



# Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

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Dear residents,

I hope that this finds you safe and well.

In recent months I have held meetings with bereaved families, survivors, and representative groups, and shared my reflections with you all in my letter dated 4 November. I wanted to write to you again with next steps.

I have heard clearly from those most affected that **now is not the right time to take a decision about the future of Grenfell Tower**. Feedback has been that consultations to date have felt rushed and insufficient time was provided for everyone to provide their views. Out of respect for those who have not yet felt able to have their say, it is right that we give more time for this. To those who have already shared their views, questions and concerns, I am grateful. I can assure you that these views will still be taken into account and that there is no need for you to resubmit them, though you are welcome to do so.

**I have decided to continue the safety works in the tower in line with the engineering advice (published in May) to ensure its stability until a decision is made. This will allow more time for us to speak with, and to hear from, you about the future of the tower.** I want the many different voices to be heard, and these conversations will help to determine when and how a decision is approached. At the same time, I will also address the other important issues and concerns that you have raised. Specifically:

- an additional independent review of the engineering advice to ensure openness and transparency about the ongoing condition of the tower
- how justice is a critical part of the journey and that any possible deconstruction of the tower prior to the completion of the inquiry or police investigations does not impact the criminal investigation or inquiry. As part of my next steps, I will work with the police, inquiry and other justice agencies to give you greater assurance on this.

I have asked my officials to **work with you and to use all available channels to help develop an engagement approach that will better enable everyone to provide their views.**

I will write to you again at the start of next year with details of what you can expect from this engagement, and about the different ways we will have a conversation with you, as well as more details on how your views will be taken into account.

I understand that bereaved families, survivors and residents hold a range of views about the tower and that for some of you, the news that it will remain standing for longer might not be welcomed. You remain important voices in the conversation about what will happen to the

tower in the future. I want to reassure you that those living, working or studying nearby can continue to do so without fear. Although the tower is a damaged structure and its condition will continue to worsen over time, the measures we have taken to date, such as wrapping the tower and installing additional props, have been to keep the tower stable and secure. The constant monitoring in place means that, if this changes, we will be able to communicate any changes required immediately.

I would like to reaffirm the principles signed in 2018, which set out the government's commitment to putting the community at the heart of determining a fitting memorial at the site, alongside how future decisions about Grenfell Tower would be approached and taken. This included that decisions on site management and any decision to bring the tower down would prioritise the safety and security of the site, and the ongoing police investigations and inquiry. This is to ensure that decisions do not jeopardise either the criminal justice or inquiry processes. Engagement on this important issue should be sensitive and fully respect the importance of Grenfell Tower to bereaved families, survivors and the local community. I have no hesitation in reaffirming this position as a valid and accurate guide for the government's actions now, as they were in 2018.

I understand that any conversation about the future of Grenfell Tower can be difficult. If you would like to talk to someone, the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing Service is a free and confidential NHS service for children and adults. You can call them on **020 8637 6279**, email **grenfell.wellbeingservice@nhs.net** or visit **grenfellwellbeing.com**.

Once again, I would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to meet with me in the past two months. I have been deeply moved by the personal accounts, honesty and steadfast commitment to justice that this community has demonstrated unwaveringly. My thoughts and best wishes are with you and your families during the four-and-a-half-year anniversary of the tragedy and over the upcoming festive period. I look forward to meeting with you again in the new year.

**With every good wish,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Michael" on top and "Gove" below it, slightly overlapping.

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