

Open Statement Fire Safety Bill and Disabled People

Disability Rights UK calls on Government to take immediate action in the Fire Safety Bill, to ensure the safety and protection of Disabled People living in high-rise buildings, in the event of fire.

Almost four years after the Grenfell Tower tragedy, where 72 people, including Disabled People, died in the worst residential fire since the Second World War, the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry relating to Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for those who cannot self-evacuate still remain to be implemented.

It is a matter of public record that a significant proportion of the victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster were Disabled People. In response to this and after having taken considerable expert evidence, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 Report made a number of very specific recommendations relating to the need for new legal duties upon building owners and managers and the introduction of measures for the protection and evacuation of disabled occupants.

- That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to draw up and keep under regular review evacuation plans, copies of which are to be provided in electronic and paper form to their local fire and rescue service and placed in an information box on the premises;
- that the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to prepare personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for all residents whose ability to self-evacuate may be compromised (such as persons with reduced mobility or cognition);
- that the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to include up-to-date information about persons with reduced mobility and their associated PEEPs in the premises information box.

Regrettably, the Fire Safety Bill fails to address or respond to these recommendations in any way.

Disability Rights UK would urge the government to take this precious legislative opportunity, to include and adopt the above Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations into the scope of the Fire Safety Bill.

We also urge Government to work with the families of disabled victims of the Grenfell Tower fire and disabled people's organisations, to develop the necessary regulations and guidance to underpin these new legal duties.



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