

The independent scientists working on the Grenfell environmental checks

Meet the scientists

A number of highly-experienced and qualified scientists are carrying out, supporting or overseeing the environmental checks around the Grenfell Tower site to investigate the potential risk of land contamination as a result of the fire.

This high degree of independent scrutiny goes beyond the normal legal framework, and has been built into the checks so residents can be assured that the work is carried out to the highest professional standards.

Environmental specialists

AECOM, an independent environmental specialist company, will carry out Stage 2 of the environmental checks. They are a large global company, with proven expertise in land contamination investigations.

AECOM's UK team has carried out more than 100 investigations into land contamination across the UK and led Stage 1 of the Grenfell environmental checks.

The AECOM team will include:



Simon Cole, Technical Director

Simon has a PhD in environmental engineering and over 20 years' environmental assessment experience. He is vice chair of the Society for Brownfield Risk Assessment and has been both an advisor and technical expert to the Environment Agency, and the UK and Welsh governments. He was the Technical Director for Stage 1.



David Dyson, Project Manger

David has 16 years' environmental assessment experience and specialises in contaminated land risk assessments. He project managed Stage 1 and will do the same for Stage 2.



Katie Bruce, Sampling Manager

Katie has over 20 years' experience of investigations into land contamination. She worked on Stage 1 and will provide community engagement support during the Stage 2 sampling work.

Chief Scientific Advisers

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Alan Penn and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Gideon Henderson, will provide the day to day scientific advice and oversight of the environmental checks.

They will liaise with the Chair of the Science Advisory Group (SAG), Sir Patrick Vallance, the government Chief Scientific Adviser, and SAG members.



Professor Alan Penn was appointed as the MHCLG Chief Scientific Adviser in July 2019. Before this Alan was Dean of the Bartlett Faculty at University College London (UCL).



Professor Gideon Henderson was appointed as the Defra Chief Scientific Adviser in October 2019. He is also a Professor of Earth Sciences at the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Oxford.

The Science Advisory Group

To provide independent scientific assurance, Sir Patrick Vallance, established the SAG. The members were selected on the basis of their scientific expertise. Their role is to quality-check the scientific approach, testing process and analysis of the results at each stage of the environmental checks process.



Sir Patrick Vallance was President of Research and Development at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). Prior to joining GSK, he was Professor of Medicine at University College London (UCL).

Suitably Qualified Person (SQP)

Dr Paul Nathanail, an expert in land contamination, is the independent SQP under the National Quality Mark Scheme (NQMS). He will observe and review AECOM's work to ensure it is consistent with good practice. He will check the data and results, allowing him to sign a declaration under the NQMS.



Dr Paul Nathanail is Managing Director of Land Quality Management. He is a chartered geologist and specialist in land condition with 30 years' experience as a consultant and academic. He has been an expert witness in planning, environmental and criminal cases and was on Defra's contaminated land expert panel. Paul is a co-opted member of SAG.

Further information

There will be opportunities to meet the scientists at community events during Stage 2.



You can email questions to the scientists via environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk.

Your email will be forwarded to the appropriate scientist for a reply.

Questions and answers will also be shared in the next community update.

You can find out more about:

The environmental specialists at www.aecom.com/uk

The Chief Scientific Advisers at www.gov.uk/government/groups/chief-scientific-advisers

The Science Advisory Group at www.gov.uk/guidance/soil-and-environmental-checks

The Suitably Qualified Person at www.lqm.co.uk