



# Grenfell environmental checks: site walkovers, next steps and opportunities to be involved

## In summary:

- We are making progress on Stage 2 and the site 'walkovers' to survey the 34 locations identified for sampling have now taken place.
- You can watch a video on the site walkovers at: <https://youtu.be/Wt7YKrfQfLs>
- The next steps will be working with residents who grow fruit and vegetables on collecting crop samples and a community event to share the Stage 2 sampling plan with you. Sampling will then take place during October and November. There will be opportunities for you to observe the sampling taking place.

## Background

Stage 1 of the two-stage environmental checks into potential land contamination around the Grenfell Tower site was carried out in spring and summer 2019. A [full report on the results](#) was published in October 2019.

Stage 1 involved a site survey, exploratory soil testing and a pilot study to inform the approach to Stage 2. The results of Stage 1 indicated that the levels of chemicals found in the soil were consistent with those generally found in London and that there was no increased risk to health from land contamination because of the Grenfell Tower fire.

Stage 2 builds on the findings of Stage 1 and will involve an investigation of the area involving more detailed soil sampling. The results will be used to consider any possible risks to public health. The initial design for Stage 2 was developed by AECOM, the independent specialists, from the findings of the research, the sampling and the results from Stage 1. This was published on GOV.UK as [Technical Note 18](#).

Stage 2 will focus on the chemicals where a potential 'significant contaminant linkage' was found under Stage 1. This means the link between the chemicals found in the soil, how people could come into contact with them and who or what may be affected as a result. These chemicals are lead and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), as under Stage 1 these chemicals exceeded screening levels in some areas. These contaminants are commonly found in urban areas and in most cases were within the normal background range for London, which means they could have originated from historic sources.

In addition, dioxins and furans will be investigated further as these chemicals are particularly associated with fires, and asbestos will also be investigated further.

## Site walkovers

The site walkovers took place during the weeks of the 17 and 24 August and on the 7 September. Safety was our priority, and this included limiting the number of participants at each location; observing social distancing and wearing face masks.

AECOM, with support from members of the community, surveyed the 34 locations identified in Stage 1 to check if they are suitable (see the map on page 4 and 5). This involved looking around each location to identify areas where samples could be taken and discussing with members of the community how the soil is used, if any of the soil has been changed and if they found any debris there.

AECOM also spoke to residents who grew fruit and vegetables at community kitchen gardens and allotments to see if they would be happy for their plots and some of their crops to be sampled. In addition, members of the community who took part had the opportunity to ask the scientists any questions they had about the environmental checks.

The suitably qualified person, Dr Paul Nathanail, who is responsible for observing and overseeing AECOM's work, attended some of the site walkovers.

Thank you to all the community members who attended the site walkovers and provided helpful information to the scientists.

## Next steps and opportunities to be involved

Following the site walkovers, AECOM are working on the sampling plan for Stage 2. This will include:

- The final list of locations where samples will be taken
- The number of samples that will be taken and at what depth
- The full list of chemicals to be tested for
- The sampling plan for edible crops.

We will hold a community event to share the sampling plan with you. **Please look out for the invitation, which will be coming soon by email.** At the event you will also be able to ask the scientists any questions you have about the environmental checks.

Following community feedback during Stage 1, we know that residents are keen to know if it is safe to eat fruit and vegetables grown locally. Ahead of the sampling plan event we will be working with residents who grow fruit and vegetables to see if they would be willing for us to sample some of their produce.

Please note that the advice on growing fruit and vegetables was reviewed by the Food Standards Agency, following the results of Stage 1 and has not changed. Consistent with soil in built-up urban environments, the advice remains to wash your hands after gardening, working or playing in soil, and wash and peel home-grown fruit and vegetables.

We expect the sampling to take place in October and November and there will be opportunities to observe the sampling. More details on this will follow the community event.

## Questions and answers

The last [community update on the 13 August](#), included a summary of the questions and answers received at the [virtual community event](#) on the 20 July. Below are the responses to the two outstanding questions from this event.

### **Q. Will a specialised health hub, with experts, be provided in North Kensington to track resident's health?**

**A.** The physical and mental health of residents in North Kensington will be monitored over many years through a population health monitoring programme. This explores the data from all health partners that has been made available on NHS databases. The programme has been developed by health partners including Public Health England, the local clinical commissioning group and the Council's public health team.

### **Q. Have you taken into consideration Coroner Fiona Wilcox's letter with regards to toxicity, contaminants and our health?**

**A.** Yes, the health assessment part of the environmental checks will address the concerns expressed by the coroner on toxicity and contaminants. In addition, the NHS has commissioned services from toxicology specialists at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust. These services can be accessed via referral from local GPs, if anyone has any concerns relating to toxicity.

## How to get in touch or for more information

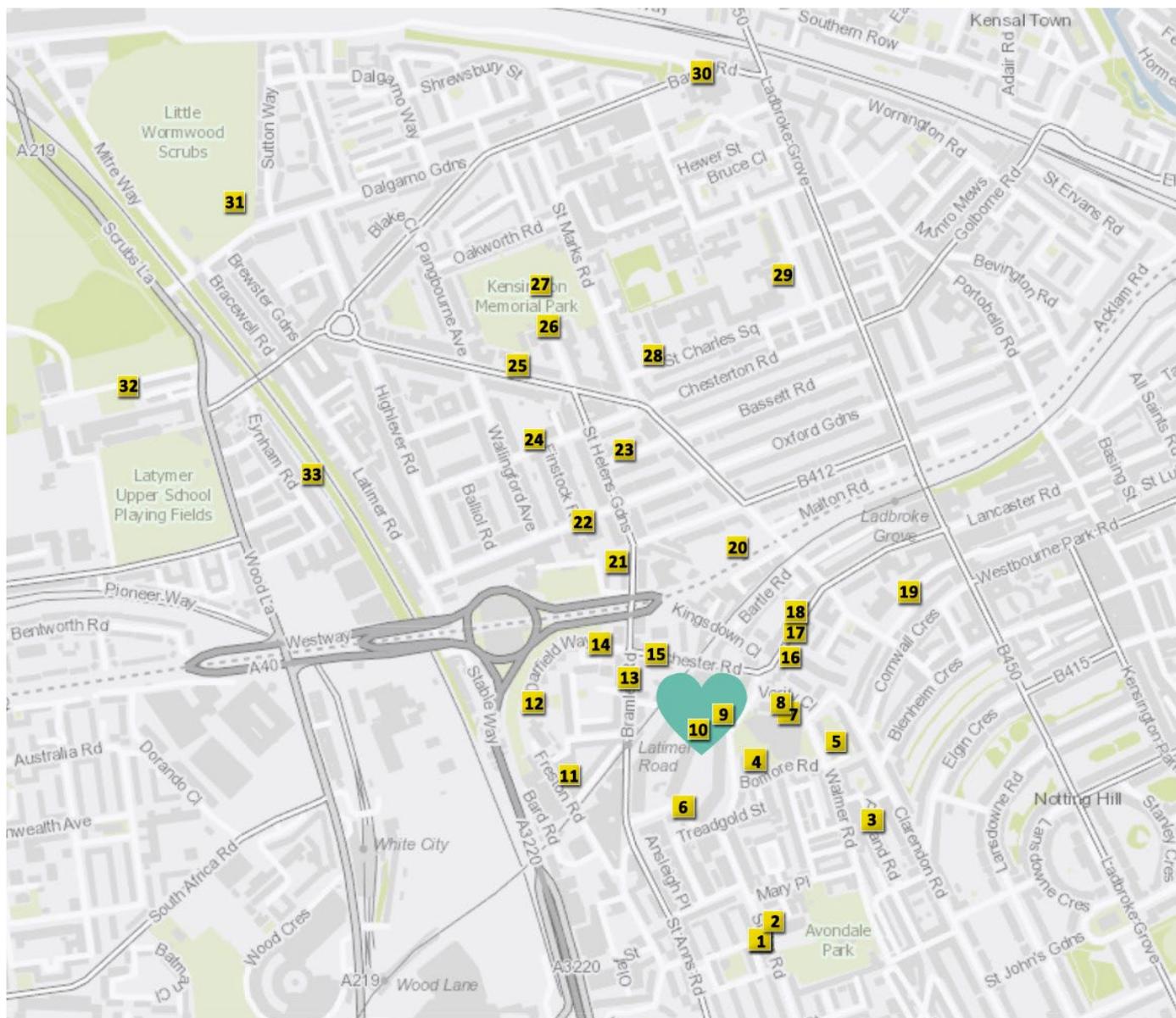
For the environmental checks team:

- Email [environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk](mailto:environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk) or phone **03034 449 086**
- Download the Nextdoor app or visit [www.nextdoor.co.uk](http://www.nextdoor.co.uk) and search for **Grenfell Community Updates – HM Government**.
- The Stage 1 report, guide to the environmental checks and meet the scientists leaflet can all be found at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/soil-and-environmental-checks](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/soil-and-environmental-checks)

If you have a question for one of the scientists you can send it in via the [environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk](mailto:environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk) inbox and it will be forwarded to them for a response.

22 September 2020

## The locations identified for sampling



### Schools and nurseries

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2. St Anne's and Avondale Park            | 6. St Francis of Assisi             |
| 11. Latymer Alternative Provision Academy | 16. Grenfell Creche                 |
| 19. Thomas Jones                          | 20. Forest school/Maxilla Walk      |
| 22. Oxford Gardens                        | 23. Bassett House/St Helen's Church |
| 24. New Studio Pre-School                 | 29. All Saints Catholic College     |
| 30. Barlby                                | 32. Burlington Danes                |

### Community gardens/kitchen gardens

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Henry Dickens Court                        | 3. Portland Road           |
| 4. Treadgold House                            | 5. Allom and Barlow Houses |
| 8. The Grove                                  | 13. Bramley House          |
| 14. Darfield Way                              | 17. Morland House          |
| 21. Robinson House                            | 25. St Quintin Gardens     |
| 27. Kensington Memorial Park (St Mark's Park) | 28. Equal People           |

## **Open Spaces and other areas**

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 7. Verity Close   | 9. Lancaster Green           |
| 10. Hurstway, Grenfell, Testerton<br>and Barandon Walks | 12. Markland House           |
| 18. Wesley Square                                       | 15. Whitstable House         |
| 31. Little Wormwood Scrubs                              | 26. Kensington Memorial Park |
| 34. Longstone Avenue, Brent (not shown on the map)      | 33. Eynham Road              |