# Met Police plan full-scale Grenfell Tower replica as delayed justice deepens families’ despair



## A Long Road to Justice: The Grenfell Tower Investigation and Its Implications

In a significant and somber development in the ongoing Grenfell Tower disaster inquiry, the Metropolitan Police are considering the construction of a full-scale replica of parts of the tower. This move, reportedly aimed at aiding juries in comprehending the complexities of the fire's spread during potential future trials, has raised eyebrows among the families of the victims who continue to grapple with the opaque nature of justice.

The tragic fire, which occurred on June 14, 2017, led to the loss of 72 lives and exposed systemic failures in safety regulations surrounding high-rise buildings in the UK. While the police investigation, codenamed Operation Northleigh, has now enlisted a team of 180 investigators at an estimated cost of nearly £24 million for the current year alone, dedicated families have expressed despair over the drawn-out process, which they fear might not culminate in justice. As expressed by a representative from Grenfell Next of Kin, the organisation representing the relatives of many victims, “the trust is broken in the Met Police and the systems” designed to protect them.

The proposal for a reconstruction, which would involve a detailed model built inside a warehouse for jury observation, aims to clarify technical evidence that has proven difficult to convey in court. Det Supt Garry Moncrieff, the senior investigating officer, emphasised the need for a thorough understanding of the evidence by jurors, stating, “As you more than anyone understand, this investigation has taken so long primarily because it is so complex.” However, as the timelines stretch until at least 2026 for potential trials, the anguish of waiting for justice weighs heavily on the bereaved.

This complexity arises from not just the sheer volume of evidence—exceeding a million words in preliminary reports—but also from intertwined investigations. The simultaneous public inquiry and criminal investigation, both probing the failings of numerous governmental and corporate entities, have steeped the process in layers of difficulty. Over 19 companies, including construction and cladding manufacturers, are implicated alongside 58 individuals, raising the spectre of long legal battles that may extend well into the next decade.

Amidst this, Kensington and Chelsea council has filed a lawsuit against Beko Europe, the maker of the fridge-freezer believed to have sparked the fire, claiming negligence in safety testing. This move is part of broader litigation aimed at holding numerous parties accountable for their roles in the tragedy, which is emblematic of deeper issues in building safety standards across the country.

The final report from the public inquiry, released recently, paints a stark picture of negligence. Regulatory bodies and manufacturers stand accused of prioritising profit over safety, with damning conclusions having emerged about the use of combustible materials on the tower during its refurbishment. Local council failures to enforce safety compliance have also come under scrutiny. The inquiry identified a culture of complacency among construction firms and regulatory agencies, which collectively contributed to the disaster that claimed dozens of lives.

For the families of Grenfell’s victims, the fight for justice is ongoing. The dismantling of the tower, set to begin after the eighth anniversary of the fire, raises further questions. While some families seek to preserve remnants of the site as a memorial, others view its removal as a necessary step towards healing. The government's commitment to using materials from the demolition in a planned memorial reflects an effort to honour those lost while addressing community sentiment about the tragedy's aftermath.

As the clock ticks towards potential prosecutions, with no anticipated charges until late 2026, a sense of weariness looms over the next of kin. They have expressed fears that the judicial system, engulfed in complexities and guarded by procedural rigor, may ultimately fail to deliver the accountability they seek. The latest communications from the Metropolitan Police acknowledge the profound impact of this prolonged wait, stating: “We cannot begin to imagine the effect that waiting for the outcome of our investigation must have” on the grieving families and survivors of Grenfell.

In this vital, yet painfully protracted journey towards accountability and closure, the Grenfell Tower fire stands not only as a reminder of regulatory shortcomings but also as an urgent call for reform within the entire framework of building safety and corporate accountability in the UK.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14689695/Police-replica-Grenfell-Tower-grieving-families.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14689695/Police-replica-Grenfell-Tower-grieving-families.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/who-is-blame-deadly-2017-grenfell-tower-fire-2024-09-04/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14689695/Police-replica-Grenfell-Tower-grieving-families.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/11c35448-2eb9-4c6a-9a56-f31a5fd18525), [[3]](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/09/04/grenfell-tower-fire-final-report-delivers-damning-verdict_6724781_19.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/2ac45a44-661d-4e3b-829f-c91a4957066e), [[7]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6pp46z93k6o)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/11c35448-2eb9-4c6a-9a56-f31a5fd18525), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/who-is-blame-deadly-2017-grenfell-tower-fire-2024-09-04/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://apnews.com/article/5aebcfdd76bbd59a57f734aa012da248)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14689695/Police-replica-Grenfell-Tower-grieving-families.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/11c35448-2eb9-4c6a-9a56-f31a5fd18525> - Kensington and Chelsea council has filed a lawsuit against Beko Europe, the manufacturer of the Hotpoint fridge-freezer believed to have ignited the catastrophic 2017 Grenfell Tower fire that killed 72 people. The council claims the company failed to conduct adequate safety tests on its appliance, which allegedly contained flammable materials in violation of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994. Legal documents allege the materials would have failed proper fire safety testing and that their risks should have been evident to a competent manufacturer. The lawsuit is part of broader litigation by the council and its Tenant Management Organisation seeking £358 million plus interest from various companies involved in the tower's fatal refurbishment, including those responsible for the fire-spreading cladding. Although Whirlpool disputes the claims and has suggested alternate fire origins, the Grenfell public inquiry concluded the fire definitively began in the appliance. The High Court has yet to receive defense statements, while the council emphasizes these legal efforts aim to ensure that corporate entities bear financial responsibility for their role in the tragedy.
3. <https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/09/04/grenfell-tower-fire-final-report-delivers-damning-verdict_6724781_19.html> - On June 14, 2017, a catastrophic fire broke out at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington, London, leading to 72 deaths. The final report, published on September 4, 2024, after an independent inquiry, revealed severe failures and negligence in the building’s refurbishment and regulatory oversight. Essential conclusions include inappropriate use of highly flammable ACM cladding, negligence by the Ministry of Local Authorities, and regulatory circumvention by manufacturers and construction bodies. The Building Research Establishment failed to enforce fire safety rigorously. There were widespread systemic issues in construction practices, regulatory oversight, and inadequate emergency response training. The report underscores the failure to heed warnings from past fire incidents and necessitates simplified responsibility chains and strict regulatory reforms. Efforts to retrofit buildings with safer cladding continue, but widespread incompetence persists in the construction sector. The families of the victims seek justice, with possible legal proceedings anticipated from 2026.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/who-is-blame-deadly-2017-grenfell-tower-fire-2024-09-04/> - A public inquiry concluded that the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire, which killed 72 people, resulted from "decades of failure" by the UK government and the construction industry. The report highlighted multiple failures, including the government's disregard for risks associated with combustible cladding, particularly following a 2009 blaze. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) failed to ensure safety compliance during refurbishment, and the response to the fire was criticized as slow and indecisive. The Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) prioritized cost-saving over safety. Various firms were found guilty of dishonesty by using and misleading the market about dangerous materials. Architects and contractors involved in the design and construction exhibited neglect regarding fire safety. The London Fire Brigade was unprepared due to poor management and assumptions about building regulations. Additionally, the Building Research Establishment and National House Building Council succumbed to commercial pressures, compromising safety standards.
5. <https://apnews.com/article/5aebcfdd76bbd59a57f734aa012da248> - The UK government announced plans to dismantle the remains of Grenfell Tower nearly 8 years after a deadly fire claimed 72 lives. The decision has faced criticism from some bereaved families who wished to preserve the building as a monument. However, the government cited structural safety concerns and the need for community healing in its decision to demolish the tower. Materials from the demolition will be used to create a memorial. The tower has become symbolic of government failures, corporate greed, and inequality, with a public inquiry revealing multiple systemic failures contributed to the tragedy. The dismantling process, set to start after the fire's eighth anniversary, is expected to take two years and will be conducted sensitively.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/2ac45a44-661d-4e3b-829f-c91a4957066e> - The final report from the public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire, which resulted in 72 deaths, highlights significant failings due to government incompetence and corporate greed. The inquiry attributes blame to multiple parties including cladding and insulation manufacturers Arconic, Celotex, and Kingspan who manipulated safety tests and misled the market. Additionally, regulatory failures at national and local levels are identified, with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the London Fire Brigade criticized for negligence and ineffective management. The report calls for comprehensive reforms in building safety regulations, including the creation of a new construction regulator, single-department responsibility for fire safety, and a contractor licensing scheme. The government is considering sanctions against offending companies, and criminal investigations are ongoing. Victims' families demand manslaughter charges, while previously settled civil cases did not preclude future criminal proceedings. The report advocates for sweeping industry changes to prevent future tragedies.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6pp46z93k6o> - It will be almost a decade after the Grenfell Tower disaster before any prosecutions could take place. The Metropolitan Police and Crown Prosecution Service said no charges would be announced until late 2026 at the earliest because of the increasing "scale and complexity" of the inquiry. Nineteen companies or organisations are currently under investigation, along with 58 individuals, over the disaster which killed 72 people in June 2017. Grenfell United, the bereaved families and survivor group, said they need to see justice and the wait is "unbearable". Senior officers have confirmed they are continuing to gather evidence of potential corporate manslaughter or fraud. The police investigation, codenamed Operation Northleigh, has been under way for nearly seven years alongside the two-part public inquiry. The delay announced today means it is likely no defendants will appear in court until 2027, if there are prosecutions. The public inquiry into the fire is expected to publish its final report in the summer or autumn of this year. Police will then spend 12 to 18 months considering its contents, a legal requirement, senior officers said.