

Answers to questions about soil and air quality and related issues

These are questions which have been posed by Grenfell United on behalf of the community, were asked at the public meeting on October 29th, or have been emailed to Kensington and Chelsea Council. The first seven questions and answers were provided on a factsheet at the public meeting.

1 Is the air around Grenfell Tower safe to breathe?

Like many parts of London, the air quality around Grenfell can be affected by pollutants due to heavy traffic and gas-fired boilers. The air around Grenfell is checked continuously, and we have not found extra pollution caused by the Grenfell fire which would add to health risks.

PHE has been assessing air quality in the area surrounding Grenfell Tower since June 2017. The independent air quality monitoring commissioned by PHE has shown the risk to people's health from pollution around the Grenfell Tower site to be consistently low. 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 level.

2 Is the land around Grenfell Tower safe?

Air monitoring has not identified any cause for concern about soil. However, we understand that local people are worried, so the Government is bringing forward testing of the soil around Grenfell for possible harmful pollution.

People are advised to take the usual protective measures such as washing their hands after gardening, working or playing in soil, and washing and peeling home-grown fruit and vegetables.

- 3 Is it safe to grow fruit and vegetables around Grenfell Tower?** You should peel and wash any fruit or vegetables you grow, and wash your hands after gardening, working or playing in soil. This is standard health advice for London soil and is not because of Grenfell.
- 4 What are you doing now to check soil safety?** The Environment Agency is leading on designing environmental soil sampling around the Tower, and planning this work is already under way. We will ensure local residents are engaged with the testing process from start to finish. The first results may be known in spring 2019. Public Health England, Environment Agency and other partners will work together to make sure soil sampling is comprehensive and that the analysis is provided to the public.
- 5 Why are you doing this now?** We recognise that local people are worried about possible land contamination and we want to make sure they have up to date information about any possible health risks.
- 6 What have you done about Professor Anna Stec's research?** Staff from Kensington and Chelsea Council, Public Health England and the local NHS met Professor Stec earlier this year and she raised her concerns about the possible health impacts of pollution from Grenfell on local people. She did not provide the research she has done. Without new evidence of possible health risks, there has been no reason to change our health advice to local people. We continue to monitor air quality and have now begun a soil assessment and testing programme. We recognise that local people are worried about possible land contamination and we want to make sure they have up to date information about any possible health risks. Professor Stec has told the Government she is willing to support the environmental monitoring programme.
- 7 What should I do if I have concerns about my health?** Please go to your GP. Your GP will give you a longer appointment if you have been affected by Grenfell. They will refer you to specialist services if you need further checks on your health.

- 8 Did you measure fire effluents, rather than merely air pollution straight after the fire? It seems in your report only particulates were measured for few first months**
- PHE carried out air quality monitoring which includes a number of fire effluents such as particulate matter, dioxin, furans and dioxin like poly chlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and asbestos. Monitoring data is published online on a weekly basis here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-monitoring-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire>
- 9 Why did you not check surroundings and soil for fire effluents?**
- The risk assessment immediately after the fire was that risks to health were best monitored through air quality monitoring as any substances entering the soil would come through the air. The air quality monitoring has shown no cause for concern.
- 10 Why not commission soil studies of your own if Prof. Stec would not share hers?**
- We were in discussion with Prof Stec about her work and understood that it would be published soon after she spoke to us. In the event this has not happened. In the meantime, Kensington and Chelsea Council began reviewing historical records as part of the development of a long-term environmental monitoring strategy
- 11 At the moment it seems you are doing only asbestos and basic screening; are you going to screen people for fire effluents?**
- Where clinical need has been established, people affected by the Grenfell fire have been and continue to be monitored by the NHS. Biomonitoring of the kind suggested is typically unable to determine whether contaminants found are in fact linked to a specific period or event. Results from this type of analysis could be significantly influenced by a multitude of elements such as lifestyle and broader environmental factors not related to the fire. This makes attribution of any results found to the Grenfell fire difficult if not impossible and could cause unnecessary concern to an already distressed community. However, if the environmental monitoring programme indicates a need for monitoring of individuals, that will take place.

- 12 Why have Professor Stec's findings not been investigated before now, as the council were aware of her findings in February?** See question 10
- 13 When will Public Health England, confirm Professor Stec's findings?** We do not have access to Professor Stec's work nor any indication of when she will share it with us. However, she has agreed to work with the Government's environmental monitoring programme. The programme aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the environmental impact of Grenfell.
- 14 Could you reassure the public that there is no threat to the residents and pupils at KAA? If you can't reassure the public, why not?** Thorough checks and clean up were carried out before any students returned to KAA. There is minimal soil on the school site and to repair damage to the outside areas caused by the fire, the limited areas of soil were refreshed and the entire playground and MUGA pitch were replaced.
- Furthermore, KAA engaged an independent air quality monitoring system, following expert advice. To date, this testing has shown results consistent with what has been reported by PHE and does not suggest any cause for concern.
- 15 Blood and urine will show if people were exposed to those fire effluents; when, how, and by whom it will be done? Who do PHE think should do it? Is it appropriate for KCL and UCL to do this, given they both lack expertise in this area?** See Q 11
- 16 Why is there no formal programme to screen police, fire, and NHS staff?** Each public service is responsible for monitoring the health of its staff.

- 17 Is RBKC screening its own staff or Members?** No. The expert advice we receive from PHE has not given us any reason to do this.
- 18 Are any of the subcontractors doing so?** No. See question 17
- 19 If any are, have any reports been made about initial results?** See question 17
- 20 Are there any plans to screen residents and children in schools for possible ill health related to toxicity either airborne or soil based?** See question 11
- 21 Residents have had symptoms of breathing, respiratory problems and chest infections, skin lesions; severe migraines and headaches; an unusual coughs and some with blood, joint and neck pain and shoulder aches, sudden feeling of low energy and fainting, high number of strokes, loss of voice and slur in speech and thyroid
Could the panel tell us what is the causes of these changes in people's health?** It is impossible to say what has caused changes in an individual's health and everyone with health concerns should contact their GP. People who were not directly impacted by the fire or suffered significant smoke inhalation and are generally fit and well are unlikely to experience long-term health problems from temporary indirect exposure to smoke from a fire.

- 22 In the light of the government announcement last Friday 26 October about carrying out further environmental checks for Grenfell site we would like to know:** See below:
- 23 What is the health screening they plan to do?** See Q 11
- 24 What are they going to screen for?** See Q 11
- 25 Who is going to carry out the screening?** See Q 11
- 26 How are they going to carry out the screening?** See Q 11
- 27 How far is the radius they will screen?** See Q 11
- 28 What is the dioxins profile they will be looking at in people and in the soil and environment?** See Q 11
- 29 Is there going to be an advisory panel from the community to ensure impartiality of findings?** We will ensure local residents are engaged with the testing process from start to finish.
- Government and its agencies will work with representatives from North Kensington to inform the design and scope of the monitoring programme. There will be regular updates and publication of the results to ensure transparency. There will also be engagement with the community on any actions needed as a result of the sampling and analysis.

- 30 What are the dangers for people who may have touched or handled burnt cladding from the tower?**
- The majority of debris in surrounding areas consisted of charred foam insulation and this material is unlikely to present an immediate risk to people's physical health. As a precaution, residents were advised not to handle any burnt material, but people who cleared debris from their own homes are unlikely to have been exposed to heightened health risks. Dust on windowsills or outside areas of homes can be safely removed by damp dusting or wiping with a wet cloth whilst wearing gloves.
- 31 What plans are in place to collate data from GPs regarding presentation of patterns of health conditions for example respiratory conditions?**
- The Council will work with the local NHS to analyse data from GP surgeries and identify any causes for concern. This monitoring will look at past data (since the fire and before the fire) and future data.
- 32 Did PHE read reports following the collapse of the World Trade Centre towers? There was huge contamination in the surrounding area (soil, vegetation, etc.) and a number of fire effluents were identified in local residents few years after towers' collapse.**
- PHE has reviewed the scientific literature on 9/11 and incorporated relevant findings into its work. It is important to recognise the differences between the 9/11 disaster which involved massive building collapse and associated spread of debris with the Grenfell disaster which did not involve building collapse
- 33 What expertise has been drawn from the work done in New York and surrounding areas since 9/11, given the similarities in the situation?**
- See Q 32. While there are similarities in terms of a building fire between 9/11 and Grenfell, there is an important difference in that 9/11 saw two large buildings collapse completely, releasing very much larger amounts of debris into the atmosphere as a result.

- 34 Professor Doyle said that 9/11 studies had been examined. Which ones specifically?**
- There are a large number of studies on health impacts post 9/11. A number of relevant studies on physical health impacts have been reviewed from the list below: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/911health/researchers/physical-health-effects-articles.page>
- 35 In the Grenfell Recovery Scrutiny meeting of 5 December joint report on Grenfell Health and Wellbeing on item 3.78 you stated that 15 people have accessed the fast track respiratory clinic for worsened symptoms have received treatment. Could you please give us the exact number of cases that have used the clinic or GPs and hospitals since last December?**
- St Marys Hospital Respiratory Team are reviewing all respiratory referrals seen via the fast tract clinic since the fire and collating the data. This will be available to the CCG shortly.
- 36 What are PHE doing to "act as counterweight" to political pressures?**
- PHE has a remit to act as an evidence-based adviser on health protection and takes this role very seriously.
- 37 How can PHE demonstrate best practice was followed post Grenfell?**
- PHE regularly exercises and tests its response to emergencies working with multi-agency partners. PHE established a scientific and technical advice cell with representatives from the EA, RBKC, LFB.
- 38 Can PHE show that its advice has been reviewed and its flexible enough to revise incorrect guidance?**
- PHE reviews its advice and updates its risk assessments in light of new information or evidence

- 39 What are the statutory duties of government departments like Defra to investigate the environmental impact of a fire like that which happened at Grenfell?**
- Government Departments create legislative frameworks. DEFRA is responsible for the 1990 Environmental Protection Act which covers structures and authorities for managing issues including waste and control of emissions into the environment. Through this framework, RBKC has a statutory duty to determine whether the site poses any risk to public health, and to ensure that any contaminated land is made suitable for use. In the light of the community's concerns, the Government has asked the Environment Agency to lead on designing environmental soil sampling around the Tower to provide the best information to survivors and local residents. In order for soil (or other land) to be legally determined as contaminated, an assessment would need to be made that there was a significant possibility of significant harm to human health. The threshold as set out in the statutory guidance would be if land was determined as contaminated under part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act (categories 1 or 2).
- 40 Where is the health and safety report for the asbestos for the building before the fire and after the fire and where are the results for the samples Deborah Turbitt promised from the pipes lift shafts ducting and floors itself?**
- These kinds of documents may also be relevant to the Public Inquiry. Because of this, the Council is taking legal advice about whether they can be released ahead of potentially being considered by the Inquiry.
- 41 When will AZZA supplementary Saturday school, who are based in KAA, have a copy of health and safety reports?**
- See Q 40

- 42 How will you protect the pupils and residents from, any asbestos been blown all over KAA school, as it stands there has been several occasions that the towers covering, has been blown off or planned removal, which could possibly contaminate the area, is that true?**
- Air quality monitoring has been in place around the Tower since the end of June 2017, this includes asbestos monitoring. No asbestos has been found above the limit of detection. The monitoring period covers the time prior to and following the covering of the tower. In the event of a small section of the covering being removed for a short period of time we would not expect to see elevated levels of particulate matter or asbestos.
- 43 What are the dangers for those who may have grown food in contaminated soil?**
- Currently there is no clear evidence of soil contamination resulting from the Grenfell fire; the usual precautionary advice is to wash and peel any fruit or vegetables you grow, and wash your hands after gardening. This is standard health advice for London soil and is not because of Grenfell.
- 44 Would PHE still have considered conducting secondary tests for toxicity in the air, soil and people if had professor Anna Spec's report not been leaked?**
- PHE has been doing continuous air monitoring since June 2017. There were plans to test the soil ahead of any deconstruction of Grenfell Tower. In the light of community concerns these plans have been brought forward in order to provide reassurance to the community that everything that can be done to keep them safe is being done.
- 45 Following Public Health England's published report in July 2017, what is the latest update?**
- Public health advice and the results of air quality monitoring is continually updated and published online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-health-advice-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire>

- 46 Can the Government/RBKC, NHS, Public Health England provide a pool of funding for complementary therapy to the affected community members and those who are experiencing similar symptoms as me and yet to be diagnosed access these services? If so, what timeframe can this be provided? And how can I access?**
- The local West London NHS CCG are undertaking continual engagement with the community and is happy to listen to any proposal. Over the next three months the CCG will be talking to local communities about their health recovery plan and how local health and wellbeing services should be delivered. You can contact the CCG by emailing grenfell.response@nhs.net Anyone who is concerned about their health, as a result of the fire, should contact their GP in the first instance to access the care they need. NHS support has been in place since the fire and recently announced an additional £50 million to fund long term checks and treatment for those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire to ensure that those affected continue to get the timely health checks and any subsequent treatment that they need. The NHS will also ensure that those who have any identified health issues will get the timely reviews and any treatment that they need.
- 47 What support is available to people like me who have been recently diagnosed with a life limited condition?**
- We take the wellbeing of Grenfell Tower survivors and local residents extremely seriously. Anyone who has a life limiting condition should contact their GP in the first instance who will discuss the wide range of support available. This will be done on a case by case basis, in discussion with and based on the appropriate clinical need of the individual.

48 Why has Grenfell recovery been granted funding to only screening mental health wellbeing and provided no physical health screening or support? toxins and dioxins are naturally released into the air following a fire of that magnitude.

The funding provided is for both physical and mental health care. Currently local GP surgeries are running additional clinics for Grenfell affected residents as a result of the increased needs, with longer appointments available of up to 30 minutes available if they are needed opposed to the standard 10 minutes.

The appointments are for anyone who feels they need help but, we are also calling in patients proactively. Those from the Tower, walkways, estates like Silchester and Bramley and residents from the wider North Kensington affected area. Local GPs have designed a comprehensive patient review specific to those affected; looking for respiratory symptoms, checking for diabetes, weight, reviewing mental health well-being, drug and alcohol use, suicidal risk, social issues such as relationship break, gang involvement in teenagers, help with back to work, linking to third sector organisations such as Family Action.

In addition, we have established a rapid access respiratory clinic at St Mary's Hospital for anyone concerned about their breathing or people with a cough. They will be seen by a respiratory consultant who will carry out appropriate tests.

We would encourage all patients to contact their GP if they have any concerns about their health. Moving forward we will be introducing an enhanced health checks and systematic monitoring. In line with the recommendations of the findings of the expert scientific review (see question 11), the NHS is also committed to implement any wider screening that is required based on the recommendations from the expert scientific review."

49 If physical screening will be taking place can you give a timeframe? See Q 48

- 50 Have you identified which adverse conditions are derived from the toxins that were released from the plastic, fire retardant soft furnishings/household furnishing/cladding and gas?**
- It is not uncommon for fires to consume the contents and structures of buildings, with the products of combustion dispersing in the environment. The presence of chemicals in the environment does not always lead to exposure. In order for a chemical to cause any adverse health effects, you must come into contact with it e.g. by breathing or ingesting the substance, or by skin or eye contact with it. Following exposure to any chemical, the adverse health effects you may encounter depend on several factors, including the amount to which you are exposed (dose), the way you are exposed, the duration of exposure, the form of the chemical and if you were exposed to any other chemicals.
- 51 What are the physical ill effects of the toxins on survivors/residents/volunteers and anyone in the borough?**
- The health impact of any toxin depends on the dose received by an individual. The environmental monitoring programme will identify whether anyone is likely to have been exposed to toxins at levels that could cause harm.
- 52 When and where are the toxicity tests commencing in the borough? Can you please give us a date and location?**
- See Q 4
- 53 Can EMG tests be made available to people to access? Especially those experiencing symptoms of a stroke and who have undergone MRI and CT body scans which results have shown they have not had a stroke, yet they still feel stroke-like symptoms as I did after undergoing 4 separate MRIs.**
- Anyone who has a concern should speak to their GP who will refer you to a specialist if there is a need. A range of tests are available including MRI and CT body scans. An EMG test should be requested only after assessment by a specialist, typically a neurologist, or other hospital physician. We would encourage anyone who has this concern to have a discussion with their specialist to see if this option is the right one for the individual.

- 54** After telling people for 16 months that the soil was safe to grow vegetables, why is it only now that Maxilla Gardens who have been growing and eating their own produce, been told to cease gardening if there were no concerns? See Q 3
- 55** How harmful to health are the air, soil and water today within the radius against the official baseline measures in place? Please provide the measure? Please provide the answers? Air monitoring has shown there is no cause for concern about pollutants in the air. The environmental monitoring programme will look at the level of soil and water pollutants. It will also decide on the geographical extent of the testing. Local people will be involved in planning the testing and overseeing its delivery and results.
- 56** When was the first date that any RBKC officer or relevant official learned of Prof. Stec's testings & findings, formally, anecdotally or informally? Prof Stec contacted PHE in November 2017 to understand the monitoring PHE were carrying out. Professor Stec's interest in Grenfell health and contamination issues was raised at Grenfell Scrutiny Committee in December 2017, at which a number of Council officers were present. RBKC officers were first in touch with Professor Stec in February 2018 but she did not share her findings with them, although she made recommendations for further investigations.

57 If it is indeed Nov 2017 or Feb 2018, why has it taken a newspaper publication to make KC and PHE revise its duty of care to residents, visitors and workers close to the tower and within the one-mile radius?

It is important to remember that Professor Stec's findings are preliminary and have not yet been verified. Neither the Government, the Council nor Public Health England have had the opportunity to analyse her research. However, all these agencies recognise high levels of concern among local people following media reports of Prof Stec's work. To address these concerns an environmental monitoring programme has begun to reassure residents that all practical steps are being taken to safeguard their health. The programme is currently in its design and planning stage. Professor Stec has agreed to support this work.

58 Since the first public meetings in the Methodist church, after the fire, cyanide, cladding, fumes and asbestos poisons in water soil crops and air have been raised at each meeting. Dr. Doyle KC and PHE were present and said publicly that there was low risk. That is also recorded in Grenfell support newsletters. See website. What does PHE/KC mean by low risk at Grenfell and its environs, in light of the definitions used last night by the soil expert of negligible and minimal with low not recognised as a competent measure by Dr. Nathanall? Please clarify?

PHE has been doing air quality monitoring and the use of the term low risk, aligns the public health risk to the levels of air pollution bandings within the daily air quality index <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/daq1>. Overall the terms low, minimal and negligible can all be used to indicate that the vast majority of people will not experience any adverse health impacts from the fire.

- 59 Recognising that low in any event was still a risk recognised by the LA and its health advisers.....What due diligence was undertaken by the LA?** Since Grenfell the Council has relied on the expert advice of PHE to guide its response to environmental health issues. The advice was and remains that the risks to health are low.
- 60 Were Housing and FCS officers aware that there was general risk including health to returning residents and school children? What risks were assessed? Please provide the findings since June 2017? Please provide the health advisories?** See question 59
- 61 Were continuous risk assessments and inspections carried out on Council and other HA owned buildings? Please provide details? Please provide H&S advisories?** See Q 40
- 62 Why has Prof Stec not been required to attend or respond in writing to the community or to a formal Scrutiny Panel in order to project accurately her findings?** It is open to a Scrutiny committee to invite anyone to attend but they have no powers to compel them. Such an invitation would be a matter for that committee.

63 Over the summer, local residents reported that unusually there were dead fish in the Kyoto gardens and scum algae on the pond. Officers said to the local councillors that it was the herons and normal in a hot summer. In light of these concerns can a test of the pond and the fauna/flora in Holland Park and Avondale Park Gardens now be included?

See question 4

64 Will all the raised beds used for growing vegetables/fruit in the vicinity of Grenfell be tested? Kensington community Gardeners support and encourage local people to grow their own food so it is very concerning that this food could have been contaminated through the uptake of contaminants in the soil. Please could you let me know how these concerns can be addressed.

See question 4. Advice about the preparation and eating of locally grown fruit and vegetables remains unchanged: they should be washed and peeled thoroughly before being eaten; also, anyone working or playing in soil should wash their hands properly afterwards. This advice has not changed since before the Grenfell tragedy.

65 I refer to a meeting of the Lancaster West Residents Association held on 6/07/2017 attended by Yvonne Doyle among others, during this meeting among the many claims made by Yvonne Doyle during this meeting were that there is no detectable evidence of damage to health in the air the group have been unable to detect deterioration in air quality. Do you stand by this?

Air monitoring has consistently shown there is no cause for concern about pollutants in the air. Monitoring data is published online on a weekly basis here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-monitoring-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire>

66 What is the RBKC going to do to encourage BEIS to amend the Furniture Regulations to ensure the future safety of RBKC and UK citizens (given that a number of safety organisations are currently trying to do exactly this)?

The Government considers the safety of consumers to be a priority, and consumers should have confidence that the products in their homes are produced to rigorous safety requirements. Safety requirements for UK furniture are acknowledged as being the highest in Europe. The fire safety requirements currently in place for upholstered furniture and furnishings are being reviewed by BEIS to ensure they reflect changed fire safety risks, risks associated with exposure to flame retardant chemicals and technological advances.

67 Please confirm that, as Paul Nathanail agreed last night, you/Environment Agency will be testing for dioxins, particularly brominated dioxins, in soil samples? And if so, please confirm that you will also check water, air, debris and blood for the same.

See question 4 and Question 11

68 What is RBKC planning to do by way of alerting your constituents that the furniture in their homes is potentially damaging their health, both from 'inert' flame retardant contamination and especially when it burns?

Furniture regulations are a matter for central Government. There are some concerns over the health and environmental impacts of certain flame retardant chemicals. The Government's aim is to encourage a reduction in the use of flame-retardant chemicals while protecting the risk of fire and this needs to be done in an evidence-based way that does not risk a reduction from fire safety. The current regulations do not stipulate the use of flame retardant chemicals, although their use is widespread as a means of meeting the requirements of the regulations. The regulations allow for the use of materials with inherent flame retardant properties and Government continues to welcome innovative approaches that deliver safe outcomes for consumers.

69 Hello, I am a parent of a 14 yr. old attending KAA and am extremely concerned that the tower is not in any way sealed protecting residents and students from dust/toxicity/airborne debris coming from the tower. Please can you tell me explicitly if, how and when this will be happening?

See question 42

70 Why have you not sealed off the Tower to prevent asbestos escaping?

The air around the Tower is monitored very closely for asbestos and other pollutants and only very low levels have been found - too low to give any health concerns.

- 71 Why are you storing debris from the Tower in garages under the Walkways when it may contain asbestos?**
- Some material that was removed from Grenfell Tower after the fire has been safely and securely stored on the protected site for many months, including in garages that are not accessible to any members of the public. Whilst the exact content of that material has not been analysed, it has been handled at all times under maximum safety protocols and procedures as a precautionary measure and it is absolutely safe and stable in its current stored state. The ongoing air monitoring across the Grenfell site, which is commissioned by Public Health England and that would identify asbestos issues, has not raised any cause for concern. We can confirm that the site team will be moving the bagged debris off site as soon as possible and planning for that is underway. We can't offer any timelines at the moment as that detailed preparatory planning work is underway with relevant partners. As soon as we have more details, information will be shared with the local community ahead of anything being moved.
- 72 Did the air monitoring machine at Sion Manning school break down at any point after Grenfell?**
- There will be periods of time when monitoring data isn't available due to breakdowns/calibrations. There wasn't any downtime of the instrument in the period from the 14 June to the installation on the PHE commissioned monitoring
- 73 Are you monitoring for large particles in the air?**
- See question 8. The particulate matter monitoring around the site measures a range of particle sizes including large particles, such as dust that we can see, and much smaller particles that we cannot see.
- 74 Are you monitoring for cement and gypsum?**
- See q. 73. Any cement or gypsum will be captured as particles, however, as the building did not collapse it was not necessary to monitor for these specifically. Notably, there are construction sites nearby, so low levels may be present as background.
- 75 Shouldn't you keep changing what you are monitoring for to ensure you find everything possible?**
- The air quality monitoring commissioned by PHE is regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary.

- 76 Will you test for all the substances found by Professor Stec?** We are aware of prof Stec monitoring for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and these are currently being monitored in air. Academics such as Prof Stec will be consulted in the development of the longer-term environmental monitoring strategy.
- 77 Can you use independent US advisers instead of UK advisers who may be too close to the Government?** It is important for us to get the right independent experts and we will ensure local residents are engaged with this process. It is important to provide a comprehensive public analysis of the findings. The environmental monitoring programme will seek input from the best experts on this issue, no matter where they are. This could include experts from the US.
- 78 Can you guarantee the safety of our children?** The expert view has been that the main risk to local people is via poor air quality following the fire, which is why we have continuously monitored air quality and made the results public. We have found no cause for concern. However, levels of air pollution are higher than we would like due to heavy traffic and other sources of pollution, but sadly this is true of many parts of London and other big cities. Soil in London may be polluted due to previous use and nearby traffic which is why the advice is to wash and peel vegetables before eating them. But there is no evidence that people including children around Grenfell are at a higher risk than other Londoners.
- 79 Have you carried out any tests inside Grenfell Walk?** No, as the flats are not currently occupied. The air monitoring around the Tower of course cover Grenfell Walk.
- 80 Is it safe to eat apples off the trees near Grenfell?** Yes, if you wash them first. This advice applies to fruit grown across London and has not changed since Grenfell.
- 81 Can we have an 18-month report on health outcomes around Grenfell, since the fire?** See Q 31.

- 82 What does "low risk" mean statistically?** Based on the available evidence it is not possible to statistically quantify the risk to the community, however, the vast majority of the community are not expected to have any adverse physical health impacts
- 83 When is the environmental monitoring programme going to start?** The design work is under way. It is estimated that the initial sampling results should be known in Spring 2019.
- 84 How is the community going to be involved in the programme?** We will ensure local residents are engaged with the testing process from start to finish.
- Government and its agencies will work with representatives from North Kensington to inform the design and scope of the monitoring programme. There will be regular updates and publication of the results to ensure transparency. There will also be engagement with the community on any actions needed as a result of the sampling and analysis.
- 85 Why were residents asked to go back to the Walkways when there were health concerns?** The risk assessment based on continuous air quality monitoring was and is that there is no increased risk to health from living near Grenfell. The environmental monitoring programme will feed into this risk assessment.
- 86 How is the £50m announced by NHS England for post-Grenfell support going to be spent?** The NHS has been here from day one and our commitment to this community is as strong as ever. The £50 million five-year spending commitment is a strong sign of this. This will pay for long-term mental and physical care, health and wellbeing services as well as enhanced monitoring and health check-up programme. We will work in partnership with the local community to design and deliver services that are appropriate and are able to meet local need.

- 87 Do you have a plan for relocating children from KAA if the area is found to be unsafe?** KAA have contingency plans in place should they need to relocate, and the council will support them to the best of our ability. Any decision would have to be taken by the Governors of KAA and their sole focus is first and foremost the safety of KAA students and staff.
- 88 When are you going to remove the debris from the garages under the Walkways?** See Q 71
- 89 What are you doing about other asbestos in flats in the Lancaster West estate?** Prior to any repairs or refurbishment, we test for asbestos and manage it in line with regulatory requirements, including removal where required. A programme of asbestos removal is likely to be included in the refurbishment programme which will take place over the next 3-4 years.
- 90 Was it safe for residents to clear debris from their homes?** See Q 30
- 91 What was the general risk to people out and about on the morning of the fire?** People who were close to the scene and exposed to smoke from the fire may have experienced irritation to their air passages, skin and eyes, and respiratory symptoms including coughing and wheezing, breathlessness, phlegm production and chest pain. People who continue to experience symptoms should call NHS 111 for medical advice or consult their GP. People who were not directly impacted by the fire or suffered significant smoke inhalation and are generally fit and well are unlikely to experience long-term health problems from temporary indirect exposure to smoke from a fire.
- 92 Will the St Quintin Kitchen Garden soil be tested?** See Q 4

- 93 Is the grass and playgrounds, football pitches etc around Grenfell safe for children to play in?**
- The air monitoring we have been doing has not identified any cause for concern about soil. However, we understand that local people are worried, so the Government is bringing forward testing of the soil around Grenfell for possible harmful pollution. It is likely some areas will be polluted because of past industrial use or traffic. We will publish the results of our testing. If we find any cause for concern, we will explain what action we are taking.
- 94 Is it safe for staff to carry out repairs on flats around Grenfell?**
- All work carried out by Council staff or their contractors is subject to a full health and safety risk assessment and appropriate protective clothing and equipment is used when needed.
- 95 Who is currently monitoring air quality around Grenfell?**
- Public Health England is monitoring air quality at several locations close to Grenfell Tower. This data is published online every week at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-monitoring-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire>
- 96 Who is currently monitoring soil safety around Grenfell?**
- Levels of pollution in soil and land resulting from the fire around Grenfell Tower are not routinely monitored at present. However, a programme of soil testing has been announced and planning this programme is under way.
- 97 Who is responsible for monitoring air quality in the area around Grenfell Tower?**
- Following the Grenfell tragedy, local people's trust in RBKC was very low so it was decided that air quality monitoring would be carried out by Public Health England (PHE), a national Government agency whose role is protecting public health. PHE started monitoring air quality very soon after the Grenfell tragedy and continues to do so. The results of its monitoring are published online every week. The Council continues to monitor air quality across the borough as part of its responsibilities to address exceedances of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter mainly from transport and gas boilers.

- 98 Who is responsible for ensuring the air is safe?** If PHE's monitoring of the air found worryingly high levels of any pollutants, it would raise this with RBKC or any other affected local authority and advise on the steps needed to minimise risks to health from the pollutants.
- 99 Who is responsible for monitoring the safety of soil and land in the area around Grenfell Tower?** RBKC is responsible for identifying any contaminated land within the Borough.
- 100 Who is responsible for ensuring the land is safe to live, work and play on?** Once a local council has identified that a piece of land is contaminated, it must draw up a plan for making it safe enough for its current or proposed use.
- 101 What did RBKC do when soil contamination was raised at the Grenfell Recovery Scrutiny Committee in December 2017?** RBKC and PHE have been in regular contact about risks to health from possible air and soil pollution. PHE's advice to RBKC has consistently been that the immediate risk to health from contamination in soil and other land remains low.
- 102 What contact have statutory agencies had with Professor Anna Stec?** See Q 6
- 103 What actions were taken by statutory agencies after contact with Professor Stec?** See Q 6
- 104 What has been done about the soil in community gardens and other areas around Grenfell Tower?** Soil in the community garden[s] on Lancaster West estate has been replaced to reassure residents, even though advice from PHE remains that the risk to health from soil pollution remains low.

105 Why did Kensington Aldridge Academy scrub all their surfaces and change the filters in their ventilation?

On the night of the fire the academy acted swiftly and ensured that all ventilation systems were shut down as a precaution. This was completed within an hour of the fire starting. As a precaution, following the fire, Kensington Aldridge Academy contracted a leading UK company (Belfor), whose core focus is recovering homes and businesses following fire and water damage, to thoroughly clean all of the buildings systems. Part of this was that the air handling and ventilation systems were cleaned in their entirety and all the air filters replaced. Additionally, the Academy ensured that all the furniture within the school, as well as every vertical and horizontal surface, were professionally cleaned.

106 What actions were taken to clean Council flats in the area?

Flats on the Walkways next to Grenfell Tower were offered internal cleaning (as well as painting and decorating), including cleaning their balconies. The area has also been jet washed.

107 What health monitoring has been done of survivors from Grenfell Tower?

A respiratory monitoring event was held on the 9th of October 2018 in Grenfell United with respiratory testing undertaken. Respiratory consultant specialists were present and reviewed patients after testing. Patients have also been monitored in St Marys Hospital under the rapid access Respiratory clinic set up in August 2017 in response to the fire. A systematic programme of long-term monitoring is being established. A further monitoring event will be held on the 12th November with specialist respiratory and paediatric consultants present. This event, through co-design with those affected, will also help shape the long-term monitoring offer. We also held a physical health event in April in Grenfell United around screening for conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. Local GP surgeries have been running additional clinics for Grenfell affected residents as a result of the increased needs, with longer appointments available of up to 30 minutes available if they are needed opposed to the standard 10 minutes. The appointments are for anyone who feels they need help but, we are also calling in patients proactively. Local GPs have designed a comprehensive patient review specific to those affected; looking for respiratory symptoms, checking for diabetes, weight, reviewing mental health well-being, drug and alcohol use, suicidal risk, social issues such as relationship break, gang involvement in teenagers, help with back to work, linking to third sector organisations such as Family Action. A lot of these patients are extremely complex, with pre-existing mental and physical health needs prior to the Grenfell Tower fire, all of which may have been exacerbated by the tragedy. Such complex patients are also being helped with case managers within surgeries. Their main role is to help patients navigate services, health promotion and self-care, for example, around diabetes which is huge in Notting Dale. They also raise issues with key workers where problems arise. In addition, as mentioned above, we have established a rapid access respiratory clinic at St Mary's Hospital for anyone concerned about their breathing or people with a cough. They will be seen by a respiratory consultant who will carry out appropriate tests.

For children we are setting up a holistic annual specialist review, focused on listening to worries and anxieties. Covering both physical, mental health &

Answers to questions about soil and air quality and related issues

wellbeing, with a strong focus on health promotion. This will be undertaken either within GU or within local Child Health GP hubs, which will be determined by co-design with Grenfell United.

We would encourage all patients to contact their GP if they have any concerns about their health.

108 What health monitoring has been done of other local people?

See answer 107 in relation to enhanced GP appointments and case management offer.

Additionally, a number of community health events have been held with two further events to be held on 19th and 28th of November 6:30pm to 8:30pm in Hilton London Kensington. These will be drop in health events to address any health concerns residents may have. Specialists from respiratory medicine, mental health, children's health will be present. Respiratory monitoring will also be taking place.

Later this month will be starting enhanced health checks for the wider population which will be undertaken by local GP surgeries as well as in the community. This will be an annual offer going forward. Grenfell Multidisciplinary team meetings have been developed, held in local surgeries, to coordinate care and ensure vulnerable patients don't slip between services

In addition, we have established a rapid access respiratory clinic at St Mary's Hospital for anyone concerned about their breathing or people with a cough.

- 109 Have coughs and respiratory problems increased in the area around Grenfell?** It is difficult to say. People who have felt unwell have been encouraged to see their GP and there has been 39 referrals to the fast tract respiratory service set up by Imperial for anyone worried about their breathing. The findings have been that these people have undiagnosed asthma, COPD, reflux, stress related symptoms, anxiety. The majority of lung function has been normal. Imperial is currently reviewing this and will provide the CCG with further data shortly. The CCG and RBKC Public Health team will work together to provide further information and services, this will be informed by the expert scientific review.
- 110 Has cancer increased in the area around Grenfell?** Our GP practices are not reporting any increase and we have also carried out a statistical review and there is no evidence of cancer increase in the Notting Dale ward in the in the year after the fire, compared to the year before the fire.
- 111 What additional health services are available for survivors from Grenfell Tower, above what is available to all people in London?** See 107. For the wider London area any person who has concerns should see their GP.
- 112 What additional health services are available for other local people?** See 107 &108
- 113 What extra environmental testing will you be doing in future?** See Q 4
- 114 When will this start?** Planning this work is already under way and local people will be involved in the process.
- 115 When will the results be published?** The first results may be known in spring next year and they will be made public.
- 116 Who will oversee this work?** See Q4

- 117 How will the community be involved?** We are committed to reassuring the community and will ensure local residents are engaged with the testing process from start to finish.
- Government and its agencies will work with representatives from North Kensington to inform the design and scope of the monitoring programme. There will be regular updates and publication of the results to ensure transparency. There will also be engagement with the community on any actions needed as a result of the sampling and analysis.
- 118 What additional health services are being put in place for survivors from the Tower?** See 107
- 119 What additional health services are being put in place for other local people?** See 107 &108
- 120 How is the £50 million recently announced by NHS England for post-Grenfell health care being spent?** See 86
- 121 What about people who live further away from Grenfell but are worried about their health?** See 107 &108.
- 122 Are we able to make an updated assessment of risk and proportionate mitigation** The environmental monitoring programme will provide additional data to feed into the risk assessment for Grenfell and the surrounding area.

- 123 How deep is the soil contaminated? Does it “need” replacing even if for non-culinary use?** There is no evidence of soil contamination as a result of the Grenfell fire, but the environmental monitoring programme will provide additional data to help us understand this issue better.
- 124 Would similar contamination have been washed off of roofs, trees etc. by now? Should we be undertaking additional check before disturbing roofs when we undertake repairs etc.?** The air quality monitoring has not suggested there is significant contamination in the local area, any contamination on roofs is likely to have been diluted and disposed of via drainage systems
- 125 Can we disturb the soil without there being risk to residents and staff, in terms of toxins kicking up into the air?** Gardens and outdoor spaces should continue to be used. You should peel and wash any fruit or vegetables you grow, and wash your hands after gardening. This is standard health advice for London soil and is not because of Grenfell.
- 126 What health screening is proportionate/useful where residents or staff are concerned about exposure?** Anyone who is concerned about their health, as a result of the fire, should contact their GP in the first instance to access the care they need.
- 127 What sort of additional tests or advice should be providing to contractors and sub-contractors – if any - e.g. gloves, masks and PPE when handling soil.** Anyone working or playing in soil should wash their hands properly afterwards. This advice has not changed since before the Grenfell tragedy
- 128 What advice should we be providing to residents with gardens and balconies concerned about their soil?** See Q 125

- 129 Have children's play areas been deep cleaned? Do they need this?** Playgrounds are routinely cleaned, including sweeping and picking litter. PHE tests to date have found a very low risk to the health of the community from the most likely source of risk, which is air quality.
- 130 An underreported but common issue on the estate is the impact on pets. What implications and mitigation is required if any for them in terms of digging up soil etc.?** There is no evidence of soil contamination as a result of the Grenfell fire, but the environmental monitoring programme will provide additional data to help us understand this issue better. If there is concern for pets a vet should be consulted.
- 131 Can the soil testing programme be expedited for areas where children play e.g. schools, playgrounds, to give results in weeks not months?** See q 4