to reduce the risks.

Public sector landlords also need to incorporate HHSRS into their stock condition surveys. To be decent, homes should be free of category 1 hazards. This does not mean that social landlords have to reassess their stock before 6 April. Landlords should incorporate HHSRS into their next planned stock condition survey and deal with category 1 hazards during planned refurbishment.

Tenants should be aware of the new approach taken by local authorities to deal with bad housing conditions. They still have discretion over the action they take but they are more likely to prioritise cases where there is some evidence of serious hazards.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/8262/144527.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8262/144527.pdf)

### How does it work?

A risk assessment looks at the likelihood of an incident arising from the condition of the property and the likely harmful outcome. For example, how likely is a fire to break out, what will happen if one does?

The assessment will show the presence of any serious (category 1) hazards and other less serious (category 2) hazards.

To make an assessment, local authority inspectors will make reference to the HHSRS “Operating Guidance”. During an inspection they may take notes manually or may use a programme on a hand held computer.

### How is it enforced and what are the penalties?

If a local authority discovers serious category 1 hazards in a home, it has a duty to take the most appropriate action.

Local authorities are advised to try to deal with problems informally at first. But if this is unsuccessful, they could require a landlord to carry out improvements to the property. For example by installing central heating and insulation to deal with cold, fix a rail to steep stairs to deal with the risk of falls, or mend a leaking roof. Local authorities also have powers to prohibit the use of the whole or part of a dwelling or restrict the number of permitted occupants. Where hazards are modest they may serve a hazard awareness notice to draw attention to a problem. Where an occupier is at immediate risk, the authority can take emergency remedial action.

A property owner who feels that an assessment is wrong can discuss matters with the inspector and ultimately will be able to challenge an enforcement decision through the Residential Property Tribunal.

Failure to comply with a statutory notice could lead to a fine of up to £5,000.

### Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals (Excerpt)<sup>13</sup>

Published: May 2006

#### Identifying hazards

Hazards arise from faults or deficiencies in the dwelling which could cause harm. An understanding of two things is needed when it comes to recognising and testing for hazards.

- The basic physical and mental needs for human life and comfort, and
- How the dwelling as a whole, and each individual element in the dwelling has an effect.

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<sup>13</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/9425/150940.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9425/150940.pdf)

In short, a dwelling should be able to supply the basic needs for the everyday life of the range of households who could normally be expected to live in a dwelling of that size and type.

The dwelling should not contain any deficiency that might give rise to a hazard which interferes with, or puts at risk, the health or safety, or even the lives, of the occupants.

So, to test whether a deficiency is connected to one or more hazards what is needed are:

- a) An understanding of the functions and workings of each element of the unit, and
- b) The ability to assess or test whether the deficiency will cause a hazard.

### Causes of hazards

The first step in checking the state of a dwelling is an inspection to identify deficiencies that could cause problems for the dwelling as a whole. It might be that the deficiency arises because of the way the dwelling was designed or built in the first place, or because of wear and tear, or because of a lack of care and repair over a period of time. As far as HHSRS is concerned, a deficiency becomes important when it can be seen that its effect is able to cause harm, i.e. when it results in a hazard. It is possible for a single deficiency to have an effect on, or contribute to, more than one hazard. For instance, a badly maintained ceiling could lead to the hazards of:

- Excess cold (because of increased heat loss),
- Fire (by allowing fire and smoke to spread to other parts of the dwelling), • Lead (from old paint),
- Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse (by providing access and breeding places for pests, which are a source of infections), and
- Noise (because of an increased passage of sound between rooms).

So, a single deficiency can have a greater or lesser effect on a particular hazard.

Again, several deficiencies may be responsible for or contribute to the same hazard. For example:

- A badly maintained ceiling,
- A door that does not fit properly, and
- The absence of a smoke detector.

Each may contribute towards the single hazard of fire, helping smoke and flames to spread to other parts of the dwelling without being detected.

Alternatively, there may be similar kinds of deficiencies in different places in the dwelling which will have an effect on the same hazard. For instance, there might be dampness in the walls of several rooms within the dwelling. In this case the addition of those deficiencies of damp and mould growth will influence the assessment of the severity of the hazard, so the more widespread the damp and mould the greater the likelihood that harm could be caused.

Again there may be deficiencies to steps to the entrance path to the dwelling or to the main stairs inside the dwelling or to the rear steps. It is how far the combined effects of the deficiencies bring about the hazard of falls connected with stairs that will be assessed or tested.

Advice on what is to be looked at when assessing the possible contribution of a deficiency to a hazard can be found in the 'Causes and Preventive Measures' sections of the Hazard Profiles in the Appendices to this guidance (and can be found in more detail in Annex D to the HHSRS Operating Guidance).

Using the HHSRS means that even an unoccupied dwelling can be checked. It is the dwelling by itself which is checked, not the dwelling with the current occupants. So, the hazard score produced by the local authority officer stays with the dwelling even if there is a change of occupiers and stays until work has been done to minimise any hazards.

It is possible that, in some cases, the activities of occupiers of a dwelling may have an effect on the possibility of a hazardous occurrence or upon how bad it would be if it occurred. Because under the Act the local authority will be concerned with making an owner take action to remove or lessen the effect of a hazard, the HHSRS looks only at those areas which come under the responsibility of the owner (or landlord) even where the owner lives in the dwelling. It may be that landlords will want to make sure that tenancy agreements set out what is required of tenants so as not to prejudice their own health and safety.

The landlord (or owner) is not responsible for the state of fixtures or fittings belonging to the occupier unless they have been taken over by the landlord (or owner) and are not removable.

#### What are hazard bands?

The full system used by local authority officers uses numbers to represent the likelihood of an occurrence as the result of a hazard and to represent the possible spread of harm. In this way a score is produced to reflect the inspecting officer's judgement as to the severity of a hazard, but these are more conveniently put into bands covering ranges of scores.

The bands (and the scores) allow the severity of very different hazards to be compared, for instance damp and mould, with carbon monoxide. The bands range from A (scores of 5,000 or more), which is the most dangerous and life threatening, down to J (scores of nine or less), the least. More detailed information about these can be found in the HHSRS Operating Guidance. The Act imposes a duty on local authorities to take appropriate action in relation to hazards falling in bands A – C (that is hazards with scores of 1,000 or over). Although not under a duty to do so, they are also able to act in relation to other hazards (those in bands D – J, scoring 999 or less).

#### Testing for or assessing the hazards

When a dwelling is being assessed for conditions which could cause a hazard the local authority officer should take account of:

- The average likelihood for a particular hazard for that type and age of dwelling given in the main guidance,
- Any deficiencies (i.e. conditions or faults) which may increase the likelihood of an occurrence, and
- How serious the outcome of such an occurrence will be to the age group(s) most at risk.

Any decisions made by the local authority officer about the likelihood of a hazard occurring in a dwelling in the next twelve months will be based on the deficiencies identified. When the officer has made that decision, a number is used to represent a range of likelihoods.

The range of different injuries and health conditions which could arise from the occurrence of a hazard has been put into four HHSRS classes based on how serious they are. As well as thinking about the likelihood, the officer will think about how severe would be the result of an occurrence. The inspector will calculate the severity of the result of a hazard by deciding which out of the four classes of harm is the most likely outcome, then which is next most likely and so on.

The numbers used to represent the officer's decisions on the likelihood and the outcomes are used to get a score. (Exactly how this is done is prescribed in the Regulations, as well as being explained in the HHSRS Operating Guidance.)

The cost of any work that might be necessary is not taken into account in scoring a hazard, it is only the danger to health or safety that is considered. In fact sometimes a very serious hazard can be put right quite cheaply – for example a safety catch on a dangerous window can make it safe.

If it is found that it is very likely that there will be an occurrence within the next twelve months which could have serious results for the age group(s) most at risk (e.g. where the score is 1000 or over) then the local authority must take the most appropriate action in relation to the hazard. Often this might mean that they will require the landlord to undertake whatever work they consider to be necessary to remove, or minimise, the risk.

## Information about Cladding

### BBC: The Cladding on Grenfell Tower<sup>14</sup>

The cladding - installed on Grenfell Tower in a recent renovation - has come under scrutiny, with experts saying a more fire-resistant type could have been used.

Both the cladding and insulation on the outside of the building failed all preliminary tests by the police. The insulation samples burned more quickly than the cladding tiles.

Documents obtained by the BBC suggest the cladding fitted during its refurbishment **was changed to a cheaper version.**

They show the zinc cladding originally proposed was replaced with an aluminium type, which was less fire resistant, saving nearly £300,000.

Cladding can create cavities which in some cases can cause a chimney effect, drawing flames up the cavity if there are no fire barriers.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) said composite aluminium panels with a polyethylene core should not be used as cladding on buildings over 18m high.

Engineering and manufacturing company Arconic later said one of its products, Reynobond PE (polyethylene) - an aluminium composite material - was "used as one component in the overall cladding system" of Grenfell Tower.

### BBC: Why non-combustible stone wool insulation makes sense- Rockwool Cladding<sup>15</sup>

Given that most fires occur in domestic dwellings, blocks of flats have a high safety risk potential in the event of a fire. Today's modern multi-storey buildings tend to offer a complex mix of occupation, including offices, hotels, residential, retail and leisure facilities. In this type of building, fire can quickly spread through the material of an external cladding system or through the cavities. Careful consideration of the design and potential fire risk in such buildings is required with particular emphasis on containment to allow safe evacuation, reduce the risk of fire spread to other buildings and to enable access for fire fighters.

Fire safety standards, embodied in Building Regulations Part B Fire Safety and associated Approved Documents, are designed to ensure that adequate fire safety provisions are incorporated in High Rise Buildings of whatever type. Regulation B4 requires the external walls of a building to adequately "resist the spread of fire" with functional requirements given in Approved Documents. In any building, the cladding system and materials must conform or exceed the regulation for limited combustibility defined in BR 135: "Fire Performance of External Insulation for Walls of Multi-Storey Buildings", when tested in accordance with BS 8414-1:2002 and BS 8414-2:2005 for its range of external wall insulation systems. This testing satisfies building regulations in England & Wales and Scotland pertaining to fire for buildings over 18 metres tall. The BR 135 classification is

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-40272168>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.rockwool.co.uk/advice/fire-safety/fire-safety-in-multi-storey-buildings/>

called for as an alternative guidance to non-combustibility compliance for domestic and commercial applications.

In our view, a much more straightforward route to demonstrating compliance with BR 135 and optimising fire safety performance is to use stone wool insulation that is non-combustible. Non-combustible products will not contribute in any stage of the fire, including a fully developed fire according to the European reaction-to-fire classification standard BS EN 13501-1.

ROCKWOOL stone wool insulation tolerates temperatures of up to 1000°C and has been awarded this highest possible European classification: A1 non-combustible, it provides vital fire protection in buildings, keeping people safe, as well as minimising damage to valuable assets. In the event of a fire, it is designed to remain stable, slow the spread of flames and help protect the building's load-bearing structure, buying valuable time for occupants to safely escape to protect lives and investment

## Extracts from The Business Case for Sprinklers: A report by the Chief Fire Officers Association<sup>16</sup>

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) is committed to reducing the impact of fire on people, property, the environment and the economy. The wider installation and use of automatic fire suppression systems (sprinklers) is seen as a preventative measure so that people can evacuate the building in the event of a fire occurring. It will also reduce the risk to firefighters who are called to deal with fires.

### Introduction and the Benefits of Sprinklers

A great deal of excellent work has been done to reduce fire risk in the home, such as the introduction of hard wired smoke alarms in new builds and the community fire safety work of the fire and rescue services, yet last year (2011/12) 380 people died as a result of fires<sup>17</sup>. Although a welcome decrease from the previous year it remains clear that greater preventative measures need to be taken in order to further reduce the number of preventable fire deaths.

Automatic sprinkler systems have been incorporated into buildings since 1872<sup>18</sup> and were originally seen and developed as a means of reducing fire losses to property and contents. Over recent years there has been a growing recognition of their use as a means of contributing to life safety which is now recognised in current UK guidance to the Building Regulations.

Evidence shows that while sprinklers are primarily intended to contain or control fires, they can also be instrumental in saving the lives of people in the room of origin of a fire. There

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.cfoa.org.uk/11543>

<sup>17</sup> Fire Statistics Great Britain: April 2011 to March 2012, <http://bit.ly/10Sf71c>

<sup>18</sup> History of the National Fire Protection Association, <http://bit.ly/11Hceli>

are no cases on record where multiple fire deaths have occurred in buildings with working sprinkler systems, where those systems have been appropriately designed for the intended purpose, have been properly installed and maintained. The evidence also shows that no lives have been lost in the UK due to fire in homes fitted with domestic sprinkler systems.

Moreover, where a sprinkler system has been installed:

- Fire deaths (including firefighter deaths) have been almost eliminated
- Fire injuries reduced by 80%
- Significant improvement in firefighter safety achieved
- Property damage reduced by over 80%
- Effects of arson reduced
- Reduction in the environmental impact of fire
- Reduction to the economic cost of fire

The average time taken for the fire and rescue service to reach an incident and be in a position to intervene is 10 minutes. Most people will have succumbed to the effects of fire within the first five minutes; a sprinkler will activate within the first three minutes and have the fire controlled by the fifth minute. Smoke damage is a major cause of loss in fires. In serious cases smoke is the main cause of death. Sprinklers wash the larger particles out of smoke reducing its density and toxicity. In addition the water cools the smoke making it less harmful.

A report published in the USA in 2007 by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) concluded that in properties where sprinklers are fitted:

- The death rate per fire is lower by at least 57%
- For most property uses, damage per fire is lower by one third to two thirds
- 89% of reported structure fires have flame damage confined to the room of origin compared to 57% when no automatic extinguishing system is present

Primary School - 125/150 pupils	Approx. £65,000 for sprinklers + £40,000 for additional project costs	Approx. £10-15/m <sup>2</sup>
Typical 3/4 bedroom detached house	£3000-£3500 if mains pressure adequate (add £750 if not) - reduced by 10-15% for more houses on a development	1-2% of build costs
High rise or larger public building with complex layout	1.5-1.9% of new build costs	£18-25/m <sup>2</sup> of the building

The main cost associated with domestic fire sprinkler systems is the capital cost of installation. There are also on-going maintenance costs. The cost of installation is estimated to be about 1- 2% of the total cost of construction. Annual maintenance costs are between £75-£150 per year.

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A further cost, which can vary significantly depending on the interpretation of individual water companies, is the cost of water supply. Sprinklers are currently not classed as a domestic use of water under the Water Industry Act 1991. Water companies are very heavily regulated and are under constant pressure to drive down costs while at the same time raising standards, within this operational framework there are many drivers which conflict with the potential ideals for sprinkler installation. Recent developments in the wider use of sprinklers in domestic dwellings and residential premises have further highlighted that the issues are not adequately covered by current water industry legislation. The most effective way of addressing this is to change the regulations and achieve a balanced application thereby creating a framework which allows stakeholders to operate as harmoniously as possible.

Section 5 of the BRE 2012 report, Cost Benefit Analysis of residential sprinklers<sup>19</sup> prepared for CFOA, presents a cost benefit analysis of the expected impact of the residential sprinklers to determine whether or not there was a positive gain in providing them in a range of building types, including houses, care premises and blocks of flats.

In doing so, BRE used a statistical value for each life saved of £1,692,000 and £50,450 for each prevented injury. These figures were the result of the Department of Transport figure, used in the Treasury Green Book [HM Treasury 2003] and Economic Cost of Fire 2004 [ODPM 2006] multiplied by the increase in GDP from 2004 to 2010, a factor of 1.23.

As the risks associated with building safety are very different from those of road safety, the applicability of these figures as the basis of assessment in fire sprinkler considerations is open to debate. Consequently a number of other cost benefit studies founded on a 'willingness to pay' basis have used a range of different values.

Nonetheless the quoted BRE statistical values offer a reasonable indication of the financial implications involved in such assessments, against which retrofit implementation costs might be compared.

Unlike the previous BRE study, the input data for the cost benefit analysis made use of comparable overseas data where specific UK does not exist. As such, the updated BRE report considered the following factors:

- Value of each death prevented

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<sup>19</sup> Building Research Establishment, Cost Benefit Analysis of Residential Sprinklers, <http://bit.ly/11yDGAC>

- Value of each injury prevented
- Value of property damage in a fire
- Interest rate for discounting future values
- Capital recovery factor
- Sprinkler system reliability
- Sprinkler system lifetime
- Sprinkler system activation
- Sprinkler system effectiveness
- Installation costs
- Water supply costs
- Maintenance costs
- Fires, deaths, injuries and property damage
- Numbers of buildings
- Number of residents per building
- Risks of fire, death, injury and average damage

It is also worth considering the factors not considered by BRE as part of the cost benefit analysis of sprinkler installation, these include:

- Accidental water damage
- Environmental impact discharge
- Insurance premium reductions
- Fire and rescue service cost savings
- Design/construction trade offs

## Sprinklers in High Rise Flats

High rise social housing blocks create a number of specific and unique fire safety and firefighting challenges that may not exist in other properties. The majority of such blocks were built between 1950 and 1970 when design and fire protection standards were lower than those required by current building regulations (i.e. all those over 30m in height should be fitted with sprinklers at construction).

In recent years there have been a number of serious fires in older high rise blocks that have resulted in occupant and firefighter fatalities. Following a major fire resulting in six deaths in 2009 in the social housing block Lakanal House, questions were asked about the potential benefits of automatic fire sprinklers in protecting residents in such properties. In response, a DCLG report suggested that retrofitting sprinklers to such buildings would not be cost effective or practical.

Where evacuation is required, the process takes longer from upper floors and sprinklers provide significant benefits in addressing this risk. Furthermore, where a fire occurs in a high-rise block, it can take a significant time before the fire and rescue service can commence firefighting operations, with the potential of greater risk to firefighters. Sprinklers can assist in controlling the fire growth whilst reducing this time between the

outbreak of fire and the start of the fire suppression activity, reducing the risk to firefighters.

There are over 4,000 high rise blocks owned or managed by local authorities across the UK. Information provided by DCLG<sup>20</sup> list 213,199 individual dwellings in 3,778 high rise premises in England. There are 797 such blocks in Scotland and 15 in Northern Ireland but unfortunately comparable figures for Wales were not available at the time of writing.

These tower blocks would have been designed and constructed in accordance with the building regulations of the day and therefore were not fitted with sprinklers. The 2012 BRE report suggested that the frequency of fire per accommodation unit increased with building height, but that the risk of death per fire was not significantly affected by height. UK fire statistics suggested that in multi-storey buildings, the number of fires per floor were not evenly distributed and that there were more fires at ground floor level. However, recent fires appear to call this conclusion into doubt or at least suggest that while the numbers proposed by the statistics may be correct, the more severe incidents which require significant fire and rescue service intervention, and hence result in media coverage, are generally on upper floors. Fire Safety in purpose-built blocks of flats<sup>21</sup> published by the Local Government Group discusses the relative risks in flats and states that around 10% of the population live in purpose built flats. In 2009-2010 some 25% of recorded dwelling fires occurred in such properties and 23% of fire deaths were in this category of dwelling. Such statistics are clearly indicative of the real fire safety and life risks that are involved in un-sprinklered premises.

## Government and Parliament Statements<sup>22</sup>

Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce: The Taskforce Initial Report – 31 October 2017

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first report of the Taskforce. These are our initial recommendations following nine weeks consideration of RBKC's response.

RBKC failed its community on the night of 14 June and in the weeks following. Prior to that we have heard that RBKC was: distant from its residents; highly traditional in its operational behaviours; limited in its understanding of collaborative working and insular, despite cross borough agreements; and with a deficit in its understanding of modern public service delivery.

Following a significant change of senior leadership, RBKC is working hard to develop and deliver effective support and services to survivors and the wider community. It is doing this while undergoing a fundamental change in the way it delivers its functions and its

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<sup>20</sup> Department for Communities & Local Government, Housing Stock Summary, December 2012, <http://bit.ly/133aUq2>

<sup>21</sup> Local Government Group, Fire Safety in purpose built blocks of flats, July 2011, <http://bit.ly/13iK7Vq>

<sup>22</sup> Statements are in reverse chronological order.

organisational culture and allocating considerable resources. We hope these recommendations will improve the success of the recovery programme.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

There are four themes that are common to all the recommendations of the Taskforce:-

- **More Pace:** the pace of delivery needs to be increased.
- **Greater empathy and emotional intelligence:** these attributes need to be put at the heart of RBKC recovery plans. On too many occasions we have received accounts from survivors and the wider community of poor treatment.
- **Skills:** all Officers and Councillors need training in how to work with a community that has been traumatised.
- **Greater Innovation:** RBKC should be bolder than it has been in its response.

Set out below are a number of detailed recommendations. Most of these fall to the council, but some to Government and the community. For each we have given an indication of timescales by which we think they should be addressed.

Governance and delivery Suggested timescale

Governance and delivery		Suggested timescale
1.	<b>Council Members:</b> The brief for the review of governance commissioned from the Centre for Public Scrutiny should be extended beyond a review of structures and processes to include what good looks like in relation to the behaviours and performance in role of Members. This should be done with a view to incorporating this into the induction for new Members, post local election in May 2018	May 2018
2.	<b>Focus on delivery:</b> The scale of the challenge is significant. To date the pace of delivery of many services has been poor - pace needs to be added as a matter of urgency. We recommend the Chief Executive further bolsters the capacity and capability at the most senior level to add pace to operational delivery. If this requires additional resource, then that should be allocated.	Immediate
3.	<b>Oversight and accountability:</b> Central government oversight was and remains necessary. However, the frequency and intensity is having an impact on the ability of RBKC to deliver on the ground. We suggest the weekly Ministerial Recovery Groups (MRG), chaired by the Communities Secretary, should be reduced in frequency.	Immediate
Housing		
4.	<b>Rehousing:</b> The pace of permanent rehousing (for Category A&B) residents must be accelerated with clear realistic targets for delivery.	Strategy and targets agreed immediately
5.	<b>Housing Management:</b> The future management and ownership of RBKC's housing stock should not be pre-determined. There are many ways that management of the housing stock can be delivered	June 2018

	and all of them should be considered. A detailed consultation with residents will also be required.	
6.	Lancaster West Estate: A plan to be adopted in consultation with local residents for the comprehensive improvement of the estate. This is to include future plans for the site of the Tower	June 2018
<b>Community Engagement</b>		
7.	<b>Care for Grenfell:</b> Ensuring there are sufficient people focussing on improving the support to survivors and the wider community must be addressed immediately. Consideration should be given to innovative ways that will increase capacity quickly, for example looking at re-prioritising work across RBKC that could free up resource to bolster the immediate support.	December 2017
8.	<b>Prioritisation:</b> Many actions have been suggested and agreed that could make an immediate difference on the ground. However, in too many cases these have not been delivered. Ensuring these are delivered will begin to engender trust in RBKC's ability to deliver. Actions for immediate focus that have been promised must be logged and delivery ensured.	November 2017
9.	<b>Community Engagement:</b> All policy development and service delivery across the council should have community engagement considerations and impact embedded at their heart, just like the approach to Equality Impact Analysis. The council needs to do a detailed mapping of its community so that it can better understand it	December 2017
<b>Cross-cutting</b>		
10.	Working holistically: RBKC needs to bring together all information on victims and survivor needs into a central knowledge and data management system, ensuring that there is rapid transfer and sharing with all front-line staff and service delivery partners, with real-time management of accuracy.	November 2017
11.	Personalised Key Workers: RBKC need to provide designated key workers as the 'single point of contact' for victims and survivors, who can then represent them, take responsibility and are empowered to follow up action from across the council and support agencies. Systems need to be examined to make sure there are no "pinch-points" that hold up delivery.	Significant improvements by end of November 2017
12.	Improving support and empathy: Training provided for all staff directly involved in providing support to survivors in how to engage with those who have suffered major trauma. Sensitivity to culture and faith should be key aspects of this training. This will take some time but we would advise that this starts as quickly as possible.	Commence December 2017
<b>The Site</b>		
13.	Covering the Tower: Management of the site is not currently the responsibility of RBKC. Nevertheless we would strongly recommend that those responsible for it accelerate covering the Tower. It is reprehensible that it has remained uncovered for so long.	December 2017

## Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce Initial Report RB Kensington and Chelsea response to Secretary of State 1 November 2017 (Excerpt)

### **Detailed response to Recommendations**

#### Governance and Delivery

1. Council Members: The brief for the review of governance commissioned from the Centre for Public Scrutiny should be extended beyond a review of structures and processes to include what good looks like in relation to the behaviours and performance in role of Members. This should be done with a view to incorporating this into the induction for new Members, post local election in May 2018. ACCEPTED
2. Focus on delivery: the scale of the challenge is significant. To date the pace of delivery of many services has been poor - pace needs to be added as a matter of urgency. We recommend the Chief Executive further bolsters the capacity and capability at the most senior level to add pace to operational delivery. If this requires additional resource, then that should be allocated. ACCEPTED. Three new Directors for Housing Needs and Supply, Housing Management and Community and Place have been recruited and are now working in the Grenfell team. He has also begun consultation with staff about a restructuring at senior level and will continue to keep staffing levels under review.
3. Oversight and accountability: central government oversight was and remains necessary. However, the frequency and intensity is having an impact on the ability of RBKC to deliver on the ground. We suggest the weekly Ministerial Recovery Groups (MRG), chaired by the Communities Secretary, should be reduced in frequency. ACCEPTED. We value the support and challenge provided by DCLG within and outside the MRG; however, preparing for the MRGs requires a considerable amount of management time and we agree that the meeting frequency could be reduced.

#### Housing

4. Rehousing: the pace of permanent rehousing (for Category A&B) residents must be accelerated with clear realistic targets for delivery. ACCEPTED. Rehousing large numbers of households in a timely manner requires a balance between achieving pace and meeting individual need. We have a clear rehousing strategy and the targets, mentioned above, of moving all who want to leave emergency accommodation into temporary accommodation by Christmas, and offering all households from the Tower and Walk permanent accommodation by next June. The pace of households moving into permanent and temporary accommodation is accelerating.
5. Housing Management: the future management and ownership of the Council's housing stock should not be pre-determined. There are many ways that management of the housing stock can be delivered and all of them should be considered. A detailed consultation with residents will also be required. ACCEPTED.

This echoes our current plan to undertake consultation on the long term options. In the meantime, it has been necessary to take urgent steps around the management of the Lancaster West Estate and the capital programme. The prospect of a vote of a “no confidence” signed by 250 members of the KCTMO meant that the KCTMO and the Council needed to take steps to amend the governance arrangements to enable the board to carry on functioning so that decisions could be made to sustain services. We are now meeting with the KCTMO to agree a governance mechanism which sustains the body as a corporate entity whilst making alternative plans for the shorter term management of the housing stock.

6. Lancaster West Estate: A plan to be adopted in consultation with local residents for the comprehensive improvement of the estate. This is to include future plans for the site of the Tower. ACCEPTED; noting that the Tower site is still controlled by London Gold and the police and so timescales for consultation cannot yet be set. Future plans for the estate will be developed with residents. Future plans for the site of the Tower will be developed with bereaved families, survivors and residents, at a pace that feels appropriate to them.
7. Care for Grenfell: ensuring there are sufficient people focussing on improving the support to survivors and the wider community must be addressed immediately. Consideration should be given to innovative ways that will increase capacity quickly for example looking at re-prioritising work across RBKC that could free up resource to bolster the immediate support. ACCEPTED; this work is underway as mentioned above.
8. Prioritisation: many actions have been suggested and agreed that could make an immediate difference on the ground. However, in too many cases these have not been delivered. Ensuring these are delivered will begin to engender trust in RBKCs ability to deliver. Actions for immediate focus that have been promised must be logged and delivery ensured. ACCEPTED; we endeavour to do this but will review our processes to ensure they are as effective as possible.
9. Community Engagement: All Policy development and service delivery across the Council should have community engagement considerations and impact embedded at their heart, just like the approach to Equality Impact Analysis. The Council needs to do a detailed mapping of its community so that it can better understand it. ACCEPTED; we have begun to embed this approach to policy and service development. We will consider how to undertake an effective mapping of the community.

#### Cross-cutting

10. Working holistically: The Council needs to bring together all information on victims and survivor needs into a central knowledge and data management system, ensuring that there is rapid transfer and sharing with all front-line staff and service delivery partners, with real-time management of accuracy. ACCEPTED; work is in hand to achieve this within the Council by the end of November: we will discuss with relevant partners how this can be shared with them within the context of our Information Sharing Protocol.

11. Personalised Key Workers: need to be designated as the 'single point of contact' for victims and survivors, who can then represent them, take responsibility and are empowered to follow up action from across the Council and support agencies. Systems need to be examined to make sure there are no "pinch-points" that hold up delivery. ACCEPTED: This is our model; we recognise we need to do more to ensure resident experience and outcomes match our ambitions for this service.
12. Improving support and empathy: training for all staff directly involved in providing support to survivors in how to engage with those who have suffered major trauma. Sensitivity to culture and faith should be key aspects of this training. This will take some time but we would advise that this starts as quickly as possible. ACCEPTED: This is underway.
13. Not relevant to RBKC

### Statement on Grenfell Tower (Excerpt)

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**

**Published: 5 September 2017**

**Communities Secretary Sajid Javid provides an update on the government response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy.**

.....Turning now to testing and building safety.

Of course, the issues raised by Grenfell extend well beyond Kensington.

Across England there are 173 social housing buildings that are over 18 metres tall and clad with some form of aluminium composite material, or ACM.

In July, the Building Research Establishment began a series of large-scale fire safety tests on ACM cladding systems, comprising both the visible cladding and the internal insulation.

The aim was to establish whether each system, when properly fitted, complied with the relevant Building Regulations guidance, BR135.

Three of the seven cladding systems that were tested were found to meet the criteria set out in BR135.

The other 4 fell short of what was required.

The cladding systems that passed the test are in use on 8 social housing towers.

Systems that failed are in use on 165.

The owners of affected buildings have been given detailed advice drawn up by our independent expert advisory panel.

This covers steps to ensure the safety of residents including, where necessary, removal of cladding.

We have also been holding weekly update calls with local authorities, housing associations and other building owner groups.

We have today published further advice that brings together all the results and the views of the expert panel on the implications for building owners.

We will shortly be meeting with local authorities and housing associations to discuss further steps.

This will include the process by which we will ensure that remedial work is carried out.

We have made the BRE tests available to all private residential building owners too.

While 89 private buildings in England have tested their cladding through those facilities, I continue to urge all private owners of similar blocks to submit samples for testing.

I have also asked housing authorities to ensure the same steps are taken for all private sector residential tower blocks in their areas and to collect the data so that we understand the scale of the issue and we can track the remedial action.

Inspections carried out since the fire have also highlighted other safety issues related to building design.

For example, structural engineers studying Southwark's Ledbury Estate said that strengthening work may be needed on blocks constructed using the concrete panel system that, in 1968, failed with devastating effect at Ronan Point.

They also raised concerns about cracks that appeared cosmetic but could compromise fire-safety compartmentation.

We have been in contact with Southwark Council and the engineers to discuss these issues, and have engaged the Standing Committee on Structural Safety to advise on their implications.

Meanwhile, all local authorities that own similar buildings have been advised to review their designs and to check whether any strengthening work was properly carried out.

Separately, the British Board of Agrément has told us that, based on their investigations following incidents in Glasgow, some cladding systems may be designed and installed in such a way that they could fail in strong winds.

We're not aware of any injuries caused by this kind of failure.

However, we are taking advice from the independent expert panel and have written to building control bodies to draw their attention to the issues that have been raised.

The wider issues of competence and certification will also feed into Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building safety, the terms of reference for which were announced last week.

Finally, I have also established an Industry Response Group, which will help the sectors required to improve building safety and to coordinate their efforts.

**Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: publication of terms of reference**

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**

**Published: 30 August 2017**

**The government has published the terms of reference for the independent Review led by Dame Judith Hackitt.**

The government has today (30 August 2017) published the terms of reference for the independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety that was commissioned following the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy.

This Review will urgently assess the effectiveness of current building and fire safety regulations and related compliance and enforcement issues, with a focus on multi occupancy high rise residential buildings. This will include addressing whether the government's large-scale cladding system testing programme identified any potential systemic failures.

The Review's 2 key priorities are to develop a more robust regulatory system for the future and provide further assurance to residents that the buildings they live in are safe and remain safe. While the Review will cover the regulatory system for all buildings, it will have a specific focus on multi occupancy high rise residential buildings.

Dame Judith Hackitt, a qualified engineer with strong regulatory background, is leading the Review and will draw on the experience of local government, industry, the fire sector, international experts and MPs. She will also engage with residents of multi occupancy residential buildings.

The Review will report jointly to Communities Secretary Sajid Javid and Home Secretary Amber Rudd. An interim report will be submitted in autumn 2017 and a final report submitted in spring 2018. The Review will co-operate fully with the Public Inquiry, and Dame Judith Hackitt will review her recommendations in the light of the findings of the Inquiry.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

We must learn the lessons of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and ensure that a fire like this cannot happen again. Following the fire, I commissioned a series of large-scale tests, which have raised the question of whether there have been potential systemic failures within the building regulatory and fire safety system.

This independent Review led by Dame Judith Hackitt will address any potential failures and recommend how we ensure the whole building regulations and fire safety system is robust. I

am determined that we do everything possible to make people safe and to ensure that they feel safe.

Review Chair, Dame Judith Hackitt said:

I look forward to working with experts from across different sectors to take an urgent, fresh and comprehensive examination of the regulatory system and related compliance and enforcement issues.

It's right that we consider the whole system together and ensure that everything possible is done to improve the safety of buildings. I will also be speaking to residents of multi occupancy residential buildings who must have a voice about these important issues that affect their safety.

## **Government completes large-scale fire safety testing programme**

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government**

**Published: 25 August 2017**

### **The final wall cladding combination has passed and meets current Building Regulations guidance.**

The final wall cladding combination tested as part of the government's series of large-scale fire safety tests has passed and meets current Building Regulations guidance.

This final test was of a wall cladding system consisting of Aluminium Composite material (ACM) cladding with a limited combustibility filler (category 1 in screening tests) with stone wool insulation.

The government's expert panel advises that the results show that this combination of materials can be compliant when installed and maintained properly. While government has not been informed of any tall buildings over 18 metres in England using this particular combination of materials in their wall system, it could offer a possible solution for some buildings with other cladding systems which have been identified as a fire hazard through previous large-scale tests.

The clear advice from the expert panel remains that building owners need to continue to take professional advice regarding remedial work that takes into account the specific circumstances of their building.

The purpose of this testing programme is to develop a better understanding of how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire. This is so building owners and their professional advisors can make informed decisions. Results of all 7 large-scale tests are available and government will shortly publish consolidated advice to landlords based on all the 7 tests.

The government announced an independent review of building regulations and fire safety on 28 July 2017. This forward-looking review will examine the regulatory system around the design, construction and on-going management of buildings in relation to fire safety as well as related compliance and enforcement issues.

### **Grenfell Tower Inquiry Terms of Reference<sup>23</sup>**

15 August 2017

The Inquiry's Terms of Reference are:

1. To examine the circumstances surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, including:
  - a) the immediate cause or causes of the fire and the means by which it spread to the whole of the building;
  - b) the design and construction of the building and the decisions relating to its modification, refurbishment and management;
  - c) the scope and adequacy of building regulations, fire regulations and other legislation, guidance and industry practice relating to the design, construction, equipping and management of high-rise residential buildings;
  - d) whether such regulations, legislation, guidance and industry practice were complied with in the case of Grenfell Tower and the fire safety measures adopted in relation to it;
  - e) the arrangements made by the local authority or other responsible bodies for receiving and acting upon information either obtained from local residents or available from other sources (including information derived from fires in other buildings) relating to the risk of fire at Grenfell Tower, and the action taken in response to such information;
  - f) the fire prevention and fire safety measures in place at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017;
  - g) the response of the London Fire Brigade to the fire; and

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/news/prime-minister-announces-inquiry-terms-reference/>

- h) the response of central and local government in the days immediately following the fire;

and

2. To report its findings to the Prime Minister as soon as possible and to make recommendations.

**News Story: New industry group to ensure construction sector ready to meet building challenges after Grenfell Tower**

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy**

**Published: 10 July 2017**

A new industry response group made up of government and the construction industry will help ensure the sector can meet the challenges following the Grenfell Tower fire.

The industry response group (IRG) will complement the work of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel (IEAP) established in June 2017 by government to advise on immediate steps to ensure building safety.

After the initial step of offering a service to building owners to identify the type of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding on high rise buildings, the government has commissioned the Building Research Establishment to undertake further tests. These will help establish how different types of ACM panels in combination with different types of insulation behave in a fire.

Once the results are published it may be necessary that quick action is taken.

At a meeting with government, the industry acknowledged that it needs to help coordinate the construction industry's response to the challenges of implementing recommendations from the IEAP and government. To ensure firms can meet these challenges the new group will lead the industry's response and ensure the sector can meet any new demands.

The group, which will be inclusive and cross-industry and led by the sector, will take forward work that will:

- provide essential advice on possible solutions for use in particular types of buildings to ensure homes, offices and public buildings are safe
- provide advice on better ways of building and the latest methods of construction, and ensure access to the necessary technical expertise in industry when required
- help mobilise the UK industry if any major programmes of construction work is needed, by acting as a focal point for government-industry communications
- advise government on the relevant sub-sectors of the construction industry, their expertise and capacity to deliver work at pace

In a joint statement, the Industry Response Group, said:

We understand how concerned people are about the safety of buildings and we would like to reassure the public that the UK construction industry is working with urgency to respond to advice published by the government. This IRG will demonstrate leadership and, acting as a focal point, provide a collective response to government and other stakeholders.

The group will include representatives from three major industry bodies in the UK:

- Build UK – the leading representative organisation for the construction industry
- Construction Industry Council – the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations for professional services providers in the construction industry
- Construction Products Association – the UK’s manufacturers and distributors of construction products and materials.

The 3 organisations will lead and coordinate contributions from across the sector.

**Grenfell Inquiry Chair: statement by the Prime Minister**

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, and The Rt Hon Theresa May MP**

**Published: 29 June 2017**

I am announcing today the appointment of Sir Martin Moore-Bick to head the [Public Inquiry](#) into the Grenfell Tower fire. The Inquiry will be established under the 2005 Inquiries Act, with full powers, including the power to compel the production of documents, and to summon witnesses to give evidence on oath. The Inquiry will be held in public.

In relation to the appointment of the Chair, the Lord Chancellor asked the Lord Chief Justice for the name of a judge who, in his view, would be best suited to the task and available to start work immediately so that we can get answers to what happened as quickly as possible. The Lord Chief Justice recommended Sir Martin Moore-Bick: a highly respected and hugely experienced former Court of Appeal judge. I have accepted the Lord Chief Justice’s recommendation.

I am determined that there will be justice for all the victims of this terrible tragedy and for their families who have suffered so terribly.

The immediate priority is to establish the facts of what happened at Grenfell Tower in order to take the necessary action to prevent a similar tragedy from happening again. But beyond that immediate focus it is also important that all the wider lessons from both this catastrophe, and the inspections of other buildings around the country that followed it, are identified and learnt.

Before the Inquiry starts Sir Martin will consult all those with an interest, including survivors and victims' families, about the terms of reference. Following that consultation he will make a recommendation to me. I will return to Parliament with the final terms of reference once this process has taken place. Then the Inquiry will begin its work.

We must get to the truth about what happened. No stone will be left unturned by this Inquiry, but I have also been clear that we cannot wait for ages to learn the immediate lessons and so I expect the Chair will want to produce an interim report as early as possible.

### Cladding sample testing update

**From: Department for Communities and Local Government and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**

**Published: 25 June 2017**

**The number of high rise buildings which have failed a combustibility test is now 60 across 25 local authority areas.**

Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, published a statement on Saturday 24 June which detailed the work being undertaken to ensure the safety of residents in high-rise buildings following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

The number of high rise buildings from which cladding samples have failed a combustibility test at the Building Research Establishment is now 60 across 25 local authority areas. All landlords and fire and rescue services for these local authorities have been alerted to the results and we are in touch with all of them to support and monitor follow-up action.

The table below shows the distribution of buildings, naming those areas where we know that the local authority or landlord has informed affected residents that a building's cladding has failed the test.

	Local authority area	Number of buildings
1	Barnet	3
2	Brent	1
3	Camden	5
4	Doncaster	1
5	Hounslow	1
6	Islington	1
7	Lambeth	1

	Local authority area	Number of buildings
8	Manchester	4
9	Norwich	1
10	Plymouth	3
11	Portsmouth	2
12	Stockton on Tees	3
13	Sunderland	5
14	Wandsworth	2
15 - 25	In addition 11 other areas where cladding test failed	27
	Total - 25 areas	60

**Communities Secretary statement: safety checks following the Grenfell Tower fire**  
**From: Department for Communities and Local Government, The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, and Alok Sharma MP**

**Published: 19 June 2017**

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid has given the following statement regarding safety checks following the Grenfell Tower fire.

The Grenfell Tower police-led investigation is underway, but it will be some time before it is fully understood how the fire started or why it took hold in the way it did.

In the meantime there is significant anxiety amongst residents about whether their own blocks are safe.

While the exact reasons for the speed of the spread of fire have yet to be determined, we have concluded that there are additional tests that can be undertaken with regard to the cladding.

We are therefore asking local authorities and other registered providers of social housing to identify whether any panels used in new build or refurbishment are a particular type of cladding made of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM).

More details on how to identify this cladding are being supplied in a technical note, and the Homes and Communities Agency can offer expert support in surveying your properties if necessary.

It is important to stress that ACM cladding is not of itself dangerous, but it is important that the right type is used.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

We have asked local authorities and all providers of social housing to identify whether any buildings in their area contain cladding made of aluminium composite material (ACM) by the end of today (Monday 19 June).

We are putting in place a rigorous, government funded testing process for any ACM cladding identified.

Housing Minister Alok Sharma this morning met representatives from across the housing sector including the Home Builders Federation, Local Government Association and the National Housing Federation. They all expressed their support for this work and gave a commitment that they would progress this with all possible haste.

It is clear that a considerable amount of work has already been undertaken. Councils are working closely with fire and rescue services to ensure that the appropriate safety and response measures are in place and talking to their tenants to hear their concerns.

Any landlord who is concerned can contact the department at [housingchecks@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housingchecks@communities.gsi.gov.uk) for further advice about cladding materials – this is a dedicated contact point which has been set up to provide technical support and reassurance.

Our priority is to reassure people that they are safe in their homes - and that is exactly what we are doing.

**Statement from the Prime Minister on Grenfell Tower: 17 June 2017**

**From: Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon Theresa May MP**

**Published: 17 June 2017**

**Prime Minister Theresa May earlier today met with victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.**



Earlier today I met with victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the volunteers and community leaders who are working so hard to help people rebuild their lives.

I wanted to listen to their concerns and reassure them personally that government is there for them – and that everything possible will be done to help them through the hugely difficult days, weeks, months and years to come.

The response of the emergency services, NHS and the community has been heroic.

But, frankly, the support on the ground for families who needed help or basic information in the initial hours after this appalling disaster was not good enough.

I have heard the concerns and I have ordered immediate action across the board to help victims' relatives and the survivors.

People lost everything in the fire and were left in only the clothes they were wearing.

I can confirm that a £5million emergency fund that I announced yesterday is now being distributed on the ground so people can buy clothes, food and other essentials. If more funding is required, it will be provided.

Residents rightly want to know when new housing will be provided. I have fixed a deadline of three weeks for everybody affected to be found a home nearby. I have today requested daily progress reports.

There have been huge frustrations that people do not know who to talk to, that they can't get through on the council hotlines.

I have ordered that more staff be deployed across the area, wearing high visibility clothing, so they can easily be found, dispense advice and ensure the right support is provided. Phone lines will have more staff.

Victims have concerns their voice will not be heard, that their many questions about this tragedy will not be answered.

That is why I ordered a Public Inquiry, with the costs for providing victims with legal representation met by government.

The inquiry will be open and transparent. Government and ministers will cooperate fully. I anticipate the name of the judge will be announced within the next few days and that an open meeting will be held with residents to help shape the terms of reference.

It has been decided today that the public inquiry will report back to me personally. As Prime Minister, I will be responsible for implementing its findings.

Understandably, those living in similar high rise blocks to Grenfell Tower also want answers.

I have ordered councils to complete urgent safety checks on all these buildings. If any further action is required, it will be taken.

After something this traumatic, many people will be in need of not just financial support, but also counselling. NHS London will provide that support.

I can also announce that NHS London will provide specialist long-term bereavement support for the families who have lost loved ones, and immediate psychological support is being provided by Cruse and Red Cross.

If other issues become apparent – if the victims need more help and support – I will make sure it is forthcoming.

The fire at Grenfell Tower was an unimaginable tragedy for the community, and for our country. My Government will do whatever it takes to help those affected, get justice and keep our people safe.

**Support for victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster**

**From: Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon Theresa May MP**

**Published: 16 June 2017**

**Prime Minister Theresa May today promised a comprehensive package of support for victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.**



During a meeting with survivors of the fire, she announced a £5 million fund would be made available to pay for emergency supplies, food, clothes and other costs.

The proposals followed a visit by the Prime Minister to Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, where people who had escaped the blaze said they had been left with no possessions or money.

The PM then chaired a meeting of a cross-Whitehall group of senior ministers and officials to agree a full range of help, which she set out to a group of residents, victims, volunteers and community leaders during a visit to the Clement James Centre near Grenfell Tower.

The package includes:

- a commitment that victims who lost their homes in the disaster must be rehoused at the earliest possible opportunity and that we should aim to do this within 3 weeks at the latest
- a guarantee to rehouse people as close as practically possible to where they previously lived, meaning they can continue to access the same public services, such as their local school or local GP – this rehousing would be in the same borough and, if not, a neighbouring borough
- until people are rehoused, the cost of temporary accommodation will be met on their behalf
- the government will also provide any necessary financial assistance to families who have been rehoused so children and their parents do not incur any extra costs in travelling to their local school
- the new £5 million Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund, made immediately available and given to the local authority to distribute – this could be used to cover loss of possessions, funerals and emergency supplies
- confirmation the Treasury will work with banks to ensure that those affected by the disaster who lost possessions like bank cards still have access to their accounts
- the Department for Work and Pensions are working with local job centres to ensure that those affected have access to the benefits and pensions they would normally receive

The Prime Minister also gave reassurance to the victims of the fire that they will be consulted on the terms of reference for the upcoming Public Inquiry. This will allow them to help shape the scope of the Inquiry so they can get the answers they are seeking.

The victims and their families will receive state funding for legal representation at the Public Inquiry.

In addition, the PM announced significant central government support to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

It includes sending in a team of experienced central government civil servants from the Department for Communities and Local Government, which has been embedded into the local council to assist with efforts.

The Bellwin scheme has also been activated – meaning that any immediate and uninsurable extra costs incurred by the council in the aftermath of the disaster will be met by the government.

To reassure people living in similar buildings that they are safe in their homes, the PM announced the government is:

- checking at speed with local authorities whether all high-rise buildings in their area have complied with recent fire orders, where work has been deemed required following an inspection
- identifying all high-rise buildings owned or managed by Housing Associations or Local Authorities and conducting a fire safety review of all buildings similar to

Grenfell Tower – the government will also work with the devolved administrations on this issue

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

“The individual stories I heard this morning at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital were horrific. I spoke with people who ran from the fire in only the clothes they were wearing.

“They have been left with nothing – no bank cards, no money, no means of caring for their children or relatives. One woman told me she had escaped in only her top and underwear.

“The package of support I’m announcing today is to give the victims the immediate support they need to care for themselves and for loved ones. We will continue to look at what more needs to be done.

“Everyone affected by this tragedy needs reassurance that the Government is there for them at this terrible time - and that is what I am determined to provide.

## Blog: How Tenant Management Organisations have wrongly been associated with Grenfell – Anne Power<sup>24</sup>

*Tenant Management Organisations are small, tenant-led organisations that take on a number of landlord functions from local councils. The one managing Grenfell Tower, however, was actually an Arms Length Management Organisation – wholly owned by the council, writes **Anne Power**. She explains why the difference matters in light of the disaster at Grenfell.*

When the Grenfell fire disaster happened, very few people had heard of Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs). The Kensington and Chelsea borough-wide TMO, formed in the 1990s, is known by tenants locally around Grenfell Tower as a “fake TMO”. It has now lost its role on the estate and may soon be disbanded. Among the 200 TMOs nationally, that particular organisation is a total anomaly – not community-based, not cooperatively run, not representative. It was set up to cover the whole borough and simply took on the existing council housing department and stock.

In sharp contrast to this model, TMOs are locally based, grassroots community groups that want to improve local conditions in their social housing estate or small area. They range from around 100 to 1500 rented properties in a single estate or area. Frustrated with remote council landlords who seem not to care, tenants often form a local group that fights for local control over local tasks to make their estate work – day-to-day repairs, caretaking, empty property, nuisance, rubbish, environmental and social problems.

Since the mid-1970s, over 200 of these TMOs have formed. They negotiate a management agreement with their council landlord to take on limited, local responsibilities, paid for out

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<sup>24</sup> <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/the-truth-about-tmos/>

of an allowance from their rents. The council retains the ownership, a significant share of the rent, and overall responsibility for the properties, including allocations policy, capital investment, major repairs, public accounting and performance. For tenants to take on even part of their landlords' role, to handle a budget, staff employment, service standards etc., they need proper training and dedicated time. Governments of all parties have supported the development of TMOs since the 1980s, funding training and introducing the Right to Manage.

Tenants in the Lancaster West estate where Grenfell Tower is located and in other big estates in the Royal Borough wanted more say and better housing services. The Director of Housing proposed a borough-wide TMO that kept the housing department intact. It was not a TMO, because the tenants could not take on the complex task of running the whole of the borough's near 10,000 unit housing stock. The housing department staff were transferred over into the "new" organisation on existing terms and conditions, and the so-called KCTMO took over all council housing management functions, making it an Arm's Length Management Organisation of the Council – an ALMO.

The actual management agreement between the borough and effectively the Director of Housing, who became the CEO of the TMO, is still unclear. An ALMO is a government-approved public structure, wholly owned and controlled by the Council, which separates the Council's landlord services from other Council functions such as schools, libraries, and swimming pools. Kensington and Chelsea decided to keep the name Kensington and Chelsea *TMO*, in the hope that tenants would identify with it. There were a handful of tenants on the board as there are in other ALMOs. Grenfell was, at least in part, a consequence of the lack of local control; tenants of Grenfell Tower had warned months before of the risk of fire or other disasters because of the neglect of safety by the ALMO (KCTMO). The public inquiry will take many months to reveal the truth; prosecutions may take even longer.

Through austerity cuts, since 2015 financial support for tenant training has gone, and there has been little interest in TMOs. Kensington and Chelsea, following budget cuts, was quick to close day care centres, local libraries, and direct services, including the repair budget of KCTMO. It cut capital spend— hence the cheaper, less fire-resistant cladding on Grenfell Tower and the cheaper building contractor, the lack of fire sprinklers, and the meagre on-site supervision. The Council at the same time cut the Council Tax of the highest band of taxpayers.

The borough has a high level of evictions and resulting homelessness from private renting. Often Buy-To-Let landlords owning former council flats now let to homeless families, paid for by the borough through housing benefit, at vast public expense. Several homeless families were housed in ex-council flats in Grenfell Tower.

The National Federation of TMOs, with several hundred members, is shaken to the core by the fire and its aftermath. Many small TMOs are based in similar high rise blocks to Grenfell. Publicity about the "fake TMO" puts their track record at risk. Yet overall, TMOs have outperformed their local council landlords on rent arrears, re-letting flats, speed of repair, cost and tenant satisfaction.

The government has established a Recovery Task Force to secure long-term recovery as the clear “responsibility of the Council”. This means taking in house the ALMO that can no longer masquerade as a TMO, but all Senior Officers in the Council are under legal orders to say nothing; this includes the Kensington and Chelsea TMO, now with a new chief executive. There is no clear mechanism to respond to the urgent needs of the 2000-3000 residents living on Lancaster West estate, under the shadow of Grenfell since the recent suspension of the ALMO’s operations there. The Council seems deaf. People need action to restore normal conditions on the estate and rebuild trust.

So the Council must act to close down the “fake TMO” and take responsibility directly, both for what happened and what should happen next. A new Interim Director of Housing should take over, to work with the borough’s Interim CEO to develop a decent housing service. The first step is to put in place a neighbourhood manager on Lancaster West, someone who can pull together the core housing services, now so desperately needed, with residents directly involved, to restore the confidence of a deeply shaken community. The lessons of Grenfell resonate across the entire social housing world.

## Life in the Shadow of Grenfell Tower: The Tower Next Door - The Guardian, 18th November 2017<sup>25</sup>

Joe Walsh looks out the window of his flat on the 14th floor of Whitstable House in west London. He can see his whole life in front of him: to the north, Aldermaston Street, where he spent his earliest years, until his parents’ house was demolished to make room for the Westway dual carriageway; to the west, Dixon House, another tower block where Walsh moved with his parents almost half a century ago, and where they still live today.

The skyline is magnificent. On a clear day, you can see many of the capital’s landmarks, the view stretching from the giant wheel of the London Eye to the arch of Wembley Stadium. But overshadowing everything, a few hundred metres away, is the blackened shell of Grenfell Tower.

Our first meeting comes six weeks after the fire that killed 71 people in the early hours of 14 June. The crowds of reporters and TV crews are long gone, and this unassuming corner of the city feels quiet and ghostly. Everywhere you look there are tributes: messages of love, teddy bears, candles, hand-drawn hearts, roses that have rusted and died.

Walsh, 58, is a small, tough man. From his Dr Martens to his shaved head, he looks like someone not to be messed with. He says as much himself: there was the life ban from his boxing club, aged 14, for kicking (“The other lad was far better, so when I came out for the third round, I just went in with the boot”); and another life ban from the nearby Maxilla social club, when he and a friend took on nine men. It didn’t last, though: now he and his father, Albert, own the club.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/ng-interactive/2017/nov/18/life-shadow-grenfell-tower-next-door>

But Joe the scrapper is only part of the story; Walsh is better known locally for helping people out. It was he who opened the Maxilla at 2am when Grenfell was on fire, to provide a haven for those who had escaped and for neighbours who wanted comfort. "We did teas and coffees for 26 hours, right through until the next day," he says. "From then on, we did 18 hours a day, because we became a donation centre."

The victims of the fire were part of a close community composed of two neighbouring council estates. Whitstable House, where Walsh lives, forms part of the Silchester Estate; Grenfell stands on the Lancaster West Estate. Today, an aerial photograph would show you the wreckage of Grenfell Tower surrounded by the four smaller towers of Silchester. "I knew quite a few families in there – some who got out, some who didn't," Walsh says. "I would meet one fella, Steven, with his dogs. He had three staffies, and I had to keep my dog away from his. His daughter escaped, but he wouldn't leave his dogs."

Walsh's wife, Siobhan, left London soon after the fire: "She went to Ireland for a few weeks to get away. She got a bit emotional. Strained." Walsh insists he's coping. "I'm all right. It's part of life. You have to go on." But he doesn't look all right; he looks broken.

Soon after the fire, a narrative emerged: that this was a deeply polarised part of London where the very wealthy and the very poor lived side by side but never met. It is true that this area, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, houses some of London's richest people: walk a couple of hundred yards and you will find yourself on streets where modest-sized houses cost £3m-£4m. Go a little farther and you reach the celebrities' even pricier homes.

But what residents of these two estates have found harder to accept is the way their lives have been depicted: as bleak, impoverished, dangerously overcrowded. Some suspect that Grenfell was deliberately portrayed this way, to create a sense that residents had made their own environment unsafe. After the fire, the government announced there would be a one-year amnesty for undocumented migrants who had been living in Grenfell; so far, there have been no reports of any. The media portrait of council residents as chaotic, and Grenfell as a kind of favela, created considerable ill feeling. "There are teachers, bus drivers, nurses and social workers in this block," Walsh says of his own tower. "The way it was put – that it was subsidised housing, mainly unemployed – was just a way of putting us all down. It ain't that sort of area."

The remains of Grenfell are expected to be razed to the ground by the end of 2018 – but Walsh worries that Whitstable, a 20-storey tower of 80 mainly council-owned flats, may also be torn down in the near future. Two years ago, its residents were told by the council that their estate was going to be regenerated. About time, they thought: their homes were overdue a lick of paint; the lifts were unreliable; the drainage wasn't what it should be. But Walsh was shocked when he discovered what regeneration might really mean. The council presented residents with a range of options: do nothing; modernise the existing buildings; partial redevelopment; or knock down the whole estate and start again. "They made it clear which one they preferred," he says. "The knockdown was the only one they talked about."

Walsh was informed that, if the "complete" regeneration plan went ahead, the council would impose a compulsory purchase order on his flat, for £475,000. It appeared a generous offer – 10% above market value – but then he was given another figure: "They said if I wanted the same-sized flat on the new property, it's going to cost me £800,000. Where am I going to find another £325,000? It's social cleansing."

One of the mysteries of Whitstable House is that the lifts stop at the 19th floor. Lina Lens, who lives on the 20th and top floor, says it's a pain. "I always have to walk. Maybe when I'm older I'll have to move."

She grew up in low-rise buildings by the sea in northern Spain, and was anxious when she first moved here 14 years ago with her young daughter, Ines. But now the teaching assistant loves living on the top floor: "I've lived with people above me and you can hear the neighbours all the time. Here, you never hear anything. Not even pigeons."

She is making tea in the kitchen and trying not to look out of the window. The view of Grenfell, black and unforgiving, never gets any less shocking: burnt-out satellite dishes on the roof; plastic sheets flapping in an empty window frame; an eerie electric light that illuminates forensic teams bent double on the floor; huge white bags piled in the back garden.

"We never really noticed the tower before," Lens says, "but now you can't not look at it. I kept waking up that night, but it was only at 6.30am that I went into the kitchen. My window was open and I heard a helicopter, looked out and screamed."

She says it's been hardest for the estates' children, who shared so many aspects of life. "Even if they didn't go to school with the children who died, maybe they knew them from swimming or homework club, through other friends or from going out. And all of a sudden they're not there. I don't think the kids are showing the trauma yet. They don't know how to talk about it." At least 18 children died in the fire.

Afterwards, Lens says she heard things about life on the estates that she did not recognise. "I went on Twitter and there were comments that so many people had died because they



were asylum seekers who couldn't speak English, who didn't even know how to leave the building. It wasn't true. I got angry more than upset."

It is incredibly peaceful today on the 20th floor: you can see the bustle of London without hearing the traffic. Outside, though, there is a disconcerting screeching noise. One Silchester resident told me it was the wind whistling through Grenfell's skeleton, but Lens says it's Whitstable's waste chute. Food gets stuck, she says, and the debris stinks.

When she heard the flats were up for regeneration, Lens hoped the chute would be one of the first things to be fixed. But, like Walsh, she has come to realise that regeneration means something entirely different: "They would be putting up a lot more flats, but no more social housing. There would be more people, and there's already a shortage of school spaces."

It is early evening, and Lens wants to light a candle for Grenfell at the community space in front of the Maxilla club. We walk to the 19th floor, then head down in the lift. Like Walsh, Lens occasionally plays spot-the-local-celeb: "David Cameron lives just down the road. I haven't seen him since he left office, but I think he's still around."

Under the Westway flyover, she lights her candle. "Yesterday, I bumped into somebody and we passed all the memorials, and she said to me, 'It doesn't get any better, does it?' And it doesn't."

Musician Peaky Saku briefly became a public figure in the aftermath of the fire. In a series of memorable television interviews, he was one of the first locals to suggest that Grenfell's new cladding – added to the tower in 2016 – had been done on the cheap and largely for cosmetic reasons. "There needs to be more care for human life rather than money," he told reporters.

His encounter with fame has left him feeling raw. Saku always wanted to be recognised for his music, but now he's not sure he wants to be recognised for anything. After his interviews went viral, people discovered he'd been to private school (something he had never made a secret of) and the online response was vitriolic. On Twitter, there were suggestions he was an impostor, or a government stooge. "They said I was some sort of devil worshipper," a still bewildered Saku says.

If there is one person on the estate who exemplifies the complexity of social identity in 21st-century London, it is this 23-year-old. A working-class man who talks the language of the streets, at the age of 13 Saku took up an academic bursary to Charterhouse school, where boarding fees are £36,774 a year.

He admits he used to be impressed by the school's moneyed environment, but now has a more balanced perspective. "I can say I'm glad I grew up here as opposed to the other pupils' houses. In order to succeed, you need drive and resources and opportunity. People who are born with resources and opportunity find it harder to get that drive."

Today, he has asked if we can meet on the Whitstable House landing where he shot the video for his Grenfell tribute song, I Don't Wanna Go Back; his mother is at home and her

nerves have been too affected by the fire for us to talk there. (Like many people I meet, he is intensely private, and asks that there is no mention of the floor he lives on.)

Saku has spent many long hours on this landing with friends, smoking and shooting the breeze. "They make out we're all bums and criminals, just smoking weed and plotting crime. That's not true. Sure we'd stand there busting jokes, but if someone walks down with shopping, we'll open doors for them. Before all of this madness, I would say Whitstable was definitely a good place to live."

Since the fire, however, his feelings have changed. "Even my mum doesn't feel secure now, living this high." He asks me to try opening the fire door to the landing: "See how hard it is? You've got these because people used to slam the old doors. Now they're too heavy. My mum can't open them."

Saku tells me the Grenfell fire is not the first tragedy to have struck here. On 31 May 2008, 10-year-old Christian Castano was waving to friends on the ground while leaning against his kitchen window in this tower. Residents had previously complained to the council that the windows were dangerous because they opened at the bottom and locks were faulty. Christian fell 18 floors to his death. Five days later, the London Evening Standard reported: "Residents claim the council had failed to repair the window, which should only have opened a few inches, despite requests." The inquest later reached a verdict of accidental death, the coroner concluding that a restrictor was in place and nobody was to blame.

We are talking in September, nearly three months after the fire, and Saku says life has yet to return to normal. After he appeared on television, locals would stop him in the street. He found it difficult: they seemed to be looking for guidance, but he wasn't coping himself. Did he know anybody who died in the fire? "There was one older lady who used to look after me. She gave me a card when I was about five, and I've still got it. I didn't take the chance to reconnect with her. You think, there'll be another day; I've got more important things to do. And then something mad happens and it's like, 'Oh, that's that.'"

Nahid Ashby stops to say hello to a neighbour. Then another, and another. She apologises: "It's only a tiny walk, but because we're a community, from here to there, I might say hello to five or six people."

When we finally reach the estate's communal garden, Ashby, who is chair of the residents' association, exhales extravagantly and smiles. "Ah, my beautiful trees. It's like an oasis of calm. The air changes, the smell changes – everything. And, if you're lucky, you hear the birds."

Walking from tree to tree, cupping a hand to her ear, she gives me a potted history of the area. "Charles Dickens wrote about it. When they dug up the ground to get clay to make bricks, it was full of pig waste and human waste and rainwater. People lived here in hovels, and the authorities only did anything about it when cholera broke out."

The Silchester Estate was built in the late 60s in Notting Dale, an area renowned for its piggeries in the 19th century, its slums in the 30s and its race riots in the 50s. The estate's four towers were part of a utopian vision, creating new communities in the sky, surrounded

by open land. Ashby is more proud of the open land than anything else: while the nearby Westway is clogged with traffic pumping out pollution, this garden, which is open to the general public, allows the area to breathe.

"People used to be scared of coming down to Latimer Road station, because they thought there was antisocial behaviour. But then the culture changed: everybody was happier. Some of them don't even know it's because of the trees that they are having a better time." We stand underneath her favourite tree, a willow. "You don't get this diversity anywhere else in this area. I've counted 38 different trees in this garden."

Ashby has some news for me: the council has sent a letter to Silchester residents updating them on its regeneration plans. It says the "options appraisal" process Walsh had worried about has been brought to an end, following the most recent residents' meeting. "It was invaluable for me to understand how the catastrophic tragedy of Grenfell Tower has affected the residents of Silchester Estate," writes the council's deputy leader, Kim Taylor-Smith.

So does Ashby think the residents have seen off the council? "No. Read it carefully. They haven't said regeneration is off the cards. They've said 'options appraisal' is off the cards. I think they will come back in a few years' time to bite us."

Since Grenfell, does she think there has been much support from the council? "No. We have been pretty much ignored. We are less than 200 metres away, and we all saw the fire. We heard it, we felt it, we smelled it. Everybody has been affected."

Ashby lives in one of the other towers on the Silchester Estate. Her living room window is huge, and the burnt-out tower looms large, like a giant flatscreen television that shows only one channel. She says she is trying to learn how to look beyond Grenfell. "It's a survival instinct, because if I keep looking at it, I keep remembering – and it makes me want to cry."

As well as the estate's communal garden, Whitstable House has an allotment carefully nurtured by Rama, a retired carpenter from Germany. Actually, he says, "allotment" is too grand: "It's just a tiny, tiny space. But we've got a raised bed for vegetables, and the potatoes taste good."

Rama, who moved in 20 years ago and looks part-wizard, part-veteran rocker, is digging them up as we speak, but he won't be eating any of this season's crop. "There was black ash and burnt plastic all over the place. I've got bin bags full of them," he says. "We had the windows closed in the house for three weeks – my missus was totally freaked – and we still have a blind over the kitchen window, so we don't have to look at Grenfell."

Rama was asleep when the fire started. "I was woken by my neighbour, who is a Muslim and was breaking her fast. It was just before 2am. I still don't want to know what I saw that night."

He says it's extraordinary how everyone got together to help – and how invisible the authorities were, both on the night and afterwards. "There was nobody from the council.

But the Maxilla opened and people came from all over. My daughter was sorting through baby stuff for three days."

Rama shows me around Whitstable, pointing out its faults. "There is no sprinkler system. The doors are a fire risk because of PVC frame. There are open-ended pipes and they run upwards, meaning the water will only run away to a certain point. This tower was built to a decent standard, but they've let it go."

Does that mean he supports the plan to demolish the tower to make way for new, fit-for-purpose homes? Rama looks amazed: "No, of course not." The tower's problems are not cosmetic, he says, but they are easy enough to fix. "This place has been run down on purpose. They use the complaints to say, 'People don't want to live here, we have to regenerate.' Then what we get is expensive housing. We've seen it all over London."

Rama also mentions the death of Christian Castano in 2008. "After he died, nobody came to check our windows. We were freaked because our bedroom window had no locks. It was only after hassling them that they came round to put a lock on." Other residents also say their windows were not checked. But the Kensington & Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation, the arms-length company that runs the council's homes, insists this is not so. "We appointed a firm of consulting surveyors to oversee an inspection programme," a spokesperson says. "Some minor repairs to windows in the block were carried out as a result."

As far as Rama is aware, there has been no health and safety inspection or fire drill since the Grenfell fire. But Whitstable is basically safe, he says – unlike Grenfell: "When you put gas pipes through the staircase in a tower block, as they did there..." He is so upset, he can't complete the sentence. "You should be shot for that," he says eventually.

You're getting worked up, I say. "I can't help it," he replies. "I'm so angry about this whole thing."



After the fire, it was reported that Kensington and Chelsea had reserves of £274m, making it one of the richest councils in the country. It was also revealed that the fire-resistant zinc cladding approved by Grenfell residents had been replaced in the refurbishment contract with combustible aluminium panels, to save £293,368 on the tower's £10m regeneration bill.

Rama looks up at the charred remains of Grenfell from his vegetable patch, and says he hopes it doesn't get knocked down. "I would put a big flame on top of that building, so everybody can see it for miles. It can stand as a great monument to

incompetence and greed: a symbol of shame."

Cassie Morris has lived on the 12th floor of Whitstable House for 16 years. A youthful mother of five children aged six to 16, she was one of the strongest advocates of regeneration when it was first mooted. "We got a simple letter saying they wanted to make the estate a nicer place," she says. "I've grown up in this area, and for as long as I can remember this estate's been the same. Our kids need something better. We knew it may take years, but something needed to be done to make the estate safe."

Then she comes to an apologetic stop: "It's really hard to talk about our problems when Grenfell Tower is in my sight. Now all these things seem so minor."

Morris, 34, works as a nail therapist and a cleaner in the mansions nearby. Does she aspire to owning one? She laughs. "Just because they've got lots of bedrooms and a big garden doesn't mean those people are happy. We're probably one of the richest communities in terms of how we are in ourselves. Obviously those homes are beautiful, but our homes are, too. Lots of the flats in Grenfell were done up to the highest standards. They were beautiful, beautiful flats."

Now Morris thinks she was naive about the regeneration project. She believes that a recent development in the area – the Kensington Aldridge Academy, which opened three years ago – hindered the Grenfell rescue operation. "As I was sat by the window and the smoke started coming over towards our building, I kept thinking: if they hadn't built that school, they would have had access to it so easily. Grenfell Tower used to be a very open space."

Has the fire made her anxious about living in Whitstable? "One hundred per cent," she says. "We don't use the lifts – we have got stuck quite a few times. It's not a nice feeling." Does she think her children have been traumatised? "Everybody who saw what happened is traumatised. It's changed something, and a lot of us can't even explain what."

She says what has astonished her is the lack of aftercare: "If you're a landlord, whether of one property or a million, if that was me I'd knock on every single person's door to check they're OK. But there has been nothing, except for a letter four days after the fire to tell us that the stay-put policy is still in place." Many locals believe the death toll would have been lower had Grenfell residents not been instructed to remain in their homes while the fire raged.

Morris apologises for becoming emotional. "I can't help but picture my kids' friends walking into their block that night and never coming out again, just because of council negligence. And these are the same people taking care of our blocks."

The Kensington & Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation insists it has fulfilled its duty of care to residents. "Residents have been sent various letters, including one about fire door inspections and another advising them that they can access services at our head office while the local estate office remains closed," a spokesperson says. "Any individuals approaching us would have received appropriate support and advice."

KCTMO denies that there have been no health and safety checks since the Grenfell fire: "A fire-risk assessment (FRA) was in place at the time of the fire at Grenfell Tower; after that fire, the FRA was reviewed by an independent assessor. This review was subsequently audited by the council's health and safety consultant. Fire drills do not take place, as there is a stay-put policy. This policy is a clear directive from the London fire brigade. It is not something that KCTMO has formulated independently."

Joe Walsh and his parents, Albert and Margaret, are doing a shift at the Maxilla. Margaret has dementia, but she does a bit of cleaning and Joe pays her a wage; it's his way of paying them back. "I moved here when I was 18 and got married, but it didn't work out. I was a single parent for 17 years, and Mum and Dad helped me throughout. So now it's my turn."

Albert, 80, reminisces about the first house the family lived in near here, the one demolished for the Westway flyover. Was he upset? "No, I was delighted. We'd only got one bedroom in the old place. Suddenly I'd got three – it was like going into Buckingham Palace. Of course the rent doubled, but it was worth it." But he wouldn't want a brand new flat now? No, he says: a redevelopment would be out of his price range. He was offered a shared equity/ownership deal by the council, but it didn't make sense to him: "Why on earth would I go from owning my home to half-owning it?"

Did Albert see the fire? "I did, yes. I hope I never see anything like that again. Even the fires you see out in the forests – Australia, Portugal and them places – this was ahead of that altogether. Too, too terrible."

After the fire, the area outside the club was set up as an outdoor community centre. Now, Joe says, it has been taken over at night by "the wrong kind of people". This evening, he tells one man in no uncertain terms that he is not wanted inside the club. Standing at the door,



Joe draws an imaginary circle in front of him. "This is my property," he says. "If you step over here, I'll belt you."

I catch Joe looking across at his home in Whitstable House, and ask if he knew the young boy who fell from the window. He becomes momentarily silent. Then he talks and talks.

"The windows have got catches on them. I don't know if the catch on young Christian's window was broken. We've had problems with one of our bedroom windows; my wife must have phoned about 15 times, and it took three months to get them to repair it. If you're living 18, 20 floors high, they should be coming round once a year. But they never checked our windows after he died."

Joe pauses and takes a breath. "I saw it. I was out with my son Rory and we turned the corner as he hit the ground, which is something you won't forget." His voice falters. He wipes at a tear and walks back into the club, shutting the door on me. Then he opens the door and carries on.

"To be truthful, I was the one who had to go and get buckets of water and bleach. I was there for three hours bleaching that pavement. You'd have thought they would have sent a cleaner round. That was a Saturday afternoon, when all the kids were playing outside." He turns away, distressed and out of words.

It is November, and Grenfell Tower is being covered in a white protective wrap – a long, laborious process. Outside Whitstable House, the veg patch has gone to seed, and Rama will have to wait until next year for a new crop. Nahid Ashby is spending her time in meetings, fighting for the estate's residents. They have just been told that the front door to every flat will be replaced or upgraded after an investigation by LBC radio confirmed they were flammable. KCTMO has just sent out letters admitting that "further works are required to fit upgraded fire-rated features".

I pop into the Maxilla. Joe Walsh is in his overalls, drinking tea, Siobhan is treating herself to a glass of wine, and their dog, Toddy, is playing catch-ball. Walsh is pleased the club's Halloween party went well: "We had 120 kids and everybody enjoyed it. We had the Spooky Disco Man, Bubble Man, face painting, apple bobbing, hamburgers – and it was all free. Nobody got ripped off."

Walsh has just received another letter from the council about its regeneration plans. It reads like governmental gobbledegook, and mentions "further proposed modifications to the local plan partial review". It's unclear what these might involve, but Walsh is sure it's not good news.

He is surprised by the tone and the timing: like other residents, he assumed the council wouldn't dare mention regeneration for years following the fire. But this letter makes it clear the Silchester Estate project has merely been suspended, not cancelled – even if it does promise that any regeneration "would be co-designed with the community and put to a binding vote".

Walsh says it now feels as if the earlier council letter – the one telling them the "options appraisal" on regeneration was over – had never been sent. He finds little comfort in the promise of a binding vote: "They've took no notice of us before, so why would they now?"

Less than six months on from the fire, he believes it is business as normal for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. "They'll just say the tower blocks are past their lifespan and don't pass health and safety now, because the regulations have changed since Grenfell. There's too much money to be made out of regeneration for them to scrap it."

It's been a long few months, and I ask Walsh how he is feeling. "Emotional and drained," he says. "Utterly drained."

I say my goodbyes to the Walsh family. It is already getting dark on this cold, crisp November afternoon. As I leave, I look back at Whitstable House. The tower, illuminated by a glorious sunset, looks magnificent.