

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

COVID-19 information

The Inquiry will resume hearing oral evidence on Monday 6 July 2020 at 10am at 13 Bishop's Bridge Road on a limited attendance basis.

Information on the limited attendance hearings

The Inquiry team has been working with its contractors to put arrangements in place so that a limited number of attendees can use the Inquiry premises safely and in line with government guidelines. A thorough risk assessment process has been undertaken by the Government Property Agency to ensure compliance with all health and safety requirements.

The Inquiry has made preparations in order to protect everyone involved, particularly those in vulnerable groups, and ensure that their safety is in no way compromised by the wider need to proceed with Phase 2. Our priority is to protect the safety and wellbeing of all attendees, maintaining social distance measures and managing touch points.

What are limited attendance hearings?

In April, the Inquiry Panel wrote to all core participants to consult them on their preferences regarding whether and how to resume hearings while government restrictions remain in place. The Panel was grateful to receive a large number of responses, which indicated a substantial consensus in favour of resuming with limited attendance hearings.

The start of limited attendance hearings means the return of taking evidence from witnesses for Phase 2, which began in January this year. The difference will be that, in order to comply with government guidance and ensure the safety of all those who would need to attend, there will be strict rules in place regarding the number of people allowed in the building. All other parties will be able to participate and follow the hearings remotely.

How will limited attendance hearings work?

Attendance will be restricted to the members of the Panel, Counsel to the Inquiry, the witnesses, their legal representatives and any person providing immediate support, and those Inquiry staff and contractors critical to the operation of the hearings. The Inquiry has also invited a member of the Press Association to attend to enable first-hand reporting and to assist in making the process as transparent as possible.

13 Bishop's Bridge Road, London, W2 6BU

General enquiries - Tel: 0800 121 4282: contact@grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk

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Even with the recent announcements, government advice remains that two-metre distancing is preferable if possible, particularly where individuals will be within the same space for a prolonged period of time.

Social distancing will be observed at all times. The Inquiry venue has been modified to ensure that it can accommodate the number of people required while allowing them to maintain the recommended social distance. The Inquiry will continue to review these arrangements as government guidance develops. Specific safety precautions include:

- Requiring all individuals to complete a health assessment form prior to attendance
- Carrying out a temperature check to attendees on arrival
- Installing hand sanitiser across the venue
- Arranging the venue and repurposing rooms in a way that limits proximity to others
- Enhanced venue cleaning regime

You can view a summary of the new procedures in place [here](#).

Following the hearings remotely

Hearings will continue to be streamed online on the Inquiry's website and YouTube page, with updates via the Inquiry's Twitter page.

Hearings will continue to start at 10:00 and finish at approximately 16:00. There will be a one hour lunch break at around 13:00, and additional breaks during both the morning and afternoon sessions. Timings can be subject to change due to scheduling and witness requirements, so please check the Inquiry website and twitter page for updates if following remotely. A provisional witness schedule for the week ahead will be available at the end of the previous week on the Inquiry website and will be shared on Twitter.

It is not possible at this time to make arrangements for anyone to gather together to watch the hearing live stream at an alternative venue, including at Notting Hill Methodist Church, due to current government guidance to avoid gatherings.

Support arrangements

During limited attendance hearings the Inquiry will continue to facilitate wellbeing support as before, however the service will be delivered entirely virtually by telephone and video conferencing. Bereaved, survivors and residents (BSRs) and members of the public will be able to contact Hestia directly to access wellbeing services by contacting 0800 246 5617 between 9:45am and 4:15pm, Monday to Thursday.

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Hestia will provide a range of services including:

- One-to-one telephone or online support sessions that BSRs will be able to book with a counsellor during the day or at the end of the day's hearings. Please contact 0800 246 5617.
- Drop-in zoom group sessions (10am-1pm and 2pm-4pm) where BSRs can join a counsellor in a peer support group to support one another, and to air and talk through any feelings or concerns. These sessions will start and finish with some resilience exercises, for example paced breathing, grounding and mindful exercises and taught resilience tools. For more information and instructions for joining a zoom group session please contact 0800 246 5617.

Counselling support services continue to be available for anyone who wants to talk about their emotional wellbeing. The NHS Grenfell Outreach Team is open Monday to Thursday from 09:00-20:00, and on Friday from 09:00-17:00. Their number is 0208 637 6279. More information, including out of hours contact, can be found on the [NHS website](#).

The Inquiry will continue to arrange interpreters on request for BSRs. This service will be delivered by telephone.