

Grenfell disaster: local charity calls on government for leadership on needed change

Friday 11 October, 2024

A local charity serving the Grenfell Tower community, including several of the victims and survivors, has responded to the disaster's inquiry report and called for sustained attention to putting things right.

North Kensington Law Centre is located in the shadow of Grenfell Tower and has been providing free legal advice to the local community for six decades. From day one of the disastrous fire, that needlessly claimed 72 lives, it has helped the survivors, their families and other local residents, who were badly affected.

'We welcome the unflinchingly honest report of the Inquiry Panel, that established the truth about the disaster. We also recognise that justice for the bereaved and survivors is still years away. Finally, we call on the new government to show leadership and resolve and bring about the change our communities need.

'We support the Inquiry's conclusions that the fire resulted from multiple failures to heed warnings and update regulations by all organisations involved. It calls out the culture of deregulation and careless indifference which resulted in avoidable risk to lives. It decries the dishonesty and cynicism of the building industry, from manufacturing to testing to selling to installing highly flammable materials.

'The Inquiry report also points to the complicity of the bodies responsible for oversight of the building industry in misleading the public. It lists the chronic and systemic failings of the local authority and its Tenant Management Organisation in relation to fire safety and their dismissal of tenants' concerns. A culture within of buck-passing from the architects to the installation firms has meant that no one took responsibility for ensuring that the cladding was safe.

'The Grenfell Inquiry report exposes what the former Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Reverend James Jones, had dubbed "The Patronising Disposition of Unaccountable Power", also apparent in the wake of the Hillsborough disaster. To strengthen public accountability, Jones called in 2017 for a Duty of Candour to be enshrined in law. Victims in Liverpool and London are still waiting.

'Finally, the report makes clear that wider change is needed. We call on the Prime Minister to expedite his promised examination of implementing all 58 recommendations of the report. The Law Centre will continue to play our part in supporting our local community and holding government to its promise. We will also continue to honour the dignity and commitment of survivors, the bereaved and the local community, in their fight to bring the story to the public's attention and demand change.'

ENDS

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Notes to editors:

- [North Kensington Law Centre](#) (NKLK) is a local charity operating from the Lancaster West estate, where Grenfell Tower is located, in west London.
- A Law Centre is a not-for-profit law practice. It employs solicitors and specialist caseworkers to give free advice and legal assistance to local people. It specialises in problems relating to people's disadvantage, such as with housing, welfare benefits or immigration status.
- North Kensington Law Centre is also the first organisation of its kind, set up in 1970. It is part of a movement of 42 Law Centres still operating across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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