

**Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Meeting
with North Kensington residents**
(Tuesday 23 February 2021)

Attendees

Memorial Commission

Thelma Stober
(Meeting Chair)

(Bereaved Representatives) (Survivor Representatives¹) (Lancaster West Representatives)
Sandra Ruiz Hanan Cherbika Andrea Newton
Nabil Choucair Susan Al Safadi

Secretariat

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Secretariat (2)

Other

Residents (9)

Meeting purpose

The purpose of these meetings is to update residents on the Commission's work and to provide an opportunity for residents to share their thoughts, ideas, suggestions about a memorial, any concerns they have and to ask questions.

Opening

- A one-minute silence was held at the start of the meeting.

Introductions

- Thelma and the Community Representatives introduced themselves. They explained their role on the Commission and that they are keen to engage with bereaved, survivors, local residents and the North Kensington community to understand their views on a fitting memorial. They explained that this is the Commission's first meeting with the North Kensington residents, and that these will take place regularly (online meeting schedule [here](#)).

Discussion

- Thelma set out the Commission's progress to date, explaining how they have been working for 18 months to get set up, engage with bereaved, survivors and local stakeholders, and to ensure that they have the right support in place. They have looked at other memorial commissions to understand how these have responded to obstacles and achievements. All these memorials are different, but there is something to learn from them all.

¹ For the purposes of the Memorial Commission, this refers to former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk.

- The Community Representatives gave an update on some of their work to date and explained that they have mainly been focusing on listening. They set out that so far, they have been asking the community about the 'feel' of the memorial, and that they have not yet started to ask questions about the detail. Thelma shared the [word cloud](#) that summarises what the Commission has heard to date about how a future memorial should feel. This reflects over 300 words that the Commission has heard so far and is a living document. Thelma asked for views from those present and made clear that they can give these to the Commission at any point by contacting a Community Representative, emailing the Secretariat, or contacting Kaizen (details for all of these below).
- The Community Representatives explained the Memorial Commission's [timeline](#). Future steps include a report on the community's preferred memorial, followed by a process to select a design team.
- An attendee asked how the 10 Community Representatives had been selected. The Secretariat explained the voting process, including how community members were asked to self-nominate, and how each group voted for their own representatives. The Secretariat explained that voting details were sent to bereaved families (via the named next of kin), households formerly living in Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk, and households living on the Lancaster West estate. Voting was open for four weeks in June and July 2019.
- An attendee suggested some ideas for engagement, including using local amenities such as libraries (once these are open following restrictions) and also gave an idea on the use of visual art to represent the themes reflected in the word cloud. The Secretariat took an action to explore these.
- An attendee shared an idea on advertising on local electronic noticeboards on their estate and offered to share the details of how to do this with the Commission.
- There was a question on how the bereaved veto works. Thelma set out that this means that nothing will happen that the bereaved are not comfortable with. The Secretariat gave some background on how the community agreed on this before the Commission was set up. They explained that while it is important that we engage with whole community, the bereaved families need to have a strong voice. The whole community will work together to develop the options, but the bereaved will need to be comfortable at every step. Thelma stated that from her own experience this is not an unusual approach to adopt, and that the same happened for the 7/7 memorial.
- There was a question about the definition of bereaved/next of kin and priority being given to next of kin. The Community Representatives stressed the difficulty of specific definitions such as next of kin and closely bereaved, noting that families can be complicated at the best of times. They want to ensure that everyone who lost a loved one has a strong voice. They emphasised the importance of focusing on the shared goal of remembering those who lost their lives.
- An attendee asked whether it was true that Lancaster West residents have the final say on the memorial. Thelma was clear that this is not the case and

explained the process emphasising this is a joint community process but that the bereaved will need to be comfortable with the final design.

- An attendee asked about the role of the council and the government. Thelma set out RBKC's role as planning authority. As ex-officio members of the Commission they only attend meetings when they are invited to provide information the Commission requires. Thelma gave planning as an example. The memorial will require planning permission from the council as the local planning authority. To make sure the Commission understands the council's planning application process and procedures and policies a council representative will be invited at the relevant time to explain this to the Commission. This will ensure that the relevant planning law matters are considered as part of any proposed design to avoid such issues following the Commission's report. MHCLG's role, as temporary owner of the site, is to ensure it remains safe and secure. The Secretariat's role is to provide administrative support to the Commission.
- The Community Representatives emphasised that this is an entirely independent and community-led process.
- There was a further question on how the Commission will ensure that the memorial is not used by politicians as a photo opportunity. The Community Representatives were very clear that the Commission is apolitical. The future memorial will not be a place for politics, politicians, or photo shoots unless invited by the Commission or the community. The attendee asked if future events could be an apolitical space without politicians present.
- Representatives agreed that the memorial should not be political.
- There was a question on maintenance and funding, especially in light of the Ladbroke Grove memorial. Thelma explained that the government will provide funding, and that they haven't done this yet as the community has not given a view on their preferred design for a future memorial. It is important, however, that long term funding is considered as part of the design and ownership of the memorial. The Community Representatives were clear that maintenance must be guaranteed beyond this government. This must be a lasting memorial to those who died, to ensure that what happened at Grenfell Tower is never forgotten.
- There was a discussion on the importance of engaging children and young people, given that they are the future and one day will be responsible for the memorial. The Commission was clear it will do this in a sensitive and trauma-informed way.
- Finally, there was a question on the timeline and the expected date for a finished memorial. The Community Representatives said they would go as fast as possible but as slow as necessary, and that this was a conversation that could not be rushed. They explained that, as on their timeline, their hope was that a memorial could be completed by 2025.

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

Phone: 020 7082 5508

Email: 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

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

Contact your **Community Representatives** [here](#)