

Press release: First new homes secured for victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid today (21 June 2017) announced that the government has acquired the first tranche of permanent new homes to rehouse local residents affected by the fire at Grenfell Tower.

The 68 flats are all newly built social housing and form part of the Kensington Row development in Kensington and Chelsea.

Work is ongoing to identify the needs of those affected who have lost their homes and match them to suitable housing. The expectation is that these new properties will be offered as one of the options to permanently rehouse residents from Grenfell Tower.

The increase to local social housing is a significant step towards meeting the government's commitment that every family from Grenfell Tower will be rehoused in the local area.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The residents of Grenfell Tower have been through some of the most harrowing and traumatic experiences imaginable and it is our duty to support them.

Our priority is to get everyone who has lost their home permanently rehoused locally as soon as possible, so that they can begin to rebuild their lives.

The government will continue to do everything we can as fast as we can to support those affected by this terrible tragedy.

More than 110 housing needs assessments have been completed to date and offers will then be made to families and this process will continue until every family has been housed.

Extra construction staff have been committed by the developer St Edward and working hour restrictions will be relaxed so work can continue around the clock to fast-track completion of the development to meet the increased demand in the area following the fire at Grenfell Tower. The government has also provided additional funding to fit out the flats to ensure they are ready for people to move in to sooner.

The new permanent housing is expected to be completed by the end of July. The Department for Communities and Local Government has also already committed to finding suitable accommodation in the local area for victims who lost their

homes within a maximum of 3 weeks.

Each home will be fully furnished and completed to a high specification and St Edward will provide liaison staff for each block so that residents are fully supported in settling in to their new homes. This will be in addition to the ongoing range of support being provided to those affected by the tragedy.

The homes will be a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom flats across 2 blocks.

St Edward is a joint venture between the Berkeley Group and Prudential.

News story: Fathers Day bikers urged to ride safe

Hundreds of motorcycle enthusiasts gathered to meet biking legend Charley Boorman at the iconic Ryka's Café at Box Hill in Surrey yesterday (Fathers' Day, Sunday 18 June) where there was a special focus on biker safety.

The bikers, many of them dads indulging their passion on their special day, were given tips by Charley, who has teamed up with Highways England to launch Be a Better Biker – a motorcycle safety campaign that aims to give experienced bikers practical riding tips when using the road network on areas such as unexpected hazards, cornering, overtaking and riding when tired.

One of the Highways England team speaking to a biker about motorcycle safety

Charley, the TV presenter, travel writer and actor, is well placed to support the campaign as 18 months ago he had a serious accident while riding his bike, which led to him nearly losing a leg. Charley was on hand to talk to bikers about the campaign and sign copies of his new book 'Long Way Back'.

Charley said:

We are all riders, some of us experienced and some of us not too much. What I like about this campaign is it aims to give practical and good tips on how to be a little safer on the roads. As we know as bikers, roads can be challenging and the people on them frustrating. As roads are getting busier we have to be more careful. So I'm happy to be involved in this launch on Father's Day of highlighting that it's important to stay safe on bikes. As they say rubber side down!

Richard Leonard, Head of Road Safety, (Safety, Engineering & Standards) at Highways England added:

We understand the pride and the passion that goes into biking, but we're concerned about the persistently high casualty rate – put simply far too many bikers are still coming to harm on our roads. This campaign will help give bikers some practical tips that they can use to protect themselves and continue enjoying the unique freedom of the open road that biking offers.

The campaign will run in the South East for four weeks from today, and includes digital and print advertising in key motorcycle and trade publications, advertising in motorway service areas and petrol stations at key areas on our network, and social media using the hashtag #beabetterbiker.

We are also producing a toolkit for partners to use to communicate campaign messages. The toolkit includes the artwork for display advertising, posters, videos and imagery for social media.

Today is also the start of Ride to Work Week, the industry led week which highlights the benefits of commuting by motorcycle or scooter.

News story: Grave of brave Nottingham born WW2 airman finally rededicated

Flight Sergeant (Flt Sgt) Frank Edward Reed's final resting place has been identified after his aircraft, RAF Stirling Bomber EH945, part of 620 Squadron, was shot down in Germany on 27 September 1943. To honour the bravery and sacrifice of Flt Sgt Reed, a rededication service was held on 20 June 2017 at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Hanover War Cemetery, Germany.

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, was conducted by The Reverend Father (Flight Lieutenant) James Mealy, Station Chaplain RAF Coningsby.

(left to right) Flt Lt Adam Jux, RAF Association; Group Captain Roland Smith, Defence Attaché; Nigel Reed, son of Flt Sgt Reed; and Gary Reed, nephew of Flt Sgt Reed (Crown Copyright) All rights reserved

Flt Sgt Reed was a Flight Engineer and part of a 7 man crew onboard the Bomber aircraft which took off from RAF Chedburgh in Suffolk at 7.55 pm on 27 September 1943. Research undertaken by JCCC and Air Historical Branch showed that Stirling EH975 was shot down and crashed later that evening. Subsequent reports stated that some of the crew were taken as prisoners of war, including Flt Sgt Reed who was badly injured, others were unfortunately killed during the crash. Flt Sgt Reed was taken to a hospital in Hanover where it is unclear how he died but most probably from his wounds.

Flt Sgt Reed was just 1 month short of his 21st birthday when he was killed.

Tracey Bowers, JCCC said:

This has been an incredibly rewarding case to work on and to be able to bring closure after such a long search for answers by Frank's son, Nigel, who has travelled from New Zealand to be with us today, is a real privilege.

Unfortunately we may never know exactly how Flt Sgt Reed died but we know he ultimately lost his life serving his Country. Now finally, his grave can bear his name and we're very lucky to have his son and members of his RAF family here with us today.

Reverend Father (Flt Lt) James Mealy delivers the service of rededication
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Rev. Fr (Flt Lt) James Mealy said:

By God's grace it is right and proper that we gathered today in prayer and thanksgiving for the sacrifice of Flt Sgt Reed. It was a privilege for me as an RAF Padre to lead this rededication service for the family and representatives today.

This is the first rededication service I have had the honour of leading and I will remember this day for the rest of my life.

Nigel Reed attending his father's service of rededication (Crown Copyright)
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Flt Sgt Reed's son, Nigel Reed, said:

Today has opened up a new chapter in my relationship with my father whom I now feel a real connection and closeness to. I would like to thank all those who made this ceremony, and the one held in Chedburgh, possible, it has meant so very much to me.

The moving ceremony rededicating the new headstone bearing Flt Sgt Reed's name, as provided by the CWGC, was held in the cemetery in Hanover near to where the crash site was.

To further honour Flt Sgt Reed's memory a simultaneous ceremony was held in Chedburgh, Suffolk (where 620 Squadron was based). It was organised by former members of The Blues and Royals, Nigel's former regiment and attended by his

regimental brothers.

News story: £15 million for 49 manufacturing and materials innovations

The 49 winning projects – involving 81 companies – have been awarded in the latest round of our industry sector competition.

To be successful, companies had to focus on identified technical or commercial challenges. Their solutions should lead to increased productivity, competitiveness and growth for UK small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Funded projects

Examples of the projects include:

- [Branscan Ltd](#), which is using intelligent sensors to detect contaminants in food processing, making it easier to trace food and improve the quality
- [Rawwater Engineering](#), which is developing an advanced bismuth alloy that can be used to plug oil and gas wells at the end of their lives. This is an alternative to currently-used cement plugs, which have issues relating to sealing integrity, a short lifespan and are high cost
- Sweet Perspex, a joint project that is developing a new bioprocess to manufacture the basic materials for acrylic production. This should provide more sustainable, bio-based materials for safe use in everyday applications such as screens for phones, laptops and TVs
- UltraWELD, a project consortium of 5 companies, is developing ultrafast laser processes to join dissimilar materials in the manufacture of complex electro-optic devices and OLED (organic light-emitting diode) lighting. This is an alternative bonding technique that will improve device sealing and integrity

Simon Edmonds, Director – Manufacturing and Materials, Innovate UK, said:

The quality of the projects funded is excellent, and demonstrates the appetite among manufacturing and materials businesses within the UK to innovate and grow.

I urge those businesses who might be interested in our funding opportunities in manufacturing and materials to look at our next £15 million competition, which is currently open for applications.

An Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund activity

Manufacturing and materials will be supported through the government's [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#).

In the [first 6 areas to be announced](#), challenges include batteries for clean and flexible energy storage, self-driving vehicles and manufacturing and materials of the future.

Speech: Queen's Speech 2017

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

My government's priority is to secure the best possible deal as the country leaves the European Union. My ministers are committed to working with Parliament, the devolved administrations, business and others to build the widest possible consensus on the country's future outside the European Union.

A bill will be introduced to repeal the European Communities Act and provide certainty for individuals and businesses. This will be complemented by legislation to ensure that the United Kingdom makes a success of Brexit, establishing new national policies on immigration, international sanctions, nuclear safeguards, agriculture, and fisheries.

My government will seek to maintain a deep and special partnership with European allies and to forge new trading relationships across the globe. New bills on trade and customs will help to implement an independent trade policy, and support will be given to help British businesses export to markets around the world.

My ministers will strengthen the economy so that it supports the creation of jobs and generates the tax revenues needed to invest in the National Health Service, schools, and other public services.

My government will continue to improve the public finances, while keeping taxes low. It will spread prosperity and opportunity across the country through a new modern, industrial strategy.

My government will work to attract investment in infrastructure to support economic growth. Legislation will be introduced to ensure the United Kingdom remains a world leader in new industries, including electric cars and commercial satellites. A new bill will also be brought forward to deliver the next phase of high-speed rail.

My government will continue to work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. My ministers will work to ensure people have the skills they need for the

high-skilled, high-wage jobs of the future, including through a major reform of technical education.

The National Living Wage will be increased so that people who are on the lowest pay benefit from the same improvements in earnings as higher paid workers. My ministers will seek to enhance rights and protections in the modern workplace.

My government will make further progress to tackle the gender pay gap and discrimination against people on the basis of their race, faith, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Legislation will be brought forward to protect the victims of domestic violence and abuse.

My government will reform mental health legislation and ensure that mental health is prioritised in the National Health Service in England.

Proposals will be brought forward to ban unfair tenant fees, promote fairness and transparency in the housing market, and help ensure more homes are built.

My ministers will work to improve social care and will bring forward proposals for consultation.

My government will ensure fairer markets for consumers, this will include bringing forward measures to help tackle unfair practices in the energy market to help reduce energy bills.

A priority will be to build a more united country, strengthening the social, economic and cultural bonds between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

My government will work in cooperation with the devolved administrations, and it will work with all of the parties in Northern Ireland to support the return of devolved government.

A new law will ensure that the United Kingdom retains its world-class regime protecting personal data, and proposals for a new digital charter will be brought forward to ensure that the United Kingdom is the safest place to be online.

Legislation will also be introduced to modernise the courts system and to help reduce motor insurance premiums.

My government will initiate a full public inquiry into the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower to ascertain the causes, and ensure that the appropriate lessons are learnt.

To support victims, my government will take forward measures to introduce an independent public advocate, who will act for bereaved families after a public disaster and support them at public inquests.

My ministers will continue to invest in our gallant Armed Forces, meeting the

NATO commitment to spend at least two per cent of national income on defence, and delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant across the United Kingdom.

My government will bring forward proposals to ensure that critical national infrastructure is protected to safeguard national security.

A commission for countering extremism will be established to support the government in stamping out extremist ideology in all its forms, both across society and on the internet, so it is denied a safe space to spread.

In the light of the terrorist attacks in Manchester and London, my government's counter-terrorism strategy will be reviewed to ensure that the police and security services have all the powers they need, and that the length of custodial sentences for terrorism-related offences are sufficient to keep the population safe.

My ministers will ensure that the United Kingdom's leading role on the world stage is maintained and enhanced as it leaves the European Union.

As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, committed to spending zero point seven per cent of national income on international development, my government will continue to drive international efforts that increase global security and project British values around the world.

My government will work to find sustainable political solutions to conflicts across the Middle East. It will work to tackle the threat of terrorism at source by continuing the United Kingdom's leading role in international military action to destroy Daesh in Iraq and Syria. It will also lead efforts to reform the international system to improve the United Kingdom's ability to tackle mass migration, alleviate poverty, and end modern slavery.

My government will continue to support international action against climate change, including the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Prince Philip and I look forward to welcoming Their Majesties King Felipe and Queen Letizia of Spain on a State Visit in July.

My government will host the Commonwealth Summit in April of next year to cement its relevance to this, and future generations.

Members of the House of Commons:

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons:

Other measures will be laid before you.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.