

Grenfell Fire Forum launches Facebook page

Our reporters
26 October 2017

A meeting of the Grenfell Fire Forum endorsed the launching of a new Grenfell Fire Forum Facebook page .

The page will be central to broadening the work of the Grenfell Fire Forum. It will publish material on Grenfell from *World Socialist Web Site* writers, those attending the Forum, survivors, local-residents and all concerned workers and youth. It will enable the sharing of information by those wanting to establish the truth about the fire and bring those responsible to justice.

During the second forum meeting last Saturday, held at the Maxilla Social Club in North Kensington, London, those present looked at a beta version of the Facebook page. There was agreement that it would be an important resource for survivors of the fire and local-residents. Suggestions were made as to how the page could be developed and how to broaden its readership.

F said, “Many in my community have been mourning for their lost loved ones and did not want to speak about it. But now I think they are ready, many are prepared to speak. However, they say they do not know what to do. This is a way forward for them to tell what happened and do something.”

She said she would post her own story and video from the night of the fire, and work with a journalism student present at the meeting to record the experiences of other members of her community.

Another participant said, “It would be important to give a voice to the survivors, many of whose terrible experiences have still to be told. They need a voice for their grief and frustration and an outlet for their anger and desire for justice. There is no faith in the [official government] inquiry.”

Those attending volunteered to publicise the Facebook page online and through community organisations they were involved in. It was suggested a leafleting campaign be organised, with contact made with local papers and newsletters.

A discussion was also held on the latest phase in the state orchestrated cover-up by the government, the Kensington and Chelsea council and the Metropolitan Police.

The *World Socialist Web Site*'s British editor Robert Stevens explained that there had been a proposal to disband the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation—who were responsible on behalf of the council for managing Grenfell Tower and oversaw it becoming a death trap.

Survivors of the fire, their legal representatives and the Grenfell Action Group opposed this as it could be a means to allow the TMO and its members to avoid possible corporate manslaughter charges and civil litigation. Survivors are demanding that the body remain intact, at least until the end of the ongoing government inquiry into the fire.

Stevens noted that the Metropolitan Police are working with Kensington and Chelsea council to block the release of correspondence that would shed light on what action was or was not taken to mitigate fire risks at Grenfell Tower.

“The police are vetting requests for information regarding what happened after the council was warned by London Fire Brigade—two months before the Grenfell fire—about the potential risk of cladding on Grenfell and other buildings,” he said.

“The police have defied repeated requests under Freedom of Information requests. They are seeking to justify this on the basis that it will jeopardize their investigation... Let's remember that this so-called ‘criminal investigation’ has still not arrested, let alone charged anyone in relation to an inferno in which many people lost their lives. This was entirely due to the criminal negligence of the authorities and no-one is being held accountable.”

Stevens drew attention to the fact that with hundreds of survivors still not rehoused by the council and living

in hotels, it has emerged that total compensation payments may total as little as £4 million.

A lively discussion followed. Participants felt the callous way Kensington and Chelsea Council were treating the survivors of the fire must be exposed.

O explained how most of the survivors were still living in temporary accommodation or hotels four months after the fire. “Nobody believes the council’s claim that they will all be rehoused properly by New Year. Once again it is empty promises.”

A discussion followed on the housing crisis and social cleansing in London and other city centres. Many former residents are under pressure to accept relocation miles away—in places where housing is cheaper.

Asked why he attended the forum, Raphael, a student in London and freelance journalist, told the WSWS, “I have been following the Grenfell situation over the last few months. I know that there has been a lot of suffering. As a journalist I try to do my job to uncover the truth. This meeting is focussing on that.”

Asked his opinion on how the media had covered the fire, he replied, “As journalists we are talking about this situation. There are a number who feel they are not doing such a good job or looking into the real issues involved. Interestingly the European press have followed the same line as the UK media. There are a lot of people involved in this behind the scenes and it’s a real mess. Nobody wants to expose them.”

On the government’s inquiry, he said, “It would be good if they let people know what is going on, gave the people some results and progress. But I think they are not going in that direction to get justice for the people of Grenfell. It seems to me they are trying hard to cover up the truth.”

Faven, who lives in the area, said she came to the forum because, “I want to support the people who lost their lives and I want to support the survivors.”

Asked her thoughts on the government’s inquiry she said, “They want to close the case. But we need to be the voice for the tower residents. We need to do something for the residents, for the community, for our people, our friends, our families. They are in a bad situation and need help.”

Asked her thoughts on the ruling elite’s policy of social cleansing across London, Faven replied, “It’s so sad. But we have to stand up as a community. We have to come together. We have to be a voice against this.

We come together for the monthly Silent March because we want to hear something from the council. We will keep going until we get an answer.”

Omar is from Sudan. He said, “I have come here today because I want justice for Grenfell. I would like us to do our level best to put pressure on the council to rehouse residents as quickly as possible... I don’t understand why [Prime Minister] Theresa May promised they would be rehoused within one month but nothing happened. And now they say they’ll rehouse them before Christmas! The forum is very important, very important. Hopefully it will continue.”



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact