

**Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Meeting  
with bereaved families and former residents**  
(Tuesday 19 January)

**Attendees**

**Memorial Commission**

Michael Lockwood  
(Meeting Chair)

**Community Representatives (8)**

(Bereaved Representatives)	(Lancaster West Representatives)
Sandra Ruiz	Andrea Newton
Hassan Hassan	Susan Al-Safadi

**Secretariat**

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Secretariat (2)

**Other**

Bereaved and former resident  
attendees (8)

**Meeting purpose**

The purpose of these meetings is to update bereaved families and former residents on the Commission's work and to provide an opportunity for residents to share their thoughts or concerns and to ask questions.

**Opening**

- Michael introduced the meeting, and a one-minute silence was held at the start of the meeting.

**Update of Commission's work**

- Michael set out the Commission's role to develop a fitting memorial for the Grenfell tragedy, and the importance of this. He introduced himself and highlighted how personal this work is for him. Each of the community representatives introduced themselves and explained how important the role was to them.
- Michael explained that the Commission is very aware of the impact of Covid-19 and the Inquiry on people's ability to feed into the process.
- He set out the Commission's work so far. This includes work to establish the right level of governance to ensure the Commission is able to properly work. This also includes appointing high-profile supporters to ensure that Grenfell remains at the forefront of people's minds.
- He explained that the Commission has been speaking to those who've worked on other memorials – for example, Manchester bombing memorial team, the Holocaust memorial, and families who worked on the memorial for 7/7. The Commission recognises these are all different and also different to

Grenfell but was keen to understand the lessons that can be learnt from these other memorials and the process they went through.

- The Commission is also continuing to engage with community groups and local stakeholders.
- The Commission is ensuring they have access to experts to help them as they go forward with their work. One of those experts is Kaizen. Their role is to help gather ideas from the families and community and they have been talking to people about their hopes for a memorial. From these initial conversations they have developed a word cloud showing emerging findings about how families and the community think a memorial should feel. The Commission is keen to hear any feedback on Kaizen and the work they are undertaking.
- Michael stressed that the GTMC will need to report at some stage but will go as slowly as necessary. He recognised the Commission has not been as visible as it should. They have taken on this feedback and continue to take steps to address these issues including most recently launching a [newsletter](#), and making the website more transparent. They are keen to ensure that families feel comfortable that there are no secrets and no surprises.
- A Community Representative outlined how the word cloud has been produced in different languages, and that engaging people for whom English is not their first language is a key priority for the Commission. They reflected on lessons from other memorials, and how the learning journey has lots of common factors. They also stressed that the Commission is determined that this memorial won't be a 'poor cousin' to other national memorials.
- The representative recognised feedback that for some families this has been too early and was clear that while the Commission does not want to delay unnecessarily, it will not be pushed before it is right for the families and community. They accept that they aren't going to get everyone's approval but want people to feel listened to and to find as much common ground as possible.
- Finally, the representative emphasised that while Kaizen are ensuring large numbers of people are reached, the Commission are available for conversations with anyone who wants to speak more directly. They can be reached through the [website](#) and through the GTMC secretariat: [GTMCSecretariat@communities.gov.uk](mailto:GTMCSecretariat@communities.gov.uk)
- Another representative explained that while all Community Representatives work for their separate constituents, they also work together. They apologised to anyone who feels they haven't been able to reach the Commission. The representative explained that they are changing this and that they all have confidence in the co-chairs.
- Michael shared the [word cloud](#) on the screen and asked for feedback.

## Q&A

- An attendee thanked the Commission and the co-chairs for all the work they are doing and the time that they are giving to the memorial. They explained they were keen to navigate the process with love and respect. They reflected on their view

that the Tower should not be taken down until the Inquiry process is finished. They also agreed with the importance of learning from other memorials and talking to other communities who have been through the process. They noted that they had not been in contact with Kaizen.

- Michael was clear that the decision on the future of the Tower is for government and not for the Commission. He said that the Commission will do everything in its power to ensure that there are no surprises, and that the community is engaged before any decision on the Tower. On contact with Kaizen, Michael explained that for GDPR reasons, Kaizen did not hold contact information for any of the families or the community and it would be for them to give consent for their details to be shared.
- An attendee reflected that the Tower is a constant reminder of what happened.
- Another attendee stated that he thought the Commission was in charge of the future of the site, and thanked Michael for the clarification that this does not include the Tower. They asked about Kaizen's role, and whose decision it was to appoint them.
- Michael set out that Kaizen had been appointed to do two things: to work for MHCLG on their consultation on the future of the Tower and help the Memorial Commission with its engagement. He said that in hindsight the Commission would have liked to have had more involvement earlier in the process.
- A Community Representative set out that they were on the panel for appointing Kaizen, but that it didn't feel like they were leading the process. The Commission has learnt and is now taking a lead on procurements. They want to see the due diligence and make sure that any company has a clean record.
- Another Community Representative agreed that it was not ideal. After they were appointed the Commission had a meeting to decide how and when decisions are made going forward, including how procurements will be run. Thelma and Michael agreed with this. There will be no decisions on architecture and design without everyone concerned. The representative acknowledges that the Commission can't technically run procurement or hold contracts, so have to lead it through MHCLG. They also reflected how, after oversight and challenge by the Commission, Kaizen do understand the work.
- Attendees agreed that procurement decisions should come down to the Commission.
- A Community Representative asked for advice on communications methods. They recognised that letters are often unopened and asked which ways of communicating will work for people. They were clear Kaizen are only one channel of communication. Representatives have made themselves available for small sessions like this with everyone, and want to hear views direct.
- An attendee set out that there was a communications gap: Kaizen are unable to communicate directly with people, RBKC-branded letters are not being opened, and engagement doesn't happen with the relevant people unless they get in contact with them. They noted that while these forums are helpful, they would expect to see the Commission having more support from Kaizen to run them.
- There was a discussion about envelopes not being opened. Attendees reflected that individuals are inundated with updates from lawyers, site team, Memorial

Commission. There is no easy answer to this. They advised that the Commission continue to advertise meetings like this on WhatsApp and that all letters and communications are much more succinct. They were also clear that until something happens with the Inquiry, it is hard to focus on the memorial.

- A Community Representative asked if an app would be useful – notifications and directing to website. The group fed back that they felt WhatsApp was easier.
- The attendees reflected on importance of overseas relatives being heard and involved. The Secretariat will contact those that it has details for, with the help of the Commission and the meeting attendees, to set up individual meetings.
- There was a question on what would happen if the Commission disagrees with the community. Michael set out that the Commission knows about the pressures people are under, such as the Inquiry and the emotional importance of the Tower. They understand that there are polarised views on all of these. An attendee set out that people are speaking as individuals not as groups when it comes to the memorial. Michael agreed that the most important thing is that everyone has a voice.
- An attendee reflected that as a Muslim, they have some very personal views about memorialisation. The Commission needs to be receptive to different cultures and reflective of all cultures and faiths. Some things will be acceptable to some groups but not to others. Capturing that is a difficult thing. They gave the example of the site being referred to as a shrine, and that some in the community recognise shrines and others don't. What is appropriate to be on a burial ground is crucial and really important to reflect. The Commission reflected on their work with faith experts and faith leaders and stated that this is clearly on their workplan. They also stated that some who speak Arabic do not necessarily read Arabic, and so verbal conversations can be better than written ones. The group agreed that specific sessions held in different languages would be helpful.
- Finally, a Community Representative reflected that the session hadn't covered ideas about the memorial. The Secretariat shared the details of how to give these (see below) and that further such sessions would be happening each month.

**To share ideas about the memorial, you can contact our engagement specialists, Kaizen:**

**Phone:** 020 7082 5508

**Email:** [grenfellmemorial@kaizen.org.uk](mailto:grenfellmemorial@kaizen.org.uk)

**Letter to:** Kaizen, 22a Cliff Villas, London, NW1 9AT

**Alternatively, you can contact the Memorial Commission:**

**Phone:** 0303 444 4831

**Email:** [GTMCSecretariat@communities.gov.uk](mailto:GTMCSecretariat@communities.gov.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.grenfelltowermemorial.co.uk/>

**Next meeting with bereaved families and former residents:**

15<sup>th</sup> February 18:00 – 19:00

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

**Or dial in:** +44 20 3443 8728 and use conference ID: 678 604 475