

Grenfell Action Group

Working to defend and serve the
Lancaster West community



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Is Jaw-Jaw Better Than War-War?

Posted on [April 22, 2014](#)



The correspondence below was sent by a member of the Grenfell Action Group to the Leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council, Nick Paget Brown, on the 11th February 2014. Sadly we received no response to this letter and we are asking Councillor Paget Brown to take on board the fact that we in the Grenfell Action Group believe that we have legitimate complaints that need dealing with and should not just be swept under the Hornton St. carpet.

Dear Councillor Paget Brown,

Thank you for your email dated 30th January 2014. Once more, I would like to reiterate that it was very disappointing that Cllr Feilding Mellen and yourself choose to question the credentials of the Lancaster West stakeholders during our visit to Hornton St in November 2013 rather than concentrate on the general constructive points we were trying to make.

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While we may not have been able to give conclusive answers to some of the direct questions you were asking (i.e, whether we all favoured re-construction or refurbishment) Lancaster West stakeholders are totally united in our wish to learn what the long-term investment plan is for the future of our Estate and to ensure that current residents are fully involved in the formation of these plans.

With respect, you are completely incorrect in your assertion that I am the only person on Lancaster West Estate to consider that we live in “slum like conditions”. In fact, at a EMB Meeting in 2012 Bob Bryans, who was Chair of the EMB at the time, described the Estate as a “slum”. Talk to the majority of residents and they will tell you the same. The likes of Cllr Blakeman and Cllr Feilding Mellen do not allow us to refer to our homes as a slum but the truth is that forty years of complete lack of investment in our community by RBKC and the TMO have left indelible scars of neglect. You only have to look at the recent post on the Hornet’s Nest to see conditions in Wornington Green and I can assure you that we would have absolutely no problem finding similar examples of this appalling squalor on Lancaster West Estate.

<http://fromthehornetsnest.blogspot.co.uk/2014/02/a-catalyst-for-housing-disaster.html>

At our meeting with you on Lancaster West Estate in October all those stakeholders present explained very clearly to you and Cllr Campbell how embarrassed and ashamed we all are to live in such neglected and run down conditions. At the time you gave us the impression that you had taken this point on board. Are you now telling us that our living conditions are fine and our complaints without foundation and illegitimate?

The one flat that you have visited on the Estate belongs to a member of the Lancaster West Residents Association who has been fortunate enough to have benefited from receiving a new kitchen and bathroom. Most flats on the Estate do not look like the one you visited and are, instead, plagued by a myriad of different problems making their tenants’ lives a complete misery. Your assertion that the common parts of the Estate are up to standard is a joke and we intend to publish photos of some of the worst areas of the Estate’s residential amenity on our blog so people can make up their own minds if this is an acceptable environment to force people to live in one of the richest Boroughs in the UK.

How could our Estate be anything else but a slum? We have had no investment to the infrastructure or residential amenity of Lancaster West Estate for forty years now. It is known around the Royal Borough as the “forgotten” Estate and for very good reasons. The windows and heating system on the Estate are very nearly defunct. It is only possible to ever get 3” of hot water to bathe in, there are large cracks in the gaps between our windows and the outside leading to many residents experiencing fuel poverty, water supply (hot and cold) always breaking down, building so hot all year we have to keep our windows permanently open, faulty electrical wiring caused a recent power surge that endangered our lives and destroyed many residents computers, fridges, televisions (all not compensated for).... I could go on but there is probably little point. Instead, perhaps, we should re-invite all RBKC Councillors down to Lancaster West to see for themselves how we are forced to exist and they can judge for themselves as to whether we live in a modern aged slum or not!

With regards to the Grenfell Action Groups’ suggestion that the RBKC Council are intent

- A Flying Mallet
- A Funny Thing Happened...The KALC Planning Application
- A Hard Rain – GAG joins the Radical Housing Network
- A Mock Eviction
- A Night At The Opera
- A Small Victory
- A Special Invitation
- A Sports Pitch Epilogue
- Academies To Hire Unqualified Teachers
- Air Pollution – Greening The Westway
- Aldridge Foundation To Pay London Living Wage
- All Animals Are Equal....
- An Act Of Pure Vandalism
- An Alien Landscape
- An Olympic Legacy
- An Open Letter – Chesterton Square & Broadwood Terrace
- An Open Letter To Nick Paget-Brown
- An open Letter to Nick Paget-Brown
- An Open Letter to RBKC Legal Services
- Another Fine Mess...
- Another Fire Safety Scandal
- APOLOGIES TO OUR READERS
- Asbestos Scare At KALC
- AUDITOR SLAMS FIRE SAFETY AT EAST KENT HOUSING
- AXE THE ACT DEMO
- Aylesbury Estate Occupied By Housing Activists
- Aylesbury Estate Versus Police State
- ‘Mystery Shoppers’ At North Kensington Library
- “Oh! What A Tangled Web...”
- “The Grenfell Pathway”- Will lessons be learned?
- Bad Air Days
- Bad Air Days – A Deepining Crisis
- Biting The Hand....
- Blakeman And Coleridge – The War Drags On
- Blakeman And Coleridge And The Gulf Of Mistrust
- Blakeman Bows Out – One Less Problem for Lancaster West?
- Blakeman Scores Some Points
- Block Boris – Demonstrate Against MIPIM
- Boris – Block The Budget
- Brickley’s Travels
- CAMPAIGN FOR SAFE CLADDING AND INSULATION
- Campaign To Save Elliott School Playing Fields
- CCHP – When Is A Policy Not A Policy?
- Combustible Cladding – Early Warnings Ignored!
- Comments On The Planning

on the “social cleansing” of our community, it is our belief and the belief of a great number of residents on Lancaster West Estate and in North Kensington social housing, in general, that the Council and TMO are overseeing the “managed decline” of our Estates. The fact that the Council/TMO do not even have a plan for future investment in their social housing stock is further evidence that the “managed decline” of our community is an active policy.

A result of this immoral treatment will lead to our homes declining to such an extent that “regeneration” will follow and the dreaded “Decant Policy”, that offers no guarantee that residents can return to their communities, will be enforced on us. To try and allay these concerns, members of our community have been asking a succession of RBKC Cabinet Ministers for Housing and Property to explain what is their long term plan for Lancaster West Estate and we have never received any other answer than the Royal Borough does not have a plan for our homes.

As you can imagine this totally inadequate response from RBKC has only helped to fuel speculation that the policy of “managed decline” is the only show in town and our homes will be knocked down and replaced by gerrymandered “mixed communities” leading to the widespread “social cleansing” of existing tenants.

Finally, it is not a crime to campaign for better housing conditions and members of the Lancaster West Residents Association, Grenfell Tower Leaseholders Association and the Grenfell Action Group urge you to continue to engage with us and involve us in meaningful conversations about the future of our homes rather than sideline our concerns by claiming that constructive dialogue has been exhausted.

We are aware that Savills are currently undertaking a study into the future of social housing in the Borough and members of the Grenfell Action Group and other stakeholders would, at least, like to be able to discuss the outcome of this report and it’s implications for future of Lancaster West Estate with you in your role as Leader of RBKC Council.

I will look forward to hearing back from you in due course.

Regards,

Grenfell Action Group

We are seeking an honest and progressive dialogue with the Leader of the Council but we cannot do this if he continues to deny that 40 years of non-investment has reduced the Lancaster West housing stock to a slum. We need the Leader of the Council to stop trying to shoot the messenger and listen to what stakeholders on the estate have to say. Cllr Paget Brown may not like dealing with difficult subjects, but he owes it to the Lancaster West community to be honest and to communicate with us rather than employing the Council’s tired old trick of trying to “crush residents” by denying them a voice.

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- CONDEM Government Vandalises School Sports
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- Cry Havoc And Let Slip The Dogs Of war
- Dale Youth – A Nugget Of Boxing Gold
- Dale Youth – A Source Of Pride
- Day Of Housing Activism – A Call To Arms
- Dead Man Walking – Merrick Cockell
- Dent Coad Parachutes Into Notting Dale Air Quality Debate
- DEREGULATION AND THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE
- Direct Action – We Salute The Guinness Trust Occupation In Brixton
- DISPATCHES – GRENFELL ACTION GROUP REPLY
- Divide And Rule
- Doing us down!
- Don't Mention The Slum Word
- Doors Wide Open
- EAST 4 WEST – A BEAUTIFUL MESSAGE!
- East London March For Homes led by Focus E15
- Edward George And The Great RBKC Planning Dept Fob Off
- Enough Is enough – Testerton Walk
- FBU – Foam Insulation Banned In Furniture Since 1988
- FBU Responds to upcoming Channel 4 Grenfell Dispatches programme
- Feilding-Mellen – RBKC's Social Cleansing Hitman
- Feilding-Mellen Bang To Rights? – No Way!
- Feilding-Mellen Versus Longniddry
- Fightin' Talk
- Film released ahead of Fire Door Safety Week
- FIRE DOOR SAFETY WEEK
- Fire Safety Scandal At Lancaster West
- Firefighters Anger At 40% Rise In London Fire Deaths
- FLAMMABLE CLADDING – NO UNIVERSAL BAN
- Flies To Wanton Boys
- Flogging A Dead Horse
- Flood at the New Pools
- Focus E 15 Mothers – Liberating The Carpenters Estate
- Focus E15 – March Against