

Press release: UK to observe minute's silence for victims of Grenfell Tower fire

The United Kingdom will observe a minute's silence at 11am on Monday 19 June in remembrance of those who lost their lives and all those affected by the fire at Grenfell Tower.

The silence will be marked at all Government buildings and other organisations may follow suit.

On Friday the Prime Minister met with survivors, residents, volunteers and community leaders where she set out a comprehensive package of support for victims of the tragedy.

This includes:

- A commitment that victims who lost their homes be rehoused within a maximum of three weeks;
- A £5 million Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund, made immediately available; and
- A guarantee to rehouse people as close as practically possible to where they previously lived.

Following the second meeting of the Grenfell Tower Recovery Taskforce, chaired by the Prime Minister, the Government is today announcing further measures to support those who lost loved ones and members of the emergency services:

- Providing an additional £1.5m to pay for mental health support to the Emergency Services through Mind's Blue Light Programme, including to ensure those involved in the response to the Grenfell Tower fire are able to receive targeted support should they need it; and
- Ensuring there is tailored bereavement support for the families of those who have lost loved ones, those who have family members still missing or have been affected by the tragedy. We will offer each family support from their own named mental health practitioner, in addition to the support they receive from the police Family Liaison Officers.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The residents of Grenfell Tower, families who have lost loved ones, and the emergency services who have been working so hard to help them have been through some of the most harrowing and traumatic experiences imaginable. As we do everything we can to help them, we will make sure they have the counselling and emotional support they need in the difficult days, weeks and years ahead.

Secretary of State for Health Jeremy Hunt said:

What we have witnessed at Grenfell is truly horrific and my thoughts are with all those affected by this terrible tragedy. We are ready to do everything we can to help – which is why the NHS will be offering specialist bereavement support to all of the bereaved families.

I would like to pay tribute to our heroic emergency services for their response – particularly those NHS staff who once again have gone above and beyond in order to provide outstanding, compassionate care.

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of Mind, said:

This funding enables us to extend and expand Mind's Blue Light Programme so that we can continue to support and reach more people who work in the emergency services. As recent terrible events in London and Manchester have brought to light, Blue Light workers do an extremely challenging job, encountering difficult and traumatic situations. That's why it's so important that comprehensive, ongoing mental health support is available in the short and long term.

If a family is in need of extra psychological support, or if a Family Liaison Officer believes that they are and obtains the agreement of the family, the bereavement pathway announced today will provide a named NHS mental-health practitioner to provide that specific support.

Additional information:

1) LIBOR provided £10m between 2014 and 2016 to support Emergency Service Charities, including Blue Light mental health projects. At the Autumn Statement in 2016 the Government committed a further £2.3m to the Ambulance Services Charity and £1.5m to MIND for additional Blue Light Mental Health. Today the government is announcing an additional £1.5m for Blue Light Mental Health Support.

2) Mind is delivering the Blue Light Programme to provide mental health support for emergency services staff and volunteers from ambulance, fire, police and search and rescue services across England and Wales. Thousands of staff and volunteers across these services have actively challenged mental health stigma, learnt more about mental health and made positive changes in their approach to wellbeing with the support of the Blue Light Programme so far. More detail here:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/campaigns/bluelight/>

3) To provide a comprehensive government response to the tragedy the Prime Minister set up the dedicated Grenfell Tower Recovery task force, chaired by

her with representation from a number of Whitehall departments including the Treasury, Home Office and Department for Communities & Local Government.

Press release: Grenfell Tower: Statement from the Prime Minister : 17 June 2017

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.

News story: Defence Secretary agrees stronger partnership with Netherlands

Sir Michael Fallon agreed the joint vision statement – a commitment to strengthen co-operation in areas including hybrid and cyber warfare and counter-terrorism – with Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Minister of Defence for the Netherlands.

The agreement will include a pledge to work more closely across defence and security policy, intelligence and joint exercises. It will also see the exchange of personnel and work towards a UK-Netherlands Amphibious Force.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Today, the UK has stepped up its relationship with the Netherlands – one of our closest and most reliable European allies. We have committed to working more closely to tackle common threats, from cyber security to terrorism, and will be united in our drive for the EU and NATO to work better together.

The UK is stepping forward not back from the global stage and will continue to defend our continent before and after Brexit.

The UK and Netherlands have a long history working together through the UN, NATO, Joint Expeditionary Force and, most recently, in the Counter Daesh Global Coalition. The Dutch have also committed a company of Marines to the UK-led NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) this year.

Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Minister of Defence for the Netherlands said:

I very much value the strong military ties between the UK and the Netherlands. Clearly, our collective security is at stake, and I am convinced that we can only face today's and tomorrow's challenges by joining forces. We need each other more than ever. Military cooperation, either bilateral or within NATO-EU, is crucial in securing and safeguarding peace and stability at home and abroad.

Sir Michael and Dutch Minister of Defence Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert met at Admiralty House after attending the Queen's Birthday Parade.

[News story: Mundell congratulates Scots recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours](#)

A number of Scots have been recognised by Her Majesty the Queen in her Birthday Honours list.

Congratulating them, Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

In the centenary year of the Order of the British Empire, the Queen's Birthday honours have recognised the achievements of a diverse and inspiring number of our fellow Scots. I congratulate each and every one of them

Billy Connolly's knighthood celebrates a truly great Scot, the irrepressible 'Big Yin' who has entertained millions, but also his

dedicated charity fundraising. He is an ambassador for both humour and humanity, and this recognition is richly deserved. Judy Murray's OBE rewards her dedication and energy in inspiring future generations to play sport. Lorna Hood's OBE recognises her exceptional and long service to the Church of Scotland, and promoting tolerance and understanding through the Remembering Srebrenica charity. Charles Skene's CBE rewards his inspirational work supporting education and enterprise in north-east Scotland. Their awards are thoroughly deserved and I congratulate them all.

My congratulations, too, go to JK Rowling, someone who has made Scotland her home and who supports so many good causes here.

It is also fitting that Her Majesty has also recognised the many 'unsung heroes' of Scottish communities. The length and breadth of Scotland, an army of volunteers have shown unstinting dedication and selflessness, week in week out.

Glasgow University's Professor Muscatelli received a knighthood, and Scottish Enterprise Chairman Robert Keiller a CBE. There are MBEs for Eunice Olumide (one of Scotland's first black models), Mel Young (founder of the Homeless World Cup), and John Delaney (for services to the Teenage Cancer Trust). BME recipients include Paul James Breen for his work with the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Therapeutic Roof Garden, and Cara O'Donnell for her work with Glasgow-based charity SAMs.

Marking 100 years of the Order of the British Empire, the 2017 Honours List recognises 1,109 people, 74 per cent of who have undertaken outstanding work in their communities either in a voluntary or paid capacity. That includes Helensburgh 'lollipop lady' Effie Walker, who received a British Empire Medal.

Press release: Queen's Birthday Honour for Dstl Chief Executive

Jonathan Lyle, Chief Executive of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has been made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB).

Jonathan is recognised in the 2017 Queen's Birthday Honours List, in recognition of his exemplary contribution to defence science and engineering over the past 41 years.

As Chief Executive, Jonathan has been responsible for reshaping Dstl's scientific capabilities to embrace and exploit new disruptive technologies. Through his leadership, dedication, drive and commitment, Dstl has achieved a

reputation across government for delivering cutting-edge scientific and technology initiatives.

Jonathan said that his honour reflected the amazing work done by colleagues throughout his career:

I have had the privilege to work with so many talented and committed people. I am deeply honoured to have been recognised with the CB and really do feel this is a reflection of a combined team effort across the lab.

Chair of the Dstl Board Sir David Pepper added:

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with Jonathan; he is an exemplary leader, and epitomises the highest standard of public service. He has done an enormous amount for Dstl, and for the use of science and technology in the defence and security of the UK. This award rightly recognises his contribution, and I am delighted to congratulate him on his achievement.

Prior to taking up his current role in 2012, Jonathan worked in a number of roles including:

- Director of Helicopters at the Defence Equipment & Support
- Director of the College of Management and Technology
- Operations Director at the Defence Procurement Agency
- MOD's Head of Profession for Science
- Head of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors

He has also worked in the Cabinet Office and the Department for Trade and Industry where he implemented a cross-government science and technology strategy.

Jonathan is a Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of both the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Institution of Engineering and Technology.

He was educated at Kingswood School, Bath, the Royal Naval Engineering College, Plymouth, and University College London.