

Grenfell Action Group

Working to defend and serve the
Lancaster West community

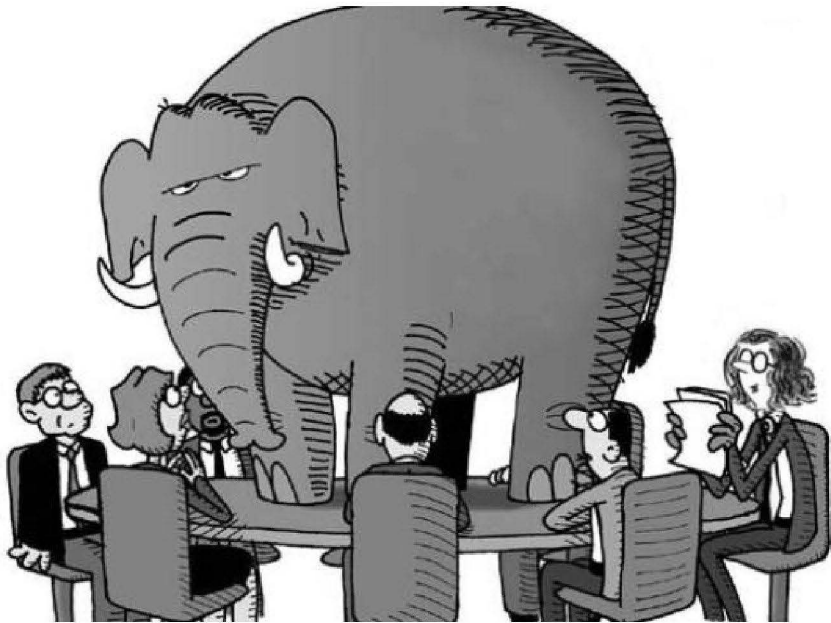


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RBKC LABOUR AND THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Posted on [December 16, 2015](#)



We recently posted a blog calling for a thorough new and independent investigation of the KCTMO. In that blog we recalled a major investigation of the TMO commissioned by the Council in 2009 and conducted by Maria Memoli of Local Governance Ltd. The report issued by Memoli was highly critical of the TMO and recommended sweeping changes at all levels of the organisation. In our blog we also referenced a more recent survey conducted in 2015 by ‘West London Citizens’ which revealed continuing and widespread dissatisfaction with the TMO, despite the supposed post-Memoli reforms. That report was delivered, during an exclusive meeting at the new Kensington Aldridge Academy, to the Leader of the Council, Nick Paget-Brown, his deputy and Cabinet Member for Housing, Property and Regeneration, Rock Feilding-Mellen and the Chief Executive of the TMO, Robert Black.

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<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com/2015/11/08/grenfell-action-group-demands-new-kctmo-investigation/>

In order to maximise the impact of our blog we contacted the editors of the Hornet's Nest blog with whom we have previously collaborated. They immediately supported our call and posted a link to our blog on the Hornet. To our great surprise the post on the Hornet's Nest soon attracted a large number of comments, more than 180 in fact, the vast majority of which echoed our concerns, condemned the TMO as a dysfunctional, negligent and incompetent rabble, and clearly indicated that deep dissatisfaction with the TMO is not confined to North Kensington, but is widespread throughout the borough.

<http://fromthehornetsnest.blogspot.co.uk/2015/11/grenfell-action-group-calls-for.html>

One would think that the evidence we had marshalled against the TMO would be sufficient to rattle a few cages at both the TMO and at the Town Hall in Hornton Street, but despite copying the links to all RBKC councillors, and several senior TMO officers, all we got back was a cursory and noncommittal response from a couple of Labour councillors. We then wrote to Cllr Blakeman of the Labour Group suggesting that, under the circumstances, it was incumbent on the Labour opposition to raise this issue with the Council and at least try to create some kind of stir. To our horror she responded:

"The Labour Group would need strong evidence to request a further investigation of the TMO, particularly given the stream of favourable monitoring reports that have gone to the Council on the TMO's performance since Memoli (see latest attached). I am afraid largely anecdotal dissatisfaction on the Hornet would not be sufficient evidence."

We were appalled by this dismissive response, not least because it misrepresented and minimised what we believe Cllr Blakeman and her colleagues already know to be widespread and deep dissatisfaction and distrust of the TMO among their constituents. It is noteworthy that Cllr Blakeman sits on both the TMO Board and on the RBKC Scrutiny Committee, but she is also a ward councillor of long standing who does a lot of casework on behalf of many of the poorest and most disadvantaged residents of North Kensington, many of whom are TMO tenants, and we are quite sure that both she, and her labour colleagues, know full well, if only as a result of this casework, the unpalatable truth about the culture of negligence, incompetence and abuse that is rampant among TMO officers at all levels of the organisation

Cllr Blakeman provided a copy of the most recent 'Performance Report' from the TMO to the RBKC Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee which claims a repairs satisfaction rate of 97%. It also claims a similar level of 'post inspections'. The report doesn't explain where these figures came from, but it does reveal that the last survey testing resident satisfaction with the TMO was two years ago and yielded, according to the TMO, a figure of less than 80%. Quite apart from the fact that their own figures are mutually contradictory we would have great difficulty accepting either the bona fides or the accuracy of any of these TMO self generated figures, and we would be very surprised if more than a very few TMO residents would find them remotely credible either.

In any case the figures are directly challenged, and not just ‘anecdotally’ on the Hornet’s Nest, as Blakeman claims, but by the recent ‘West London Citizens’ survey, which found dissatisfaction with the TMO to be in the region of 70%.

- A Flying Mallet
- A Funny Thing Happened...The KALC Planning Application
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- 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 Deepening 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?
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- 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!

REPAIRS AND CONDITIONS

Our Key Findings

- Of all North Kensington residents surveyed 38.7% said they had a 'Repairs/ Conditions' related housing issue.
- 71.2% of council housing residents surveyed said they had a 'Repairs/Conditions' issue.
- When asked to give details of the issue, 70.7% had a problem connected to the TMO.

TMO:

- 43.4% of respondents complained of the slow response time to get repairs done.

These figures, if taken seriously, which we believe they should be, would directly contradict the figures concocted in the TMO Performance Reports, and although we are no fans of 'West London Citizens', we would be inclined to give greater credence to their recent findings than to any statistics concocted by the the TMO for the benefit of a Council Scrutiny Committee.

Although we were horrified by Cllr Blakeman's response she has at least made the position of the RBKC Labour Group clear and we now know that we can expect no help from them in calling for the urgently needed investigation of the TMO which was the subject of our original blog. There is no denying the excellent casework that Blakeman and (some of) her colleagues do on behalf of individual constituents, but we have learned from long experience that, on the macro level, the RBKC Labour Group is notable for its political duplicity, and they sometimes choose to run with the hare, but are also known to hunt with the tory hounds.

Ultimately one has to wonder why the Labour opposition would fear to challenge the utterly discredited and despised TMO. Even the dogs in the street know that the TMO is rotten to the core.

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- Feilding-Mellen Bang To Rights? – No Way!
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- Film released ahead of Fire Door Safety Week
- FIRE DOOR SAFETY WEEK
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