

# Grenfell Action Group

Working to defend and serve the  
Lancaster West community



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## MARSHALL GETS STUCK IN

Posted on August 27, 2013



We feel compelled yet again to return to the vexed issue of the TMO’s refusal to fully compensate Grenfell Tower residents for the extensive damage to residents’ electrical appliances caused by the power surge debacle in May. Following the thoroughly disappointing outcome of the July Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee, which abandoned Grenfell Tower residents to the tender mercies of the Council’s insurers Zurich, we wrote on 13 August to Councillor Quentin Marshall, Chair of the Committee, inviting him to attend a meeting that had been hurriedly arranged on behalf of Grenfell Tower residents with representatives of the TMO, who are responsible for maintaining, inspecting and ensuring the safety of the electrical plant and equipment at Lancaster West. Alas, Councillor Marshall didn’t attend the meeting, and didn’t even bother to reply to our email. We wrote back to him on 19th August but have still had no reply.

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Please see below the text of our email of 19th August:

*Dear Councillor Marshall,*

*It was disappointing that you were unable to attend the meeting arranged by the TMO that occurred on Lancaster West Estate on Thursday 15th August to discuss the power surge issue and the Council's refusal to compensate victims.*

*If you had attended this meeting you would have heard, at first hand, how residents woke terrified to find their flats full of smoke as a result of electrical appliances catching fire.*

*One resident stated that if he had been sleeping when his electrical equipment caught fire that the consequences may well have been fatal. These examples are all the more frightening as the power surges had been already going on for 18 days with multiple reports of other residents electrical appliances blowing up within this time frame.*

*We believe that these incidents of residents electrical appliances catching fire have been totally unsatisfactorily explained by the TMO as being caused by water hitting a hot surface and causing steam to rise!*

*Why was no robust action taken when the power surges were first reported and why did residents have to wait for 18 days and until a near catastrophic incident occurred for the problem to be rectified? Why wasn't the Health and Safety Executive informed in early May when residents first reported electrical equipment catching fire in their homes? Why are innocent victims of the power surges now being treated like vermin and denied compensation?*

*Please can you advise our community about how best to proceed to shine a light on the injustices that have been highlighted above and what future role will the Scrutiny Committee play in investigating what actually happened in Grenfell Tower between 11th and 29th May?*

*Regards,*

*Grenfell Action Group*

For the benefit of any Grenfell Tower residents who might be tempted to accept the £200 payment offered by the TMO, but are worried that this might prevent them from continuing to pursue a claim for full compensation, TMO officers clarified on the night, and in a subsequent briefing document, that accepting the so-called goodwill payment will not in any way compromise your right to take further action in pursuit of full compensation.

They provided a link, which some may find useful, to government advice about options available to claimants, including action through small claims courts.

[www.gov.uk/make-court-claim-for-money](http://www.gov.uk/make-court-claim-for-money)

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- Boris – Block The Budget
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- Comments On The Planning

It is also worth noting here that when challenged by one resident about their decision to refer all claims to their insurers, despite the fact that the Council maintains a reserve of £250,000 for the settlement of small claims, the attending TMO officers were unable to offer a satisfactory explanation.

In our view there is a deeply flawed logic, not to mention highly questionable ethics, involved in offering so-called goodwill payments totalling several thousand pounds in implicit recognition of the TMO's responsibility for the distress and inconvenience suffered by residents, while simultaneously referring all claims for damages to insurance assessors who could be counted on to reject such claims on any available pretext. Given that the Council has already set aside a £250,000 reserve to settle such claims, without the need for any involvement by its' insurers, one has to wonder at the true intentions of the Council and the TMO in this instance

To our mind this is highly suggestive of an inherent hostility on the part of the Council and the TMO towards any complaints or expressions of concern or dissatisfaction coming from Lancaster West residents. To the disinterested reader this may seem a little paranoid, but to Lancaster West residents who have long suffered the neglect, contempt and double standards of both these bureaucracies it will seem anything but paranoid.

## WAKE UP QUENTIN MARSHALL!

Your scrutiny committee is at risk of being implicated in the hypocrisy and rank injustice of the TMO's treatment of Grenfell Tower residents on this issue.

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