



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Silchester Estate Residents Association
By email

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
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Dear Silchester Estate Residents Association,

We wanted to write to you following the Guardian article over the weekend regarding soil toxicity near Grenfell Tower. We know that this may cause you some concern locally and wanted to address this issue as soon as possible.

We fully understand the concerns raised by the local community regarding possible health effects as a result of the fire. The health and well-being of the local community has been, and remains, a consistent priority for Government and we continue to take local concerns seriously.

At the outset, we should make clear that the issues raised in the Guardian article published on 13th October stem from preliminary, unfinished research that has not yet been published or shared with the Government or relevant experts. The Director of Public Health for Kensington and Chelsea, together with Public Health England, are seeking an urgent meeting with Professor Stec to discuss her study, its methodology and its implications. They will then undertake a rapid review of what, if any, further actions should be taken with regard to any soil contamination, in order to protect and reassure the public.

Public Health England has been working with health partners and the local community since the fire to ensure that they have the best available public health evidence and advice. This includes hearing representations from the community directly in the weeks following the fire.

Public Health England has been assessing air quality in the area surrounding Grenfell Tower since the start of the fire on 14 June 2017. The independent air quality monitoring has shown the risk to people's health from air pollution around the Grenfell Tower site to be consistently low.

Public Health England has informed us that debris from the fire, such as charred insulating foam which did deposit locally was cleared up by the council in the days following the fire and advice was provided to residents on the clear up of remaining dust. As in any large city with an industrial legacy, there are potential areas of contamination, but Public Health England has advised that there is very low risk to health.

A particular concern within the community was asbestos. No asbestos has been detected, levels of particulate matter remain low, and monitoring results for dioxins, furans, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are broadly equivalent to background levels for London. Air quality monitoring reports, which show the data, are published weekly at the request of the community:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-monitoring-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire

We have worked closely with local partners to understand the long term health impact of the fire on the community around Grenfell Tower and have worked hard to ensure the right resources are in place to respond to local need. The NHS recently announced an additional £50 million to fund long term screening and treatment for those affected by the fire to ensure that those affected continue to get timely reviews and any subsequent treatment they may need.

As you know, we also announced in August that the Government will take responsibility for the Grenfell Tower site until the community can determine the future. We want to assure the community that the site will continue to be effectively managed, with the health and safety and security of those working and living in the surrounding area of paramount importance. We remain vigilant and have asked Public Health England to keep all available monitoring results under close examination and to work with the local NHS as appropriate.

Professor Yvonne Doyle, Public Health England's Director for London, attended Monday evening's RBKC scrutiny meeting to support the local Director of Public Health and local government representatives.

Public Health England has also stated that they are happy to meet community representatives and parents of students at Kensington Aldridge Academy and understand that RBKC will organise meetings so that local concerns can be heard and responded to.

The health and well-being of the local community could not be of greater importance and we will not hesitate to take further action should this be necessary.



RT HON JAMES BROKENSHIRE MP



RT HON NICK HURD MP