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Grenfell Tower tragedy:

Context:

- In the early hours of 14 June 2017, a fire spread through Grenfell Tower, North Kensington, leaving 71 people dead. The fire appeared to be accelerated by the building's *exterior cladding system* – leading to a national programme of extensive testing of the cladding on other high-rise buildings. This revealed widespread use of aluminium composite materials which did not meet the limited combustibility requirements of building regulations guidance. Additional concerns emerged about the adequacy of the structural design of cladding systems when materials fell from a building in Glasgow. A subsequent series of fire and rescue service audits of tower blocks led to the temporary evacuation in London of the Chalcots Estate, Camden, and resulted in the discovery of structural safety issues with four buildings at the Ledbury Estate, Southwark.
- Dame Judith Hackitt was tasked by the secretary of state for the department for communities and local government (DCLG) and the home secretary to conduct an *Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety* with a particular focus on their application to high-rise residential buildings. Dame Judith was not tasked with investigating the specific circumstances at Grenfell as these are matters for the ongoing police investigation and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. In Dame Judith's [interim report](#), published in December 2017, she described how the regulatory system covering high-rise and complex buildings was "not fit for purpose."

The final report:

- Dame Judith's 156-page final report [Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety](#) was published on 17 May and concluded that the regulations themselves – and indeed the guidance for meeting them – were "ambiguous and unclear." The report called for a "radical rethink" of the safety system and Dame Judith has said that her proposals would result in a new regulator to oversee the construction and management of buildings, starting with the 2,000 to 3,000 'high risk' residential buildings with more than 10 stories. The report strongly criticises the current system, which Dame Judith said had resulted in a "prime motivation is to do things as quickly and cheaply as possible... A race to the bottom."

Reactions:

- The **Fire Industry Association (FIA)** also welcomed the final report – emphasising that it had been "pushing for years for changes in the regulatory environment and competency levels in the fire safety industry." The FIA was clear that it would "encourage the government to implement improvements to fire safety standards more widely, rather than just for high rise residential buildings (HRRBs)."
- The **Federation of Master Builders (FMB)** published a report [Raising the bar: A post-Grenfell agenda for quality and professionalism in construction](#). A headline recommendation within the report is for more regulation in the construction industry to end the tyranny of cowboy builders – a demand supported by almost 80 per cent of builders according to the FMB.
- The report acknowledges that the *Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety*, "raised serious questions about standards, regulation and compliance within the built environment." The issues raised by the review "must therefore be fully addressed but we should not shy away from drawing implications that go beyond the particulars of fire safety and tall buildings." FMB clearly states its belief that "lack of competence and professionalism in one part of our industry can never be entirely quarantined from other parts of our industry. We must drive a culture change across the entire sector."
- The **British Safety Council (BSC)** welcomed the publication of the final report – lauding the conclusions as "ambitious and far reaching." The BSC called on the government to "extrapolate this robust, effective and proven regime to inform the developing theme of residents' safety" and supported calls for consultation regarding a ban on the identified cladding as a short-term measure.

APM is a member of the **Construction Industry Council (CIC)** – which held its members' conference as the final report was published. Following publication of the final report, CIC members welcomed the announcement by the secretary of state for housing, communities and local government that the government "will consult on banning the use of combustible materials in cladding systems on high-rise residential buildings." The CIC conference attendees felt that it was essential to begin the formal consultation as soon as possible and argued that it would be appropriate for the industry itself to "impose a moratorium on the use of combustible materials in cladding systems on buildings over 18 metres, until there is a clear decision by the government on the definition, classification, testing and use of combustible cladding and insulation materials for higher risk and other buildings."

APM welcomed Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations and fire safety. Responding to the report, Sara Drake, APM chief executive said, "Dame Judith's report is to be welcomed and addresses many of the key issues of building safety arising from the tragedy of Grenfell itself but also other issues that the post-disaster discussions have made plain need addressing. As a professional body three generic themes emerge: The first two highlight the need to improve the culture as well as competence aspects across building and construction. The third theme binds these two together, namely this will require leadership and cooperation across professions and sectors. That must be our collective endeavour".

Philip Isgar, who led the work on Grenfell on behalf of APM said: *"The focus on achieving unambiguous responsibility for life safety at all stages of a project – from planning and design, through construction and on to occupation – is what we collectively need to collaborate towards achieving. We welcome the emphasis on cultural and behavioural change. We will work with other bodies and through the construction industry council in the coming months to ensure we embed the insights from the Hackitt report."*

Further reading:

- APM intends to publish a policy briefing in June on the Grenfell tragedy.
- Since the tragedy, **LSE Housing and Communities**, in partnership with the **National Communities Resource Centre at Trafford Hall**, has worked with tenants, landlords and professionals to identify the most important lessons from Grenfell. These are enumerated in a [blog post](#) by Professor Anne Power – Professor of Social Policy and Head of LSE Housing and Communities. Outlining *10 key lessons to be learnt from Grenfell*, Professor Power highlights that "problems in multi-storey blocks are being uncovered all over the country" and that "half of the four million socially-owned homes in England are in multi-storey blocks – roughly 30,000 blocks."

Industrial strategy:

- The government this month set out four [missions](#) to tackle the [grand challenges](#) as set out in the industrial strategy, with each mission focussing on a specific problem and "bringing government, businesses and organisations across the country together to make a real difference to people's lives." In a speech delivered in front of the

iconic *Lovell Telescope* at Jodrell Bank, the **prime minister** unveiled the four new missions to tackle issues such as healthy ageing, zero-carbon vehicles, home energy efficiency and using AI to improve disease detection and prevention.

- Timed to coincide with this new push, the think tank the **Resolution Foundation** hosted a series of [lunchtime discussions](#) – dealing with each of the four grand challenges – with ministers across government and leaders from the worlds of business, technology and policy.

To watch these discussions, please click the following hyperlinks:

- [Grand challenges: the future of mobility](#)
- [Grand challenges: artificial intelligence](#)
- [Grand challenges: ageing society](#)
- [Grand challenges: clean growth](#)

Digital railway strategy:

- **Transport secretary Chris Grayling** this month announced the launch of **Network Rail's digital railway strategy**. In addition to a commitment to "ensuring all new trains and signalling are digital or digital ready from 2019" Network Rail set out that they want to see digital rail technology "benefiting passengers across the network over the next decade."

The strategy states that new digital rail technology will:

- safely allow more trains to run per hour by running trains closer together;
- allow more frequent services and more seats;
- cut delays by allowing trains to get moving more rapidly after disruption; and
- enable vastly improved mobile and wi-fi connectivity – so that passengers can make the most of their travel time and communities close to the railway can connect more easily.

Head of the civil service and the importance of project management:

- The **Institute of Government (IfG)** hosted John Manzoni, the head of the UK civil service, to give a [keynote on civil service reform](#). Mr Manzoni emphasised that as the civil service places greater emphasis on *functional skills* so the importance of project management is becoming *more apparent*. This is also expected to have a catalytic effect elsewhere as this "influences how the civil service interacts with the private sector and how this percolates down to decentralised and other parts of the public sector."

■ His speech also focused on changes to the civil service and how it was adapting to meet the challenges of transformation (and Brexit) – at a time when the civil service is recruiting more than 300 project managers specifically to work on Brexit activity this year. Making explicit reference to project leadership, Mr Manzoni stated that “we have a group of experienced project leaders, many of whom have been trained through our major projects leadership programmes, and are now being deployed into the most complex Brexit projects.” All of this provides a very significant reference point for APM’s wider engagement with government and beyond.

Reports, publications, and events across Westminster and Whitehall:

■ The government this month announced funding to investigate the development of a low cost, low carbon hydrogen for industry, buildings and transport. The £20m [hydrogen supply programme](#) will look to significantly reduce the high cost of producing large volumes of low carbon hydrogen, so that the technology can become a competitive, clean energy supply of the future.

■ The **National Audit Office (NAO)** published its report [The Defence Nuclear Enterprise: a landscape review](#). Among the key facts highlighted by the report are the following:

- **£5.2bn**: the estimated expected spend on the nuclear enterprise (the enterprise) in 2018–19, 14 per cent of the defence budget;
- **49**: the number of years the Royal Navy has operated the continuous at sea deterrent;
- **10**: the number of in-service nuclear submarines as at March 2018;
- **£4.9bn**: the initial forecast cost of 52 in-progress estate upgrade programmes over their lifetime.

■ The **Department for Education** published the most recent [apprenticeship statistics](#) showing a marked decline in the number of apprenticeship starts. This prompted business organisations such as the **British Chambers of Commerce (BCoC)**, the **Confederation of British Industry (CBI)**, and others to re-issue their calls for reform of the apprenticeship levy.

■ The inaugural meeting of the new *UK life sciences council* took place this month – chaired by **business secretary Greg Clark** and **health and social care secretary Jeremy Hunt**. The council was also attended by a range of industry experts, including Pascal Soriot from AstraZenca (co-chair), as well as representatives from J&J, MSD, and ABPI. The main objective of the council is to ensure the UK continues to be a global leader in life sciences.

■ The **Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)** this month launched for consultation its draft long-term [clean air strategy](#) – outlining the steps it plans to take to address emissions from a range of sources. These steps include proposals to tackle air pollution from domestic solid fuels like wood and coal-burning, emissions from agriculture, as well as further action on polluting non-road mobile machinery and air pollution from aviation and shipping.

The consultation closes on the 14 August 2018 and can be accessed [here](#).

■ The **mayor of London, Sadiq Khan**, this month set out his vision for London’s environment in 2050, presenting his *environment strategy* to the London Assembly for consideration before final publication in the coming weeks. The strategy outlines the mayor’s plans to “make London a greener, cleaner and healthier place” by targeting London’s toxic air, increasing its green cover and making London a zero-carbon city by 2050 with energy efficient buildings, clean transport and energy and increasing recycling.

■ **Minister for London Jo Johnson** this month visited the [Thames Tideway tunnel](#), accompanied by treasury minister Robert Jenrick and deputy leader of Wandsworth council Jonathan Cook, as engineering teams prepared to start tunnelling work on the £4.2bn sewage system – one of the largest projects of its kind in Europe.

■ The **House of Commons work and pensions committee** published a report [Universal credit: supporting self-employment](#).

■ A [second joint report](#) was published by the **House of Commons business, energy and industrial strategy** and **work and pensions committees** on the inquiry into the collapse of Carillion.

■ Several important reports were published this month by the **House of Commons public accounts committee**. Its report [The Defence Equipment Plan 2017–2027](#) highlights that a significant affordability gap has again opened up; with forecast costs at least £4.9bn – and potentially as much as £20.8bn – more than the £179.7bn budget. The committee’s report states that the Department is “reluctant to present openly an assessment of the affordability gap” and that it has “failed to report transparently to parliament and the public about the financial risks it faces.” In addition to reports on [Renewable Heat Incentive in Great Britain](#) and [Government risk assessments relating to Carillion](#) the committee published its report [Exiting the European Union: The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and the Department for International Trade](#) highlighting that the **Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs** is a key player within government in negotiations (on the withdrawal agreement and the future relationship with the EU; in future trade agreements; in border planning; and in agreeing future arrangements with the devolved administrations) given that it is one of the departments most affected by Brexit and that almost all of its areas of responsibility framed by EU legislation.

■ The **House of Lords EU external affairs sub-committee** published its report [Brexit: Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations](#).

■ The **House of Lords EU justice sub-committee** has published its report on [Dispute Resolution and Enforcement after Brexit](#). Given that one of the aims of the government’s Brexit strategy is to end the direct jurisdiction of the court of justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the UK, finding an adequate replacement that allows for the resolution of disputes between the UK and EU post-Brexit is critical for the maintenance of the rule of law in the UK. The sub-committee’s report considers six options ranging from relying on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute system to joining the EFTA court (though with the addition of British judges).

- The **House of Lords energy and environment sub-committee** published its report [Brexite: food prices and availability](#). The committee's report states that "it is inconceivable that Brexit will have no impact on EU food imports to the UK." Indeed, if an agreement cannot be negotiated, Brexit is "likely to result in an average tariff on food imports of 22 per cent." At least as significant as *tariffs* are the *non-tariff barriers* that may result from Brexit. A key point made by the report is the stark contrast between government confidence and industry concerns.
- The government this month published its [response](#) to the **House of Commons science and technology committee's** report on *Brexit, science and innovation*.
- The **House of Commons environmental audit committee** published its report [Green finance: mobilising investment in clean energy and sustainable development](#).
- The **House of Commons business, energy and industrial strategy committee** published its report [The impact of Brexit on the pharmaceutical sector](#).
- The **House of Commons foreign affairs committee** published its report [Moscow's Gold: Russian corruption in the UK](#).
- The **Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)** announced that the UK will launch a research and innovation hub for experts to develop solutions to stop plastic waste from entering the oceans, finding environmentally-friendly alternatives to plastic. India, Canada, and other Commonwealth nations have already signed up to be part of the newly announced *marine plastics research and innovation framework* – a hub where researchers will be able to connect and collaborate on the latest research and innovations to tackle marine plastics.
- The **secretary of state for international trade, Dr Liam Fox** delivered a speech to an audience at the first UK trade and export finance forum where he talked about UK export finance (UKEF) – as part of the Department for International Trade – exploring its plans and ambitions as well as enumerating some of its recent successes. The transcript is available [here](#).
- Earlier this month the government confirmed that it is developing options for a *British global navigation satellite system* – setting up a taskforce led by the **UK Space Agency**. The taskforce, it hopes, will work quickly to develop options that will provide both civilian and encrypted signals and be compatible with the GPS system.
- The **House of Commons international trade committee** published its [report](#) on UK-US trade relations. With the UK to begin negotiating free trade agreements in less than a year, the committee's report encourages government to ensure that the basis of negotiations is a clear, evidence-based and comprehensive trade strategy, which is open to scrutiny.
- New laws introduced this month will mean that from June, drivers will be able to use remote-control parking on British roads. Changes to the *Highway Code* and relevant regulations were [consulted on](#) earlier this year and received overwhelming support from a range of groups including manufacturers, insurance groups and haulage companies. The law encompasses technology such as remote-

control parking and motorway assist which government and industry say have the potential to "transform car travel for those with mobility challenges, unlocking tight parking spaces and using computers to help driver accuracy on the road."

- **UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)** published its [Strategic Prospectus: Building the UKRI Strategy](#) which it says, "will create a research and innovation system that is fit for the future and equipped to tackle the environmental, social and economic challenges of the 21st century."
- The **Environment Agency** published the outcome of its consultation on [Environment Agency charge proposals from April 2018](#).
- **HS2** this month published its summary response report [High Speed Two Phase 2a \(West Midlands - Crewe\) Equality Impact Assessment Report Consultation Summary Response Report](#). HS2 Ltd undertook consultations on the working draft EQIA report to contribute towards enabling and documenting active fulfilment of its public sector equality duty (PSED) during the design stage of the proposed scheme. This report summarises the key issues raised during consultation on the July 2017 EQIA report, explaining how these have been considered through the development and EQIA of the proposed scheme.

Reports and publications – professional bodies/think-tanks/other:

- The **Centre for Policy Studies (CPS)** published a report by Alan Mak MP as part of the CPS' flagship programme *New Generation* – promoting new policy ideas from fresh conservative thinkers, including MPs from the 2015 and 2017 intakes. Entitled [Powerful Patients, Paperless Systems: How new technology can renew the NHS](#) the report contains a foreword by the Rt. Hon Jeremy Hunt, secretary of state for health and social care.
- **Energy UK** this month launched its [vision document](#) seeking to identify the challenges and opportunities of "delivering a clean, green future energy system that meets consumer expectations".
- The **Federation of Master Builders** published its [State of Trade survey Q1 2018](#).
- **Ofcom** published its report [Choosing the best broadband, mobile and landline provider: comparing service quality 2017](#) – the aim of the report being to provide clear information on service quality so that consumers can best compare how different providers are performing and therefore make informed purchasing decisions.
- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** published [data](#) on air pollution showing that globally, nine out of 10 people breathe air containing high levels of pollutants and that around seven million people die every year from exposure to polluted air.
- The **Energy Technologies Institute (ETI)** published a [summary report](#) from its *nuclear cost drivers* project identifying eight key cost drivers and 35 credible opportunities to reduce the cost of generating electricity using nuclear power.

- The **British Academy** has published its report [Governing England: Devolution and public services](#) identifying health, skills and infrastructure as keys to devolution success.
- The **Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)** published its [Mortgages market study – interim report](#) calling for the mortgages market to work better while preserving important regulatory protections where these are needed. The FCA would like:
 - for it to be easier for consumers to find the right mortgage;
 - for there to be a wider range of tools providing consumers with a choice about the support (including advice) that they receive;
 - for consumers choosing an intermediary to be able to do so on an informed basis, and;
 - for consumers to be able to switch more freely to new deals without undue barriers.
- The **Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA)** published its latest [discussion paper](#) on global financial services regulation, considering what the UK can do (in the context of Brexit) that would “not only improve the UK’s financial service industry, but would also improve global financial services and the availability of capital, hedging mechanisms and insurance internationally.”
- The **Resolution Foundation (RF)** *intergenerational commission* published its [final report](#) on the social contract between generations. Among its key recommendations were:
 - Introduction of a new £1bn ‘better jobs deal’ that offers practical support and funding for younger workers most affected by the financial crisis to take up opportunities to move jobs or train to progress; and
 - £1.5bn to tackle persistent underfunding of technical education routes.

Both of which, it says could be funded by cancelling the forthcoming 1p cut in corporation tax.
- The **National Audit Office (NAO)** published its report [Early progress in transforming courts and tribunals](#) on modernising the justice system, explaining how HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is introducing new technology and working practices to modernise the justice system. The NAO also published its [report](#) on low-carbon electricity generation contracts.
- **Policy Exchange** published its report [Solutions to the Irish border: Why the UK \(including Northern Ireland\) can leave the Customs Union, avoid a hard border – and preserve the Good Friday agreement](#) asserting that an Irish border without physical infrastructure is fully attainable, and therefore that the “overly complex proposals” for a Customs Partnership are unnecessary.
- The **Sellafield Ltd** [social impact strategy](#) was published earlier this month and sets out how to deliver the maximum social impact from the £2bn of taxpayer money that it spends each year.
- The **Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI)** and **Brightside** published a joint report on higher education access entitled [Reaching the parts of society universities have missed: A manifesto for the new director of fair access and participation](#).
- **EEF**, the manufacturers’ organisation and **Westfield Health** jointly published a report [Unlocking employee productivity: The role of health and wellbeing in manufacturing](#). EEF also published a [report](#) in partnership with **Squire Patton Boggs** on access to EU workers post-Brexit.
- The **Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)** has launched a consultation – running until July and available [here](#) – on new standards to address bribery, corruption and money laundering.

Reports, publications, and activity from the world of project management:

- The **Major Projects Association (MPA)** is hosting an event on [Project closure and operational readiness](#) on 13 June 2018.
- **AEIPRO-IPMA Spain** has an upcoming event in Madrid on 12 June 2018 entitled [How leading companies work on a project event](#).
- There is a [call for papers](#) for the **ProMAC2018 Conference** in Thailand.
- **IRNOP** [call for Doctoral symposium papers 1 June 2018](#).

APM events/research and policy outputs:

- **APM** published its policy briefing on the [National Infrastructure Commission](#).
- **APM** published its [guide to project sponsorship](#).
- Two **APM Research Summaries** were published in this period including *Three domains of project organising*
- Additionally, **APM** published the 10th and final paper in its *Road to Chartered* series, entitled [APM as a chartered body: Supporting the journey of chartered project professionals](#). This following the ninth paper [Joining the dance? Creating an inclusive profession](#) – also recently published.
- **APM** published its [Guide to Project Auditing](#)

APM forthcoming:

- **APM Awards 2018** are now open for submissions – deadline 18 June 2018 [click here](#) for more.
- **Joint APM and MPA event/webinar** on project closure and handover on 31 July 2018 – more information available in June.
- **APM research publication** on the relationship between project management and productivity to be published later this summer.
- **APM** will publish a policy briefing on the Grenfell tragedy, the Hackitt Report, and the Grenfell Enquiry in late June/early July.