

**Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Meeting
with local residents**
(Thursday 24 February 2022)

Attendees

Memorial Commission

Thelma Stober
(Meeting chair)

Community representatives (2)

(Survivor Representatives¹) (Lancaster West Representatives)
Hanan Cherbika Andrea Newton

Secretariat

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Secretariat (2)

Other

Residents (4)

Meeting purpose

The purpose of these meetings is to update residents on the views the Commission has heard so far, and to provide an opportunity for residents to share their thoughts, concerns, ideas 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 all bereaved, survivors, and local residents about a fitting memorial.

Lancaster West updates

- Thelma spoke about the process that the Commission has been through to collect the themes in the word cloud. She asked if any of those present had any views on the themes.
- An attendee suggested the word justice be added. Secretariat explained that this was in the words gathered but not in the eight themes of the words that came up most often. Thelma agreed that justice should feature.
- An attendee said that different people in the community have different views, and that it might be difficult to bring everyone together. Thelma said that the most important views are from those who lost loved ones, and also those who lost their homes. Those who live nearby are also incredibly important because

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

they will need to live with a future memorial and so their views will also need to be included.

- A community representative said that there will always be division in any community, and that the final goal is to achieve something that everyone can live with. She was clear that communication is key.
- An attendee came in and said that a lot of the words that have come up numerous times, so there are common themes there. There is clear common ground between survivors and bereaved families, as well as residents. They said that this provided hope.
- Thelma thanked the attendees and shared the vision statement and said that this has been the result of all the conversations to date.
- An attendee said that that this was reflective of the memorial. They added that there was no doubt in the community in terms of the fact that bereaved families and survivors have a greater say. There is also no doubt that the whole community needs to be patient. Some of the most difficult issues have been related to fake news circulating. The work that the Commission is doing is great and transparent, and is accessible to anyone in North Kensington who wants to be involved. Another attendee agreed that they should make sure everyone gets a say, as well as those with the loudest voices. The process itself needs to be respected.
- A community representative agreed that having a say does not mean that you get what you want. It means having the opportunity to contribute to the process.
- An attendee said that proximity and who is more affected are two different considerations. Lots of people in North Kensington have been affected by the fire, and there is no way of 'ranking' trauma. People close to the Tower will of course be very affected by all the ongoing work. But these two things (trauma and impact from works) need to be considered in parallel.
- Thelma was clear that people on the Lancaster West Estate are being consulted, but that it is important that others in the area are also consulted, such as some of those who live extremely close to the Tower but not on the estate itself.
- Thelma set out how her personal experience has shaped her understanding of how important it is to be consulted. Thelma was clear that the Commission wants to talk to any affected families and residents in any way they want to, whether it is online, in person, or by email.
- An attendee was clear that there is no question about whether they have been consulted, but that they need reassurance that the responsibility for the process will stay with GTMC. The Commission reassured them this was the case.
- Another attendee was clear that the cladding and the refurbishment of the Tower was about making the Tower beautiful from the outside. They said they thought the memorial should not be beautiful – it should be powerful and a reminder. Another attendee said that it was ok to be blunt and uncomfortable. Another attendee said that it was possible for something to be powerful and a reminder but also a beautiful space to come to remember. A community

representative thanked everyone for their views and said that this was all being noted.

- An attendee said they felt that those who want the Tower to stay as it is do not want a memorial, they just want to preserve the Tower. Thelma was clear that all views relating to the Tower structure would be passed on to the government, which is responsible for the Tower site.
- An attendee said that if bereaved and survivors wanted a functional building, the community would stand by them. But that there needs to be a plan to invest in the emotional support of the community because they will have to live with whatever this building is.
- Thelma agreed and said this would be passed on. She said that from her own experience, time does not heal and that it feels to her like her own experience, which was 17 years ago, was yesterday.
- A community representative explained the shape of the site footprint, and the area that has currently been designated for the memorial. An attendee asked if the Lancaster West Estate would lose any amenities, especially for children. The community representatives on the call spoke about the importance of working with children and young people and hearing their views. They were clear that making sure the children of the area feel the memorial is theirs is very important to the Commission. It also needs to be above all a space that is respectful to those who have lost the most. Another attendee said that losing space would be a price worth paying for a beautiful memorial.
- Thelma explained that the Commission will be writing an interim report in May, which will set out all the information the commission has heard and also what more it needs to do. She encouraged those on the call to look out for this. She thanked everyone for sharing their views.

Next meeting with local residents:

Wednesday 16 March 18:00-19:00. You can see our full list of meeting dates [here](#).

To share ideas about the memorial, you can contact the Memorial Commission via:

Phone: [0303 444 4831](tel:03034444831)

Email: GTMCSecretariat@levellingup.gov.uk

Website: www.grenfelltowermemorial.co.uk/ via [contact](#) buttons in the 'About Us' section.