

The Housing Commitment to Residents who lived in Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

The Grenfell Tower fire that occurred on 14 June 2017 was a disaster on an unprecedented scale. We wish to express our sorrow at this tragic event and our thoughts are with you and your family.

Rehousing you to suitable and good quality permanent housing is a major priority for Kensington and Chelsea Council, while continuing to provide wider support and assistance.

The Council has developed a rehousing policy that reflects the Government's commitment to provide a new home in social housing for the former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk within the period of one year.

Both the Council and the Government have announced commitments to former residents of Grenfell Walk and Grenfell Tower. This factsheet sets out the housing commitment to you, delivered by Kensington and Chelsea Council, supported by Government.

Important information about your move to a permanent home

Former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk

The Council's and the Government's commitments to you

Who are we rehousing to permanent social housing?

The Council is committed to rehousing to permanent social housing anyone who, immediately before the fire, was living at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk as their main home. Therefore, we will be helping:

- Council introductory or secure tenants
- Resident leaseholders
- Subtenants or lodgers of the above
- Tenants of non-resident leaseholders.

Your priority for rehousing

The Grenfell Rehousing Policy awards you the very highest priority for rehousing to permanent social housing. This priority is worth 3000 points on the Council's Housing Register. This is higher than any other priority for rehousing.

We are committed to rehousing you to permanent social housing within 12 months. If you have not moved to a permanent home within 12 months, we will work with you to ensure our assessment of your needs is up to date and to try to identify and remove any barriers to your rehousing. Personalised housing advice and support will be available to you throughout the rehousing process.

November 2017

If you, or your Family Liaison Officer or Key Worker, has any questions about the Grenfell Rehousing Policy or the rehousing process, please call the Grenfell Enquiries Team on **020 7361 3034**.

Who will be offered properties first?

All former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk have endured and continue to endure enormous suffering. After very careful consideration, the Council has decided to use four 'priority bands' to ensure the most vulnerable households are given the opportunity to be rehoused first. In summary, the four bands are:

- **First band priority** will be given to anyone who has been bereaved as a result of the fire.
- **Second band priority** will be given to a household that has a member or members:
 - with a serious physical or mental disability
 - with a serious learning disability
 - who has needs for care and support or carer's needs for support
- **Third band priority** will be given to any household which includes dependent children.
- **Fourth band priority** will be given to all other former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk.

If two or more households have the same priority for rehousing (for example, because they both have a household member who is physically disabled and have dependent children) preference for an available property will be given to the household that has lived in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk the longest.

This means, as social housing is made available, it will be offered first to residents who have been bereaved as a result of the fire. Available housing will then be offered to other residents who lost their home to express an interest. The expressions of interest will be prioritised for residents with health problems and / or care needs, and then to households with dependent children. Social housing that has not been accepted by the above groups of residents will be offered to all other former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk.

The Council will take into account whether a household falls into more than one priority band. For example, preference for an available property will be given to a household with a disabled household member and dependent children over a household with a disabled household member but no dependent children.

Interim accommodation before your move to a permanent home

The Council is committed to rehousing all former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk into a new permanent home within 12 months of the fire. We are listening to residents about the kind of homes they need and want, and we are working very hard to increase the supply of suitable social housing. While we are confident we will meet our commitment, it is likely that some residents will not be rehoused until next year.

At the same time, the Council is also committed to helping residents move out of hotels into more suitable accommodation as soon as possible. Many households, especially those with children, wish to move into a self-contained home.

We wish to work closely with residents to help them move into a good quality local interim home until permanent social housing becomes available.

We can help you identify a suitable interim home in two ways.

- You can find a local private rented property that you will be happy to move into on an interim basis. You can give the Council details of the property you have found and we will do our best to secure it for you.
- The Council is identifying local private rented property that can be offered to you. You will not be penalised for turning down an offer of private rented accommodation. We will listen to your reasons for turning down a private rented offer so that we can try to offer another property that better suits your needs.

Sometimes it will be possible to convert your interim accommodation to your permanent home so you can remain living in the property. The Council is working with Housing Associations and landlords to secure some of the properties currently being used as interim accommodation to make this happen. If this is something you would be interested in, you can speak to your Allocations Officer.

Remaining in a hotel will **not** increase your chances of being rehoused to a permanent social home any sooner. Moving to an interim private rented home will not decrease your priority for rehousing and will not delay your wait for a permanent home. Moving to a private rented property will mean that you will live in a much better interim home until you are permanently rehoused.

You will not need to pay any rent or service charges until 1 July 2019.

This remains the same whether you are living in an interim home or have moved to a permanent home, having left hotel or emergency accommodation.

Interim homes offered to you will be fully furnished, and big enough for each family, and will not be in a high rise building.

Expressing an interest in permanent social housing

As and when permanent social housing is made available, it is advertised on a special private online system which is accessible only by former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk. The adverts will give you important information about the available property, such as its size, location, social landlord, floor level, and suitability for people with mobility problems.

You will be able to express an interest for advertised properties if, having seen the advert, you might be interested in living there. We are aware that some residents will not have access to the online system or may not feel comfortable using one. Therefore, our dedicated housing officers can make direct contact with you to let you know

when permanent housing is being made available and discuss with you whether you would like to express an interest. The Council wants to make sure that no-one misses out on the chance of registering their interest in a suitable new home.

The Council will use the priority bands, explained above, to select who will be offered the property.

You will not be competing with other residents for properties. We will only invite you to visit and view a property in which you have expressed an interest if it is available for you to accept.

We know that the decision whether to accept or turn down an offer of social housing can be a very difficult one, and that you may need time to think about what you want to do. We do not want to rush anyone to make a decision on their new home before they are ready, but it would be helpful to know your thoughts within three days. If you are shown more than one home it would be helpful to know which is your top choice within two days.

If you don't like somewhere or think it is not suitable then please tell us why. We can use this information to understand what you do need from your home, and find you somewhere you are happy with more quickly. In the meantime, we can show the homes you do not like to other households who might be interested.

Do you have a choice about where you will live?

You will not be forced to accept an offer of social housing, and you will not be penalised in any way if you do not accept such an offer. You will keep your priority for rehousing until you move to permanent accommodation. You will only move to a property if you are happy to do so.

The Council has been listening to what you say you need when moving to a permanent home. As well as offering former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk local social housing of a high standard provided

by other social landlords, the Council is securing additional properties to increase our supply by 300 properties for the approximate 200 households who require permanent rehousing. Therefore, all residents will have the opportunity to move to a new permanent home that meets their needs.

We hope that you will be offered a property that is acceptable to you within 12 months, and will continue to work with you to ensure you are rehoused to a suitable home.

What size of property will you be offered?

You will be offered a property of the same bedroom size as your home in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk. However, if you were overcrowded in your home in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk, you will be offered a larger property that meets your family's needs.

The Council can be flexible about the size of the property offered to you, following discussions with your Family Liaison Officer or Key Worker.

When we look at the number of bedrooms you will need, we will use the same rules used by housing benefit. This means that children of the same sex will be expected to share until the eldest reaches 16, and that boys and girls will be expected to share until the eldest reaches 10.

Help with moving and resettlement costs

You will be offered a furnished home that you will be able to live in straight away. This will include furniture, flooring, curtains and white goods provided at no cost to you.

Any costs incurred (e.g. removals) moving from your current accommodation to your new home will be covered. This is both for moves into interim accommodation and permanent accommodation. You will also be offered help to set up new utility and council tax accounts (ready for the end of your utility and council tax free period). We will also provide advice and help to set you up in your new home.

Will you still receive a support package, including a transition allowance, if you move out of a hotel?

Support will be provided to enable residents and their families to move out of hotel and emergency accommodation into more suitable housing.

To enable the transition from emergency accommodation, a direct payment will be provided at £300 per person per week, and £150 per child per week (age 0–5) for the first three months, followed by three months support of £150 per person per week, and £75 per child per week (age 0–5).

Your Key Worker, together with your Housing Officer, will develop a personalised resettlement, care and support plan with you that will provide practical and psychological help with your longer term recovery and adjustment to life beyond the Grenfell Tower fire.

What rent and service charges will you have to pay for your permanent home?

You will not need to pay any rent or service charges until 1 July 2019. You will also not need to pay any council tax or utility bills (water rates, electricity, and gas if you have it) until 1 July 2019.

This remains the same whether you are living in a interim home or have moved to a permanent home, having left hotel or emergency accommodation.

The rent and service charges for your permanent social housing (after the rent and service charge free period) will be no greater than the amount tenants were paying at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk. This remains true even if you are rehoused to a larger home.

When you start to pay rent and service charges those on low incomes will be able to claim Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Rent

If you held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk the rent you will pay for your permanent home will be whichever of the following is the lowest:

- the actual rent you paid for your tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk
- the average rent charged at Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for the size of property you need
- the actual rent charged for your new home

If you did not hold a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk, the rent you will pay for your permanent home will be whichever of the following is the lowest:

- the average rent charged at Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for the size of property you need
- the actual rent charged for your new home

You will find a table showing the average rent (and service charge) for Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk at the end of this section.

Your rent may increase, or decrease, in the future. The formula for calculating your rent changes is currently set and regulated by the Government, and this regulation will continue until at least 2025. Legislation and regulation ensures that any rent change is reasonable and affordable.

Your landlord has to give you at least one month's notice in writing before any rent change, and tell you the date from which the change will apply.

Service charges and utility bills

The amount you pay for services provided at your permanent home by your landlord will be capped. The Council has guaranteed to pay the difference between your capped rate and the actual charge for the services provided.

If you held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk the service charges you will pay for your

permanent home will be whichever of the following is the lowest:

- the actual service charges you paid in the last year of your tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk, minus any payments you made for water, heating and hot water
- the average service charge raised at Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for the size of property you need
- the actual service charge for your new home

If you did not hold a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk you will pay the average service charge raised at Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for the size of property you need.

The amount you pay for service charges can change every year, depending on how much it costs to deliver the services provided. Each year, your capped service charge will change at the same rate as the overall service charge. For example, if the overall service charge increases by 1 per cent, your capped service charge will increase by 1 per cent.

From 1 July 2019, you will be responsible for paying the utility bills for your home (water rates, electricity, and gas if you have it). Costs for these services are not included in your capped service charge, so you will not be paying twice for them.

Average Grenfell rents and service charges

Please see above for the circumstances in which you might be charged the average Grenfell rent and service charges.

The average Grenfell rent is the average of all the rents in Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for each property size.

The average Grenfell service charge is the average of the service charges at Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk for each property size. Charges for water, heating and hot water have been removed from the average Grenfell service charge.

Size	Average Weekly Rent	Service Charge	Total
1 bed	£97.27	£14.34	£111.61
2 bed	£116.68	£19.74	£136.42
3 bed	£133.09	£22.70	£155.79
4 bed	£148.67	£26.76	£175.43
5 bed	£163.95	£30.82	£194.77

Welfare reform measures – what if my housing benefit does not cover the rent?

If you have one or more spare bedrooms in your permanent home, receive housing benefit to help you pay the rent and are of working age, you might be affected by the ‘spare room subsidy’, or bedroom tax. If you have one spare bedroom, your housing benefit may be reduced by 14 per cent, and if you have two or more spare bedrooms, your housing benefit may be reduced by 25 per cent.

The Council is committed to ensuring that former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk who are rehoused to permanent housing and might be affected by the spare room subsidy cap on housing benefit will not lose out financially throughout the length of their original tenancy. Any shortfall in housing benefit created by these caps will be covered by the Council.

What types of tenancies are being offered?

There will be a number of different social landlords who will be offering permanent social housing.

If you accept a council property you will be offered a lifetime secure tenancy.

If you accept a housing association property you will be offered a lifetime assured tenancy.

Council secure tenancies and housing association assured tenancies are very similar but tenants do not have exactly the same

rights. However, the Council has guaranteed that if you held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk and you are rehoused to a permanent housing association property, you will continue to have at least the same rights in your new permanent home that you had previously. The Council has drafted a document that can be attached to a housing association tenancy to ensure you do not lose out.

Will your family members have the right to succeed to your tenancy?

Permanent social housing tenancy agreements granted to former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk will allow family members to succeed to the tenancy in the following circumstances.

- If you are a joint tenant and one of you dies, the tenancy will automatically pass to the remaining tenant.
- If you are a sole tenant, when you die your tenancy will pass to your spouse or civil partner.
- If you do not have a partner/ spouse then the tenancy can pass to a member of your family (parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece) if:
 - They have lived in the property as their main home at the time of the sole tenant's passing and
 - They lived there for more than 12 months

Family members succeeding to the tenancy will not inherit the commitments given to the original tenant with regard to the Grenfell cap on rent and service charges. In other words, family members succeeding to the tenancy will be required to pay the full rent and service charges for the property.

Will you have the right to buy your home?

The Government has stated that residents who held a council tenancy in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk will be offered a new home that will be on at least the same terms as the one they lost.

If you held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk, and you move to a permanent council property, you will still have the right to buy your new permanent home.

If you held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk and you move to a permanent housing association property, the Council will ask your new landlord to grant you the right to buy.

It is probable that if you were a council tenant at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk your new home will have a higher market value than your previous home. There are strict legal rules for the price at which the Council or housing association can sell a home under the right to buy. We cannot sell your new home to you at the same price as your previous home in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk. Where you, as a council tenant, want to exercise the right to buy your new permanent home, but cannot afford to do so because of its higher value, the Council will explore alternative options to help you to buy a home. The Council is currently exploring what options can be developed to offer support to residents in this position.

It is recommended that anyone wishing to exercise the right to buy their home seeks independent legal and financial advice.

What happens if you move again in the future?

These housing commitments last for as long as you live in the permanent tenancy.

If you choose to move at some point in the future (for example, through a mutual exchange or a transfer) your rent in your new home will be set according to the policy of your new landlord. This means you may pay more rent if you move to a new home in the future.

What help is available to leaseholders in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk?

The Council, in consultation with leaseholders, has developed an offer that will ensure leaseholders can find another suitable home in the area. See the separate factsheet **Guidance for leaseholders from Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk**.

The Council has established a Navigator Team that is dedicated to helping leaseholders discuss their options. It can also direct you to independent legal and financial advice, help with the purchase of a new home and the moving in process. The Navigator Team can be reached by telephone on **020 7641 4508** from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, or contacted by email at **navigator@westminster.gov.uk**

If you, or your Family Liaison Officer or Key Worker, has any questions about the Grenfell Rehousing Policy or the rehousing process, please call the Grenfell Enquiries Team on **020 7361 3034**.

English

Information from this document can be made available in alternative formats and in different languages. If you require further assistance please use the contact details below.

Arabic

يمكن توفير المعلومات التي وردت في هذا المستند بصيغ بديلة ولغات اخرى. إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مزيد من المساعدة، الرجاء استخدام بيانات الاتصال الواردة أدناه.

Farsi

اطلاعات حاوی در این مدارک به صورتهای دیگر و به زبانهای مختلف در دسترس می باشد. در صورت نیاز به کمک بیشتر لطفا از جزئیات تماس ذکر شده در ذیل استفاده کنید.

French

Les informations présentées dans ce document peuvent vous être fournies dans d'autres formats et d'autres langues. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide complémentaire, veuillez utiliser les coordonnées ci-dessous.

Portuguese

A informação presente neste documento pode ser disponibilizada em formatos alternativos e em línguas diferentes. Se desejar mais assistência, use por favor os contactos fornecidos abaixo.

Somali

Macluumaadka dokumentigan waxaa lagu heli karaa qaabab kale iyo luuqado kala duwan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad intaas dhaafsiisan fadlan isticmaal xiriirka faahfaahinta hoose.

Spanish

La información en este documento puede facilitarse en formatos alternativos y en diferentes idiomas. Si necesita más ayuda por favor utilice la siguiente información de contacto.

Grenfell Enquiries Team

Call 020 7361 3034