

The Rt Hon. Amber Rudd
The Home Secretary
2 Marsham St,
Westminster,
London
SW1P 4DF

17th June 2017

Dear Home Secretary

I welcome the recent announcement that the very necessary step has been taken to appoint a government Task Force to coordinate all relief and support in this disaster. This is not a moment too soon: we have been hearing this morning of experienced and organised volunteer groups' despair at being asked to stand back when there was little or no help to replace them.

I have been in discussion over the past few days with local charities, voluntary organisations, and groups of volunteers working for affected residents. They have made representations to me, on the basis of which I have collated a list of the following key issues they are facing and insist that the following actions are taken:

Immediate support for those affected

1. No household or individual should have to contact many different parties to get the help they need. Every affected household or individual should have a named officer/social worker, and any handovers done with named replacements. Support should be available 24 hours of the day, 7 days a week.
2. There must be officials from all relevant government departments and agencies on site to deal with benefit claims, identity documents, any issues related to immigration status and all other key administrative and bureaucratic issues.

3. Those who need to bury their loved ones must be linked up with the free funeral services being so generously offered.
4. I have been told that some people who have lost their homes have been sent out of borough and are being given only £10 per day subsistence. If this is accurate it must be addressed without delay.
5. Those affected and in employment must receive help to inform employers so that they do not lose work because of this disaster.
6. A very firm commitment that in the short, mid and long-term, residents affected are located within the borough or in close neighbouring boroughs - so they are close to their local networks, schools, work and communities - must be formally announced and communicated to all residents without delay.
7. As soon as possible I would like to see a full and detailed breakdown of every category and approximate of person, what is being done for them, and where they are being relocated. This to include any temporary or AirB&B guests who may have been staying in the building.
8. Information, reassurance and advice must be given to neighbouring residents living in towers, along with a timetable of safety checks, especially those in the Silchester estate.

Co-ordination of relief response

1. There must be a single point of contact and a coordinated response to offers of support by volunteers whose skills and experience are needed, such as counsellors and psychotherapists and solicitors.

2. There must be regular briefings throughout the day to all those involved in the relief effort, with a single point of contact in each group and a single point of contact for requests for information.
3. Links must be established between donated funds and those who so desperately need them. Kensington and Chelsea Foundation are a well-established group and we need to see a robust method of getting funds out where needed and without delay.

I appreciate that fulfilling the above will require significant resources and do not want to minimise the scale of the task ahead. No doubt your team has collated a similar task list and I would be grateful for sight of this, and to have your firm commitment that all the above issues have been taken on board.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the extraordinary response of both the emergency services and the local community. Their input has been exceptional and unprecedented and offers an example to us all of what can be achieved when communities work together.

I look forward to your early response.

A copy of this letter is being sent to Councillor Nicholas Paget-Brown, Leader of Council of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.



Emma Dent Coad

MP for Kensington