

# FIREFIGHTER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | JUNE/JULY 2021

## MEET AN FBU TRAILBLAZER

UROOSA ARSHID  
FRONTLINE  
FIREFIGHTER

SEE P14

**CONFERENCE  
REPORT**  
See P10

**FBU HIGH RISE  
SAFETY VICTORY**  
See P12

**RED PLAQUE  
WEBSITE**  
See P16







# MATT WRACK

## BUILDING SAFETY – A NATIONAL DISGRACE

### BUILDING SAFETY SCANDAL

FBU members will recall how sections of the press unjustly criticised some of our members in relation to the response to the Grenfell Tower fire. We have consistently exposed and challenged such criticism. We have highlighted and explained the glaringly obvious point – what happened at Grenfell was a complete failure of safety systems which should be in place at high rise residential buildings.

Since Grenfell we have seen the horrific scale of this failure across the country. This situation is the responsibility of government ministers who have allowed lax regulation, and of developers and corporations involved in construction and refurbishment schemes who put profit above safety.

Firefighters reject being scapegoated for the political failure of governments or for the criminal behaviour of profit-seeking corporations.

During the four years since the disaster, it has become clear that tens of thousands of other buildings around the country are covered in the same deadly cladding as the tower.

Recent events have only pressed home the importance of fixing the crisis in building safety, as well as other fire safety issues that have been discovered since Grenfell.

Towards the start of May a fire broke out at a building with unsafe cladding in Poplar, London.

Then, *The Guardian* revealed that cladding banned from high-rise blocks



A firefighter at the scene of a standoff between police and Palestine Action protesters on the roof of an arms factory in Leicester  
See Station Cat p23

is likely to have been used on more than 70 schools, leaving children in danger.

This is a national scandal – and responsibility rests with government.

A basic aim of government should be to ensure the safety of citizens; on this point the government has completely failed.

We in the FBU will work with tenants and residents across the country to support their campaigns for justice and for the right to live at home in safety.

### SPECIAL CONFERENCE

The union's special conference took place on 28 May, and while it was – for the first time in FBU history – an online conference, it was still good to see and hear from FBU members across the country.

The conference took active steps on some of the biggest issues facing firefighters

and our union, including Covid-19 duties and pay.

Conference has paved the way for the union to oppose upcoming Westminster attacks on collective bargaining rights, with “all legal, political and industrial options”. This is a major challenge which threatens the rights, pay and conditions of all of us. We will need to stand together to oppose it.

### BREATHING APPARATUS

The union has successfully resisted changes to breathing apparatus safety procedures which would have endangered firefighters.

While this issue arose in the London Fire Brigade (LFB), it has implications for members across the UK.

As a result of the building safety crisis, some are arguing that, since buildings may be at risk of failure, longstanding BA safety policies should be altered. In other words,

they are seeking to resolve the crisis in building safety by undermining safety procedures (BA entry control) of firefighters.

We need to remember that these procedures have developed after the deaths of and injuries to our members – originating with the Smithfield fire of 1958.

The LFB had proposed that firefighters fighting a fire in a tall building could be deployed beyond the bridgehead wearing breathing apparatus (BA) but not under air.

The union made submissions to LFB's health and safety advisory panel, which resulted in the policy being overturned. (Please see full report in this issue, p12).

We were very pleased that the commissioner of the LFB accepted the findings of the panel.

National Fire Chiefs Committee guidance, however, still seeks to promote this proposed policy. It should be withdrawn immediately by the NFCC and by any employer that has introduced such a policy or is trying to do so.

The answer to the problems highlighted by Grenfell is not to undermine longstanding professional and safety measures of firefighters, but rather to make buildings safe.

We are happy to work with government and with chief officers to look at the operational challenges we face.

But attacking the safety of firefighters does absolutely nothing to protect residents in their homes.

JESS HIND/REPORTINGDIGITAL.CO.UK



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## FIREFIGHTER

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## TO ALL FBU MEMBERS PAYING CONTRIBUTIONS BY DIRECT DEBIT

### Upgrade of payment processor for Direct Debits

As part of a systems upgrade, the Fire Brigades Union is changing its payment processor for Direct Debit payments. Our new processor, GoCardless, will be responsible for all Direct Debit collections from 17 June 2021. You can read its privacy notice at [gocardless.com/privacy](http://gocardless.com/privacy)

No action is required from you to continue paying by Direct Debit, and the change will not affect the service you receive in any way. The only change you will notice is that FIRE BRIGADES UNIO will appear on your bank statement instead of FIRE BRIGADES UNION. All your payments will continue to be fully protected by the Direct Debit Guarantee, as detailed below.

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# NEWS

## GRENFELL CONCERNS

Grenfell residents' safety concerns were ignored by the organisation managing the tower

p6



## CLADDING ACTION NEEDED

New high rise fire highlights need for action on flammable cladding

p7



Firefighters lobby parliament over PCC takeovers in April 2016

# THREAT REMAINS OF POLICE TAKING OVER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

## POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONERS

The FBU is calling on firefighters and fire control staff to say “No” to Westminster government promoted local takeovers of fire and rescue services by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).

Gains by the Tories in recent local elections mean that three-quarters of current PCCs are now Conservatives. It is expected that there will be continuing pressure for them to take over governance of fire and rescue services across England.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced the most significant change to the governance of the fire and rescue service in generations.

It allows PCCs varying degrees of control over fire and rescue services in one of three models: representation, governance and single employer.

“Representation” enables a PCC to be represented on a fire and rescue authority with voting rights.

In the “governance” model, the PCC assumes responsibility for the fire and

rescue service.

The “single employer” model would see a single employer for both police officers and firefighters – a Police, Fire, and Crime Commissioner (PFCC).

This model poses the greatest threat, as it would enable a PFCC to harmonise terms and conditions as well as conduct and complaints systems.

The FBU has been critical of the current fire authority set-up that has seen authorities cut services and do little to challenge Westminster government funding cuts.

But a PFCC takeover would be a slippery slope to worse fire service governance and less democratic accountability.

To date, PCCs have taken over fire governance in Essex, Staffordshire, North Yorkshire and Northamptonshire.

**A PFCC TAKEOVER WOULD BE A SLIPPERY SLOPE TO WORSE FIRE SERVICE GOVERNANCE AND LESS DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

Further attacks on the fire and rescue service and firefighters' pay, conditions and safety will be contained in the planned White Paper preceding more legislation affecting the service.

The Westminster government is clearly looking to reignite the so far lacklustre PFCCs project and will push PCCs to empire-build and the FBU believes they will – sooner rather than later.

One example of the dangers is how, while mayor of London, prime minister Boris Johnson used London Fire Brigade reserves to fund the police.

The FBU stands by its belief that firefighting is a humanitarian service, not a policing role.

It will oppose plans to delegate fire functions to a single chief officer for policing and fire, integrate senior management teams, and harmonise terms and conditions and conduct and complaints systems.

The FBU is calling on firefighters to campaign and seek commitments from local PCCs to maintain separate governance arrangements.

# EMPLOYERS OFFER 1.5%

## PAY

Fire employers have offered firefighters a 1.5% pay rise in annual negotiations, a proposal which is now being discussed by FBU members in branch meetings.

While the union's executive council has recommended implementation of the offer in light of the urgent need to improve the wages of FBU members, a final decision on this will not be made until consultation in union branches has concluded.

In a circular to FBU members Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said

that the offer fell far short of what firefighters deserve.

It "reflects the chronic underfunding of our service by central government, who continue to treat firefighters and other key workers with utter disrespect," he said.

"The executive council was clear that this offer will not address the needs of members nor the policies of the union."

The union is set to carry on fighting for better pay for members, with a resolution at the FBU conference firmly backing it in doing so.

## SOUNDING OFF

*Kate Osborne, Labour MP for Jarrow, says outlaw this attack on workers' pay and rights*

## BAN FIRE AND REHIRE

Many workers have lost friends, colleagues and family members to this terrible virus and now at least one in 10 workers face a pandemic of opportunistic employers using Covid-19 as a cover to dramatically reduce workers' terms and conditions through the process of "fire and rehire".

This is a disgraceful practice by employers (some of whom have made huge profits during the last 12 months) using the pandemic as cover to reduce the pay, pensions, and holiday entitlement of hard-working staff.

Economic uncertainty has provided an opportunity for big business to use "fire and rehire" to shift power further away from workers so it can boost long-term profits.

The government needs to understand that well paid, secure work is good for the economy, and greater security for workers would mean a stronger recovery.

Our friends across Europe understand this. The practice of 'fire and rehire' is banned in Ireland, Spain, and France.

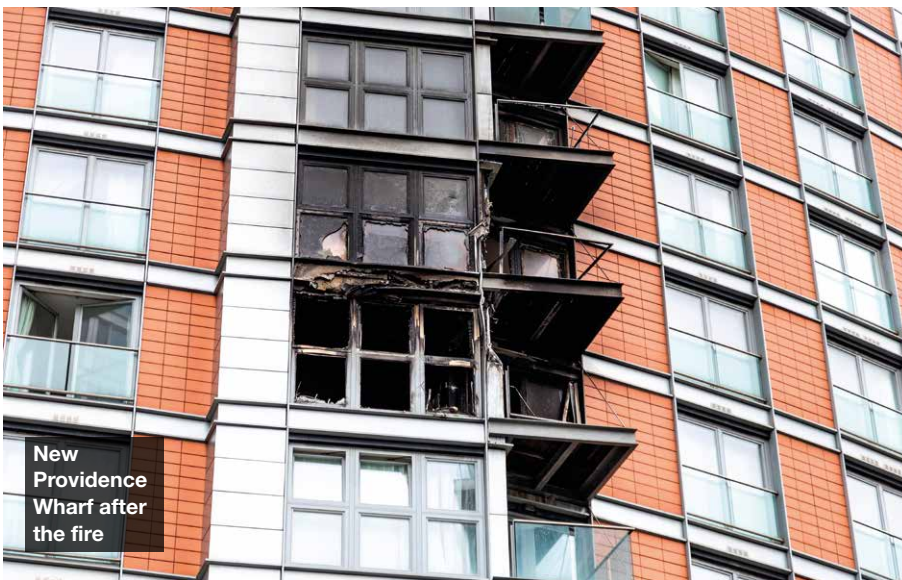
If this Tory government is serious about "levelling up" and "raising standards" it must commit to ending "fire and rehire".

It had the opportunity to bring a legislative end to the scandal in the Queen's Speech in May.

Yet there was no sign of the long-promised Employment Bill, showing that the government is not prepared to do anything about weak employment rights, unsafe workplaces, and economic insecurity.

These have been issues for many years, but they have been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic.

If this government really cared about working people, it would do all it can to protect workers, strengthen their rights and end "fire and rehire" once and for all.



# CLADDING SCANDAL PROTEST

## CLADDING

A cladding scandal national day of protest saw victims demonstrating their anger across the UK.

Showrooms where housing developers market properties were surrounded by protesters angry at having been sold unsafe homes by developers.

They demanded that developers and government fix the crisis without making homeowners liable.

It is thought that hundreds of thousands of people across the country

could be living in high-rise homes with unsafe cladding. Their homes are serious fire risks and need tens of thousands of pounds worth of work.

Yet developers have refused to pay for the work, leaving residents facing huge debts, with unsellable houses and in constant fear of fire.

The government is also facing strong criticism for its role in the crisis.

It has stalled in ensuring work is carried out, and failed to provide the cash or make developers pay.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack spoke at

an online rally as part of the day, saying: "It is a national scandal that in one of the richest countries in the world people can die on the scale they did at Grenfell ... and the government moves at snail's pace to address, or to avoid, the issue".

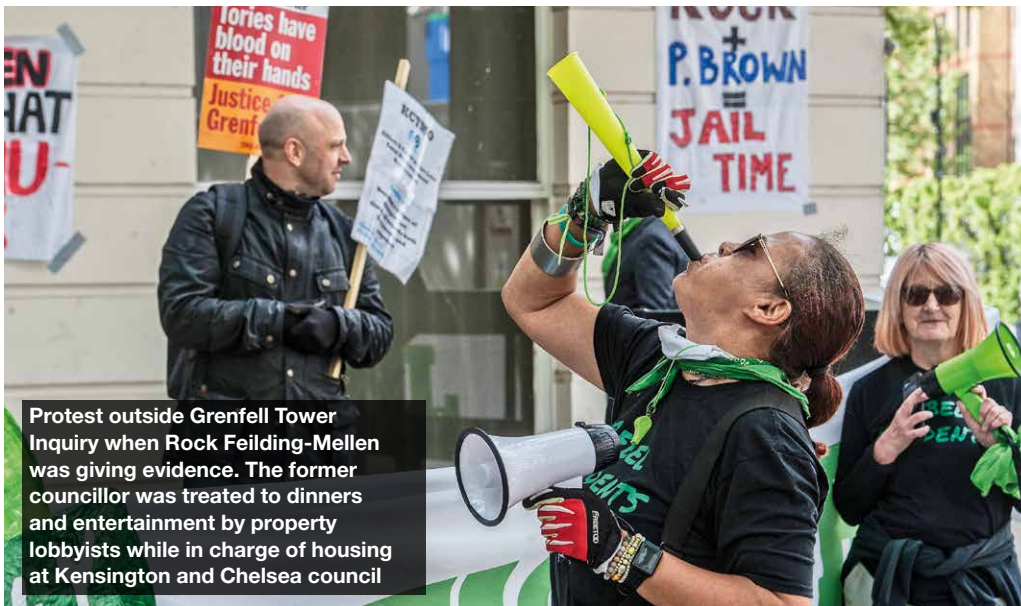
Campaigners say they face "financial ruin and bankruptcy, mental health issues and homelessness" because of the scandal.

The protests were organised by the End Our Cladding Scandal campaign, and other groups.

■ NEWS FOCUS - p7







Protest outside Grenfell Tower Inquiry when Rock Feilding-Mellen was giving evidence. The former councillor was treated to dinners and entertainment by property lobbyists while in charge of housing at Kensington and Chelsea council

# GRENFELL RESIDENTS' FIRE SAFETY CONCERNS IGNORED

## GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

Fire safety concerns of Grenfell Tower residents were ignored by the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO) which managed all the local council's housing, the inquiry into the disastrous fire at the tower has heard.

Since April, the inquiry's Module 3 has been hearing evidence from former residents of the tower and employees of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council (RBKC) and KCTMO about how residents' complaints were handled and how the tower was maintained.

Hearings have revealed how residents' complaints and concerns regarding fire safety risks, fire safety doors and the quality of the work during the refurbishment of the tower between 2014 and 2016, were ignored by the TMO as it sought to save money on work to improve the appearance of the building.

Module 3 is also examining the fire risk assessment process and the obligations and

compliance of KCTMO and RBKC under the Regulatory Reform Order 2005, as well as the active and passive fire safety measures in the tower.

As a core participant, the FBU can submit its assessment of the evidence at the start and conclusion of each module.

In its opening submission to Module 3, the union examined the evidence on the functionality of the lifts at Grenfell Tower and showed how it was likely that the fire switch was damaged during the refurbishment works, causing the lifts to be inoperable on the night of the fire, seriously impacting the London Fire Brigade's operations.

The union also highlighted a culture at RBKC/KCTMO that ignored fire safety warnings – where “the correct and significant interventions by London Fire Brigade and residents were seen as a hurdle to get over, a paperwork problem to close out, and the potential risk to life was not evaluated”.

Module 3 is due to conclude at the end of July.

## 70 SCHOOLS CLAD WITH FLAMMABLE INSULATION SINCE RESIDENTIAL BAN

### CLADDING

More than 70 schools are likely to have been clad in combustible insulation since it was banned from use on residential buildings, according to *The Guardian*.

The FBU had already raised the alarm about cladding on schools, but this had not received widespread attention until now.

General secretary Matt Wrack said that “we already knew that buildings across the country are not safe enough for people to live in. Now we've found out that buildings children learn in are unsafe too.”

The week before *The Guardian's* analysis was published, the Department for Education released fire safety proposals for school buildings which would continue to allow combustible cladding for structures under 18 metres.

### SIGN UP FOR THE UK FIREFIGHTERS CANCER AND DISEASE REGISTRY

If you have not yet registered for the Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry, sign up today. It only takes a few minutes and will help us make firefighting safer in the future  
[uclan.ac.uk/FCDR](http://uclan.ac.uk/FCDR)

## NEALE WILLIAMS – A GREAT UNION REP AND FIGHTER FOR THE FBU

### OBITUARY

I first met Neale Williams, who has died aged 57, at Islington, London, fire station 30 years ago. We became close friends and comrades, Neale became the FBU branch secretary and I was his chair.

Neale was a great union rep and fighter for the FBU

both locally and nationally. Fairness, comradeship, equality and diversity were central to his thinking.

As a committed anti-racist, he was proud of his work around Firefighters Against the Nazis and organised firefighters to

attend anti-Nazi demos.

He helped set up *Red Watch*, a rank-and-file magazine for firefighters.

Neale played a leading role in the 2002/3 firefighters' strike as the group secretary for North East



London, ensuring he was at the forefront of the dispute.

In his many endeavours he was supported by his partner Jane who advised Neale through both wins and disappointments.

Neale will be remembered and missed by all who knew him.

**Charles Brown**



Residents protest after the fire in East London

# NEW HIGH RISE FIRE HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR ACTION ON FLAMMABLE CLADDING

A high-rise fire in a building in Poplar, East London, with combustible ACM cladding, similar to that used at Grenfell, required 25 fire engines and 125 firefighters and more than 40 people required treatment with two hospitalisations.

Reportedly caused by a “consumer unit” or fuse box, the fire on 7 May at New Providence Wharf caused the building’s ventilation system to fail. Some 34 residents needed to be rescued, 22 of them with fire hoods, as escape routes filled with smoke.

The fire and circumstances surrounding it have led to renewed calls to resolve the scandalous government decision to leave millions of people living in dangerously cladded buildings.

Survivors and bereaved relatives from Grenfell were “horrified” by the fire and said that “the government promised to remove dangerous cladding by June 2020 – it has completely failed its own target and every day that goes by lives are at risk”.

This sentiment was shared by demonstrators near the fire site the day after. Around 160 people, including Tower Hamlets mayor John Biggs and Apsana Begum, Labour MP for Poplar

and Limehouse, demanded an end to the cladding scandal.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack commented: “It is extremely alarming to see another high-rise building in the heart of London light up in flames ... It should shame this government that, four years on from Grenfell, there are people across the country living in buildings wrapped in flammable cladding”.

As well as fire safety, concerns around the cladding scandal involve the burden of cost being placed on the leaseholders of cladded properties, as opposed to developers or the government. Some leaseholders are facing bills of tens of thousands of pounds.

One thing that leaseholders have been made to pay for are “waking watches”

**‘IT SHOULD SHAME THIS GOVERNMENT THAT, FOUR YEARS ON FROM GRENFELL, THERE ARE PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY LIVING IN BUILDINGS WRAPPED IN FLAMMABLE CLADDING’**

which can cost residents hundreds of pounds a month each. Despite claiming that the system can protect residents, the “waking watch” in Poplar failed.

In January this year, Landor Residential, the owner of New Providence Wharf, owned in turn by Ballymore, appeared on a “name and shame” list, highlighting building owners that have yet to start work to remove ACM from their blocks.

In April this year, Ballymore confirmed it had secured £8m of government grant funding to go towards cladding removal work.

Since the New Providence Wharf fire, Ballymore, four years after Grenfell and heavy criticism that it sought to pass too much of the cost of fire safety remedial work on to leaseholders, has agreed to pay £20m towards fixing fire safety issues across its housing developments in London.

However, the company is not able to commit these funds until relevant approvals are in place for the government’s Building Safety Fund – announced in March 2020 - which could be as late as September.

In the meantime the ACM cladding is still in place.







## 4 MAY - WE REMEMBER

Again this year, due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, only a small delegation of FBU officials and members was able to attend the wreath laying at St Paul's Cathedral in London on Firefighters Memorial Day.

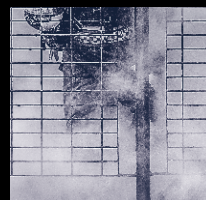
On duty, white watch from Dowgate fire station attended with a fire appliance along with Colin Livett from the Firefighters Memorial Trust. The event this year was live-streamed.

The FBU is doing more to honour and remember fallen firefighters with the launch of the red plaque website (see p16).

PICTURE: MARK THOMAS







## FBU CONFERENCE 2021

# PREPARING FOR ATTACKS

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, representatives from every brigade tuned in to the union's first ever online national conference

Opening conference, union president, Ian Murray praised FBU members in Leicestershire, who refused to assist in removing protesters from the roof of a commercial premises supplying drones to the Israeli military, and stood down from the incident once those protesters were deemed safe.

The threat of oncoming attacks on firefighters' pay and conditions from the Westminster government and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) topped the conference agenda.

"This is the single most important discussion we are having today because it is a threat to the entire functioning of this union and how we work to represent our members," said Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary.

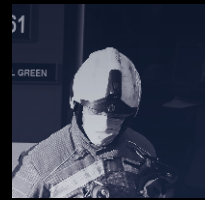
"There is an attack coming. We don't know the full details of it yet, but we know it is on its way and we have a duty to prepare ourselves and to prepare our members."

Wrack also spoke of the union's significant victory on BA wear in high rise buildings (see p12).

Conference delegates opposed any abolition of collective bargaining in







the fire and rescue service and the implementation of a pay review body in its place, as well as the “tearing up” of the Grey Book of pay and conditions agreed through UK-wide collective bargaining.

These proposals were recommended in a series of HMICFRS reports on the service, and are widely thought to be part of the government’s upcoming White Paper on fire reform.

Delegates mandated the executive council to prepare a campaign to fight this attack and defend fire and rescue services and firefighters’ pay and conditions.

### THE PERIL OF PAY REVIEW BODIES

The potential threat to abolish the National Joint Council (NJC) and firefighters’ collective bargaining arrangements dominated proceedings.

Guest speaker Kevin Courtney, general secretary of the National Education Union, shared his members’ experiences of pay review bodies.

He told delegates the introduction of the School Teachers’ Pay Review Body (STPRB) in 1991 had been “a complete disaster for the teachers of England”, with

teachers losing their seat at the negotiating table and pay and workloads worsening over the past 30 years.

“You should resist this pay review body. You should resist atomisation of terms and conditions moving away from the national,” he said, stressing that unions need to work together to resist government attacks.

### CHALLENGING TIMES

The past year has been one of the most unusual and challenging in the FBU’s history, with firefighters and the union having to adapt to meet the challenge of the COVID-19 crisis.

Tragically, some firefighters lost their lives to the virus and delegates observed a minute’s silence to remember them and all those who had died during the pandemic.

An executive council motion noted that decades of austerity and under-funding

had left the fire service unprepared for the pandemic, but that firefighters had stepped up and carried out additional work to help the NHS and their communities, including ambulance driving, delivering PPE, and moving dead bodies.

Firefighters’ safety was at the top of the FBU’s priorities and conference agreed that the historic tripartite agreement negotiated by the FBU had allowed firefighters to safely carry out COVID-19 activities outside of their role.

Delegates spoke passionately about the vital work of FBU health and safety officials in ensuring that all of the activities were properly risk-assessed, and condemned fire service employers for putting firefighters and the public at risk by pulling out of the agreement unexpectedly in January and watering down control measures designed to help stop the spread of the virus.

### PAY AND RESTRUCTURING

A £4,000 real-terms pay cut for firefighters over the past decade and an increased workload were heavily criticised by delegates who called on the government to give all workers a pay rise.

The resolution included preparing for a united campaign across the public sector to challenge and oppose the pay freeze.

### REGION 11

Conference endorsed a restructure of region 11, covering Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire, Kent, Surrey, and East and West Sussex.

The region will be divided into two, with (pre-conference 2015) region 12 (Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and Oxfordshire) reinstated to help deal with the variety of challenges facing local fire services.

There are big challenges ahead for the union, but this year’s conference reaffirmed that members are ready to stand together and fight off attacks on the service and firefighters’ rights at work.

## MEMBERS ARE READY TO STAND TOGETHER AND FIGHT OFF ATTACKS ON THE SERVICE AND FIREFIGHTERS’ RIGHTS AT WORK





# UNION WINS FIREFIGHTER SAFETY VICTORY



National officer **Riccardo La Torre** explains the FBU's recent success on high rise firefighting

**T**he FBU has won a significant victory in our campaign to defend firefighters' health and safety on the job. Although the case concerned the London Fire Brigade's (LFB) high rise policy, it has implications for every fire and rescue service and for all firefighters.

The union stood its ground on firefighters' safety and health, persuading LFB to rethink. It also means the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) high rise guidance will also have to change.

## HIGH RISE FIREFIGHTING

LFB has been revising its high rise firefighting policy, known as PN633, in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire. Principal managers and the FBU agreed that the policy had to be improved in light of longstanding failures in building safety, which put residents in high rise buildings at greater risk of fire.

However, the union's officials could not accept certain new elements in LFB's draft policy for emergency evacuation and mass rescue, in circumstances where total building failure had occurred.

The LFB's proposed procedure would have allowed incident commanders at high rise fires to deploy firefighters to work beyond the entry control point at the bridgehead without first having started up their breathing apparatus (BA).

The FBU argued that this procedure was unsafe, putting firefighters and the public at greater risk.

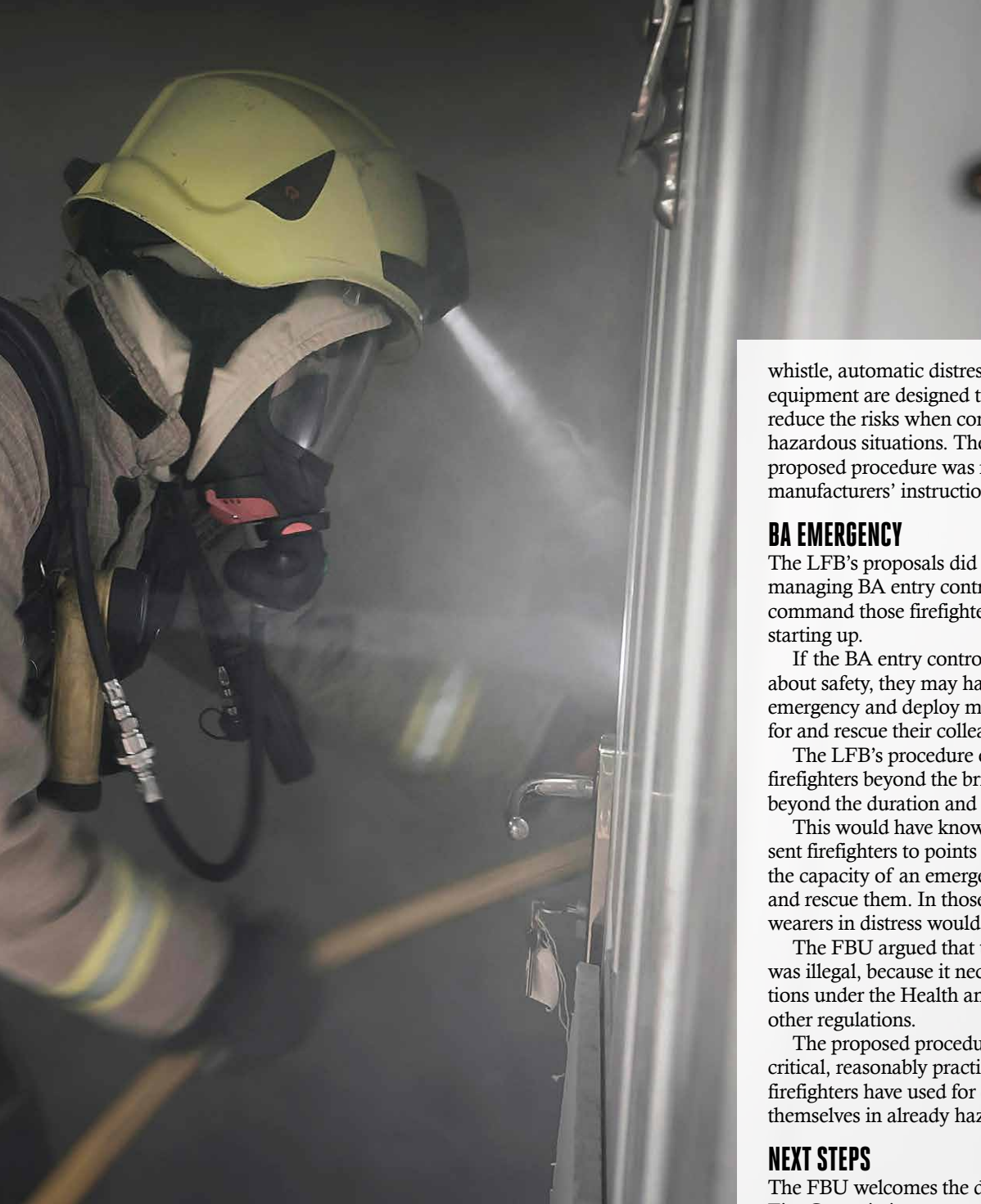
Without agreement, the matter was referred to the LFB's independent safety panel, which took evidence and made a ruling last month.

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The FBU argued that the disputed procedure would create additional, foreseeable risks to the lives and health of firefighters in a situation where the risks are already elevated.

Pre-entry checks are essential safety





PETER ALVEVALANNY

whistle, automatic distress signal unit and related equipment are designed to be used in tandem, to reduce the risks when committing firefighters into hazardous situations. The FBU argued that LFB's proposed procedure was not compliant with the manufacturers' instructions.

### **BA EMERGENCY**

The LFB's proposals did not explain how officers managing BA entry control could monitor and command those firefighters committed without starting up.

If the BA entry control officer has concerns about safety, they may have to declare a BA emergency and deploy more firefighters to search for and rescue their colleagues.

The LFB's procedure explicitly sought to deploy firefighters beyond the bridgehead, to places beyond the duration and limitations of a BA set.

This would have knowingly and intentionally sent firefighters to points of the risk area beyond the capacity of an emergency BA team to reach and rescue them. In those circumstances, BA wearers in distress would have become un-saveable.

The FBU argued that the revised procedure was illegal, because it necessarily breached obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and other regulations.

The proposed procedure would remove a safety-critical, reasonably practicable risk control measure firefighters have used for decades to protect themselves in already hazardous situations.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The FBU welcomes the decision by the London Fire Commissioner to accept the findings of the panel and withdraw the disputed aspects of the proposed procedure.

The FBU's intervention is significant beyond the LFB. Some other fire and rescue services have similar arrangements or are considering them.

Fire and rescue authorities and their chief fire officers in every service should work with FBU health and safety representatives to take immediate steps to remove this practice and any such policies.

The FBU is fully committed to identifying and negotiating new high rise policies that learn the lessons from the Grenfell Tower fire.

However, the union cannot accept the introduction of any procedures that put firefighters and residents at greater risk.

requirements. The time to find a fault is at the entry control board in safe air, not once deployed into the risk area, when it may be impossible to rectify any failures in deteriorating conditions.

Adjusting other personal protective equipment such as helmet, fire hood and gloves on the move would amplify the risk further.

The proposed procedure gave no indication of how the firefighters committed in this manner should judge when they need to start up their BA sets. Firefighters could be exposed to noxious gases, oxygen deficient atmospheres, particles and other hazardous substances like asbestos.

Breathing apparatus, the tallying system,

**The LFB's proposed procedure would have allowed incident commanders at high rise fires to deploy firefighters to work beyond the entry control point at the bridgehead without first having started up their breathing apparatus**

# **THE FBU IS COMMITTED TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF GRENFELL BUT CANNOT ACCEPT PROCEDURES THAT PUT FIREFIGHTERS AND RESIDENTS AT RISK**





# YES, FIREFIGHTERS CAN LOOK LIKE ME

**W**hen Uroosa Arshid applied for a frontline firefighter job with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, she had no idea she would soon be hailed as a barrier-breaking trailblazer.

For it was not until she had been in the job for a good few months that it became clear just how historic her appointment was; Uroosa was the first hijab-wearing firefighter in the UK.

Her employers were “extremely proud and honoured” to have her on their team – and keen to attract a more diverse workforce in a profession where white men still predominate.

Uroosa is keen to see recruits from a wider range of backgrounds, including, of course, more hijab-wearing Muslim women. So she agreed to a number of media interviews arranged by her employer to spread the word to would-be recruits and others that firefighters are not just white men – “they can look like me”, she says, helping to blast away stereotypes.

In joining the service, Uroosa, now 27 and out of probation, was fulfilling a

**Uroosa Arshid,  
trailblazing  
hijab-wearing  
firefighter and an  
FBU member, talks  
to Helen Hague**

childhood ambition. When firefighters visited her primary school in Derby, she was entranced by what she heard and inspired to join a job where she could save lives and “Ride in a Big Red Fire Truck” alongside “firefighting superheroes”.

And as someone who has stepped up to help spearhead a much-needed diversity drive, it’s not lost on Uroosa that the firefighters who first inspired her in the classroom were “three white males”.

She shared her ambition with her family, who did not take it seriously. “They thought, ‘next week she’ll want to be an astronaut and a florist the week after’.”

Despite a successful first career as a self-employed personal trainer – she still

loves kick-boxing and the sort of martial arts championed by Bruce Lee – Uroosa’s firefighting ambitions remained.

She was “blessed enough to get in first time”, is “in for the long-term” – and hopes one day to drive that Big Red Fire Truck – also known as a fire appliance.

Everyone at West Bridgford station has been “extremely supportive,” says Uroosa, who is one of two women firefighters based there, and the only one on green watch.

She has not felt at all disadvantaged on the station and feels colleagues “have got my back ... I’m just trying to find my feet within the service and my role within it”.

## **DIVERSITY DRIVE CUTTING THROUGH**

It’s early days, but the diversity drive is already cutting through. A couple of hijab-wearing women approached Uroosa after seeing her on TV. Nothing has come of it so far but, “at least the conversation is getting started”.

In trips to local schools with her green watch colleagues, Muslim girls and their mothers are excited to see a firefighter who wears a headscarf and “looks like them”.



# 'HER JOURNEY IS SYMBOLIC OF HOW FAR WE HAVE COME BUT ALSO OF HOW WORK MUST CONTINUE TO ELIMINATE COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES'

But outside station camaraderie, Uroosa is used to “getting strange looks” and even questions about whether she is up to doing “the fireman’s lift” by people unaware of her fitness trainer background and kick-boxing prowess.

After all, she is not only a woman and a firefighter – still shocking to some – but a woman declaring her Muslim faith by wearing a hijab at work.

She has no problem praying five times a day as her faith demands – and can do so in five minutes and if there is a shout, she “of course” can swiftly join her colleagues.

## TESTAMENT TO HARD WORK

Tariq Khan, FBU national B&EMM chair, said: “Uroosa is an inspiration for Islamic people who aspire to join the fire and rescue service.

“Her success is a testament to the hard work that she has put in and the principle that whatever you strive to achieve, no perceived barriers should stand in your way.

“Her journey is symbolic of how far we have come in the emergency services but also of how much more work must still continue to eliminate common misconceptions and stereotypes.”

Uroosa, a smart, super fit, high achieving, modest Muslim woman, is the opposite of a fame-hungry wannabe celebrity.

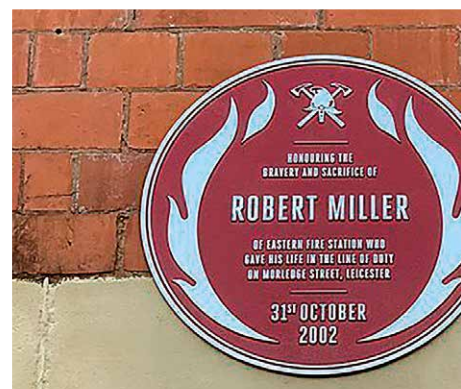
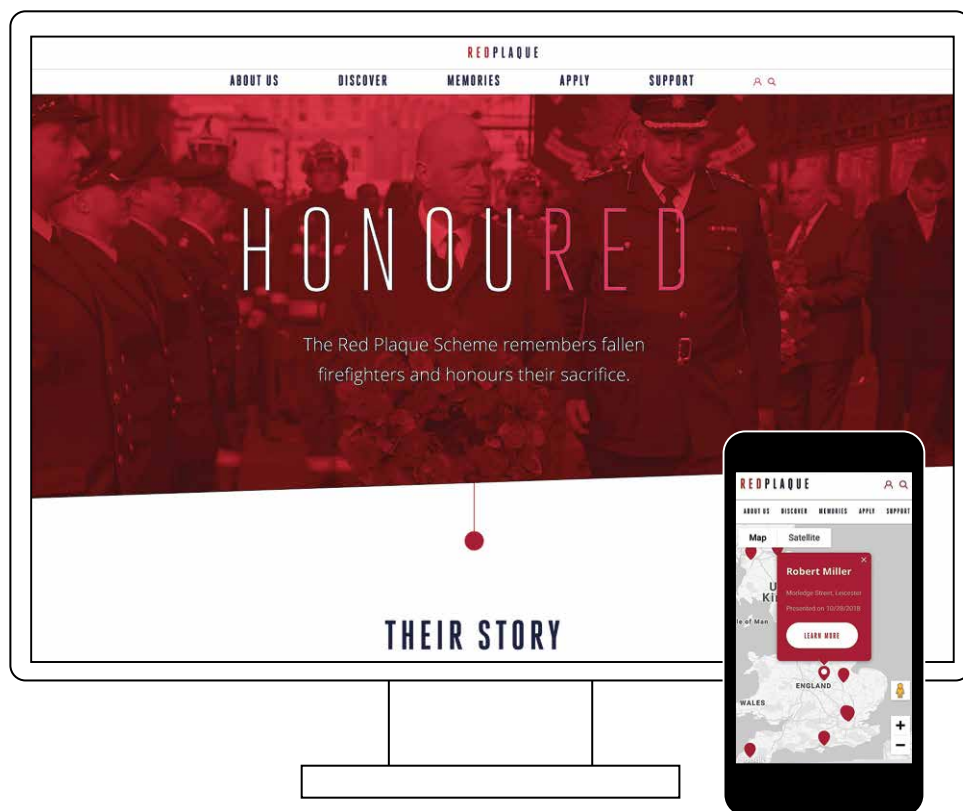
She is a real “influencer” – not one who peddles products for profit online. She is telling her own story, not to build her social media profile, but to help the UK fire service better reflect the community it serves.

And, as for achieving that goal, Uroosa, her union and her employer all know there is still a very long way to go.



IMAGES COURTESY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





# RED PLAQUE SCHEME GOES ONLINE

**O**n Firefighters' Memorial Day this year, the FBU launched a new website dedicated to our Red Plaque Scheme. The scheme recognises as many fallen firefighters as possible for their selfless work to protect others. Fully funded by proceeds from the weekly Firefighters 100 Lottery, the scheme has created a number of plaques each year since it was founded in 2017.

Each Red Plaque commemorates a moment in local history, offers a place for reflection, and memorialises the ultimate sacrifice of the fallen firefighters.

Found near the scene of the incident, the plaques take inspiration from the well-known English Heritage Blue Plaque Scheme which marks the homes of influential historic and cultural figures.

## MORE THAN 50 PLAQUES

Since 2017, Red Plaques remembering more than 50 firefighters have been unveiled across the UK.

Each plaque is unveiled at a ceremony attended by serving firefighters, FBU representatives, community members, fire chiefs, and the family, friends, and former colleagues of fallen firefighters.

The most recent Red Plaque to be unveiled was at Greenbank Fire Station in Plymouth, commemorating the 45 men and three women who died while on duty as firefighters during the Blitz in the Second World War. The plaque, unveiled on 25 April this year, was the outcome of

New website will make it easier to locate Red Plaques honouring fallen colleagues and read the stories behind them, and also to suggest sites for new ones





an intensive research project to identify and name firefighters killed during the Plymouth Blitz.

Red plaques play a vital role for the loved ones of fallen firefighters, providing them with a place for reflection and personal commemoration.

Billy Faust died while fighting a fire in Bethnal Green in 2004. He and Adam Meere were the two firefighters remembered by the first Red Plaque which was unveiled in November 2017.

### 'IT MEANS A LOT TO FAMILIES'

His father Dave Faust said: "It means a lot to the families of firefighters who have died in the line of duty that their sacrifices are not forgotten."

The new website provides context for the Red Plaque Scheme, shares stories behind each plaque, and allows family, friends, and former colleagues to post memories about the fallen firefighters.

It also includes an interactive map of current Red Plaques across the UK, so everyone can discover Red Plaques or memorials throughout the country.

Each plaque has its own page with information about the incident and the fallen firefighters, along with photographs of the plaque and the unveiling ceremony and a space to share any memories.

An application form on the website enables visitors to nominate a fallen firefighter for the scheme, making the application process simpler.

The Red Plaque Scheme itself is

## YOU CAN NOMINATE A FALLEN FIREFIGHTER FOR A RED PLAQUE: [REDPLAQUE.ORG.UK/](http://REDPLAQUE.ORG.UK/) APPLICATION

Scenes from the unveiling in October 2018 of a Red Plaque honouring Robert Miller, known to all as Bob, a firefighter at Leicester's Eastern fire station. He was fatally injured in 2002 at the age of 44 while searching for people to evacuate from a fire in a disused factory. His memorial is on the wall of the Morledge Street building where he died. Hundreds of people turned up. Bob's old friend and sub-officer, Mark "Mole" Smith (top right) was among the many speakers at the unveiling.

managed by a team of union members and leaders who volunteer their time, work with local communities, authorities and fire services to commission, install and organise the unveiling ceremonies and maintain all Red Plaques.

### FUNDING FROM LOTTERY

The scheme would not exist without funding from the Firefighters 100 Lottery which was created to fund and support firefighters, their bereaved families, and honour the bravery and sacrifice of fallen firefighters.

As well as funding the Red Plaque Scheme, the lottery supports research into the physical and mental health and wellbeing of firefighters and supports humanitarian initiatives and appeals.

- The new Red Plaque Scheme website is at [redplaque.org.uk](http://redplaque.org.uk)
- To find out more about the Firefighters 100 Lottery and to buy tickets, go to [firefighters100lottery.co.uk](http://firefighters100lottery.co.uk)







Ricky Tomlinson and Des Warren following their release from Leicester jail

MIKE TOMLINSON/REPORT ARCHIVE/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

# ANTI-UNION PLOT EXPOSED

They were charged with conspiracy, but the real plot involved the government and courts – now, at last, the truth behind the convictions of the Shrewsbury 24 has been acknowledged by the justice system. **Francis Beckett reports**

In 1972, building workers began a strike for safer and better conditions on building sites. It lasted 13 weeks and won a partial victory. Five months after it ended, 24 of the strike organisers were rounded up by the police, tried and sentenced to prison.

The bitter legal battle to clear their names only ended in March this

year. Many of them did not live to see their victory.

Conditions in the construction industry in 1972 were dreadful. Big construction employers were ruthless and exploitative. There was no health and safety provision on building sites.

One of the strike organisers, Ricky Tomlinson – later a famous actor – told the 2013 FBU conference what working for McAlpine was like. “If you wanted to go to the lavatory you either found a tree and took a cement bag, or you went home and you lost your pay. Someone was killed every single day in the building industry. Yet I can’t remember a boss ever going to jail over it.”

Four days after the strike ended with a victory on pay, but not on conditions, it emerged that the employers’ organisation was building a dossier on the strike leaders to give to then Home Secretary Robert Carr.

Edward Heath’s Conservative government wanted to weaken the

power of the unions, and the 24 were not forgiven for their victory. They had picketed large building sites around Shrewsbury, and the police had been with them all the time. No one was arrested at the time.

Now, suddenly, they were charged with “conspiracy to intimidate”. Their belated arrest looked like revenge because they had led a successful strike.

Twenty-two of the 24 were convicted and given jail terms, some suspended.

## HEAVIEST SENTENCE

Des Warren got the heaviest sentence – three years – perhaps because he told the judge some home truths from the dock. He quotes the speech he made in his book *The Key To My Cell*:

“Employers, by their contempt of laws governing safety requirements, are guilty of causing the deaths of a great many workers, and yet they are not dealt with before the courts. Mr. Bumble said: ‘The law is an ass.’ If he were here now he





# THE POLICE DESTROYED ORIGINAL WITNESS STATEMENTS AND HID THIS FROM THE DEFENCE

**ABOVE:** Pickets (l-r) John McKinsie Jones, Terry Renshaw and Kevin Butcher

**BELOW:** Supporters of the Shrewsbury 24 take part in a TUC demonstration in 2018

MARK KERRISON/ALAMY



**Back row (l-r) Pickets Bernard Williams, Kevin Butcher, Michael Pierce, Terry Renshaw and Ken O'Shea. Front row (l-r) Picket family members Dawn and Melanie McKinsie Jones, Eileen Turnbull (campaign researcher) and Harry Chadwick (campaign chairperson)**

# AFTER 50-YEAR STRUGGLE

might draw the conclusion that the law is, quite clearly, an instrument of the state, to be used in the interests of a tiny minority against the majority.”

According to Warren's family, he was made to drink a cocktail of tranquillisers in prison which led to Parkinson's disease and may have contributed to his death in 2004.

Ricky Tomlinson got two years and was held in solitary confinement after refusing to work or wear clothes. But he did find in prison the book that influenced him more than any other: Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, the great socialist novel set largely on building sites.

After his release, like the others, Tomlinson was blacklisted from work in construction. His solution was to start a new career as a night club compere, and he discovered a huge talent as an actor and performer.

These days the world knows Ricky, now 82, as a wonderfully gifted comic

actor, best known as Bobby Grant in *Brookside*, DCI Charlie Wise in *Cracker* and Jim Royle in *The Royle Family*.

The campaign to have the convictions quashed has taken almost half a century and might never have succeeded if campaign researcher Eileen Turnbull

had not uncovered key information by ploughing through huge piles of documents in the National Archives.

What she found was explosive. The police had destroyed the original witness statements – and had hidden this from the defence.

As the appeal court judgement put it: “We are confronted with a situation in which an unknown number of the first written accounts by eyewitnesses have been destroyed in a case in which the allegations essentially turned on the accuracy and credibility of their testimony.”

She also pointed out that on the day the jury retired to consider their verdict, a television documentary called *The Red Under the Bed* presented by Woodrow Wyatt and Richard Whiteley was broadcast, and is likely to have swayed jurors.

Ricky Tomlinson saw documents which he believed proved it was funded and written by the British intelligence services.



STEFANO CANNONI

**FBU general secretary Matt Wrack with Ricky Tomlinson at the union's 2013 annual conference**



# NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE WEBINAR – WOMEN: 'OUR FUTURE, OUR FIGHT'

**Holly Ferguson** reports on an online event that replaced this year's FBU women's school

Inspirational women speakers in a webinar took the place of this year's FBU women's school.

They each gave a talk before a discussion with members.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy**, Labour MP for Streatham, South London, explained she is a socialist feminist because she "doesn't have a choice".

"Socialism means equality to me as a person and feminism means equality to me as a woman," she said.

She discussed how Covid-19 and its economic impact have and will disproportionately affect women and why equalities should not be a side issue or shoved aside because of the pandemic or any other "bigger" issue.

The MP called for equality for all "right now". In the coming months of things getting "back to normal", she said, we need to look past "normal" and fight for better equalities for all.

Former firefighter **Lynn Bell** is CEO of LOVE Learning, Scotland, a charity providing innovative ways to approach education and pathways to inclusion and attainment for the most vulnerable in society.

She compared owning her own business and being a firefighter – both are generally male-dominated environments where women always have to work harder to prove themselves.

**Eireann McAuley**, 23, a policy officer for the Scottish TUC, spoke of the need for



more women in male-dominated environments because visibility is vital to attract others. "You cannot be what

you don't see," she said.

Former professional footballer **Alex Culvin** spoke of her experience of working

in a male-dominated sport and how baffling its sexism and the stereotyping was.

Throughout the webinar, participants heard from women FBU officials and reps about their roles and why they chose to get more involved in the FBU.

Advice for women in the discussion session on how to get their voices heard was "the more you repeat something the more likely it will be heard".

Panel members discussed the need for a blended approach to working after Covid-19.

Employers had proved that flexible working can work for all and this would allow for greater accessibility for women and others who require it, they said.

The need to organise and mobilise, to make sure union structures are accessible to women and to younger people, was discussed.

Speakers stressed the need to be relevant to encourage young members and to look at unique ways of attracting their attention.

As one speaker put it: "Let's keep doing what we are doing and run the world".

Be courageous, know your self-worth and speak your truth, was the message.

The webinar, on 26 April, was organised by the national women's committee with the help of Gabby Matkin of the FBU's communications department and FBU head of education Lindsey McDowell.

■ A recording of the webinar is available at <https://youtu.be/meXu7tZidek>



# VICTIMISATION THE BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN

**Neil Todd** of Thompsons Solicitors discusses victimisation of union members for taking industrial action

Unions have grappled for some time with the issue of whether section 146 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (TULRCA) can protect members subjected to a detriment by their employer for participating in official industrial action.

The orthodox view has been that no claim can be brought for a detriment under section 146 TULRCA because industrial action takes place during working hours.

This is a problem because s146 (2) TULRCA requires that protected union activity must take place at an “appropriate time”. This is one outside working hours (which might cover a ban on voluntary overtime, but not a conventional strike) or in working hours when the employer has granted consent for the activity.

Unions have long contended this restriction to the effectiveness of s146 TULRCA is not consistent with Article 11 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR).

Case law concerning Article 11 makes clear that the UK is under a positive obligation to comply with Article 11. That positive obligation also encompasses the adoption of effective and clear judicial protection against discrimination on grounds of union membership and the imposition of any detriment, however modest, constitutes a disincentive or restraint of the ability to participate in industrial action.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI

Two employment tribunal cases have brought the issue of how s146 TULRCA should be interpreted into sharp focus.

In the Unison case of *Mercer v Alternative Future Group Limited*, the claimant was suspended for organising and participating in industrial action and relied on the act of suspension as a detriment for the purposes of s146 TULRCA.

The case was unsuccessful. The tribunal agreed that s146 TULRCA was incompatible with Article 11 in permitting an employer to subject a union member to a detriment for participation in industrial action, but could not see how it could interpret the domestic provision to get around this point and it had no jurisdiction to issue a declaration of incompatibility. This claim is on appeal.

In the meantime, in the case of *Morais v Ryanair DAC*, the employment tribunal reached exactly the opposite view.

In this case, 29 members of the pilots’ union BALPA had concessionary travel benefits withdrawn for participating in industrial action. They asserted this was a detriment for the purposes of s146 TULRCA.

In this case, in light of the Article 11 case law, the tribunal concluded it should construe legislation in a way that is compatible with the convention.

On this basis, it accepted that “consent” by the employer for the purposes of the definition of “appropriate time” ought to be construed as having been deemed to have been given by the employer when a worker participates in

official industrial action.

If this was not the case then consent would be an unnavigable obstacle to rendering s146 TULRCA compatible with Article 11.

This case therefore turns on its head the orthodox rationale that has gone before – that an employer does not consent to industrial action.

This case also decided a preliminary issue concerning the application of the Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations 2010.

It looked at two issues. The first was whether compiling a list of strikers falls within the definition of a “prohibited list” as containing details of persons “who are taking part or have taken part in the activities of trade unions”.

The tribunal thought this was the case and noted parliament had intentionally adopted an expansive definition of “activities of trade unions” for the purposes of the black-listing provisions.

The second issue was whether the production of such a list by the employer for its sole use constitutes a prohibited list for the purpose of the regulations. The tribunal unequivocally found that it did.

The latter case is significant as it potentially paves the way for trade union members to argue they are afforded protection by s146 if they suffer a detriment as a result of participating in lawful industrial action.

They can also assert that any list compiled by the employer to identify who was on strike in order to determine who should be subject to such a detriment can be a “prohibited list” for the purposes of the black-listing provisions.

However, this case is also on appeal. The battle lines have been clearly drawn.



**FBU FREEPHONE  
LEGAL ADVICE  
0808 100 6061  
IN SCOTLAND  
0800 089 1331**

[WWW.THOMPSONSTRADOUNION.LAW/](http://WWW.THOMPSONSTRADOUNION.LAW/)  
TRADE-UNIONS/FBU





**LAST YEAR'S WINNER: Thursday 8pm  
clap for carers, Sidcup (South East  
London) fire station by James Atkins**

## FBU PHOTO COMPETITION 2021

After receiving such high quality entries to last year's photo competition, we thought we'd do it all again in 2021.

We are looking for well composed images that are striking, tell a story and illustrate one or more aspects of a firefighter's working life; the more dramatic, creative, personal or humorous, the better.

Once again, with kind sponsorship from College Hill printers, there will be one first prize of £500 and two runners-up prizes of £100.

### HOW TO ENTER

You can either enter online or by post.

Include your full name, address, membership number, contact telephone number and email address. Clearly mark your entry Photo Competition 2021 and include a short description of your picture, detailing where it was taken and the story behind it.

Digital images must have a minimum size of 3,000 pixels on their longest edge.

Physical prints or slides must be of sufficient quality and resolution to be printed at large size.

Original negatives for prints must be available.

**Email:** firefighter@fbu.org.uk with "FBU photo comp 2021" as the subject line.

**Post:** FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 7AE.

### JUDGING

The judging panel will be made up of Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, a representative from our sponsors College Hill Press, Anna Zych from the FBU communications team as well as editor and designer Alan Slingsby and photographer Stefano Cagnoni.

### COMPETITION TERMS

The contest closes on 30 August 2021.

Winners will be announced in the October/November issue of *Firefighter*.

By submitting an entry, each entrant agrees to the official rules (more info on how to enter and terms please will be available on the FBU website – fbu.org.uk

The competition is open to current FBU members only.

## PLAY BASED ON FIRST NATIONAL FBU STRIKE

*'Bysmal Boys*, a play written by Laura Genders, daughter of former firefighter and branch rep, Glyn Genders, will show as part of the Greater Manchester Fringe Festival in September 2021.

Set in 1977, as the first firefighters' national strike is set to begin, it's the story of the lads of blue watch, Macclesfield and what the strike means for them, their families and their union.

"Conflictive, comic, compassionate, the boys of Blue Watch navigate their individual stories and that of their brotherhood."



## THANK YOU, ALBERT

**A big thank you for the donation of £255 made to the Fire Brigades Union, at the request of the late Albert Ludlow, who retired as DO in Guildford, Surrey, in 1977.**

**He is remembered fondly by those who knew him, as a "top man" and "the best DO ever".**

### FBU POLITICAL FUND

## NOTIFICATION OF RIGHT TO GIVE WITHDRAWAL NOTICE

**To: All Members who joined the FBU on or after 1 March 2018 and to those members who opted-in to the political fund on or after 1 March 2018**

*Dear Brother/Sister,*

The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended by the 2016 Act) Section 84A (1) and (2) requires the Fire Brigades Union to notify you of your

right to give a withdrawal notice, and hence opt-out from the political fund that you opted-in to join on or after 1 March 2018.

The withdrawal notice will take effect at the end of the period of one month beginning with the day on which it is given.

If you wish to opt out of the political fund then you can do this by the following measures:

- (a) by delivering the notice (either personally or by an authorised agent or by post) at the head office or a branch office of the union;
- (b) by sending it by e-mail to the following email: membership@fbu.org.uk

If you have any queries please contact the email detailed above.

**Yours fraternally  
Mark Rowe, National Officer**



# STATION CAT PRINCIPLES AT STAKE

## FILE AND FORGET

It is not her newspaper of choice, but the other day your Cat found herself reading *The Times of India*.

It had a story about a fire in the office of the commissioner of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the city of Nagpur in central India.

Documents and files relating to the rural work guarantee scheme across 34 districts were destroyed in the fire.

Neither back-up paperwork nor electronic copies exist.

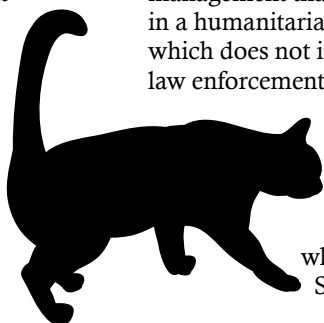
Your Cat got to thinking ... there must be a few government ministers, and former ministers come to think of it, who would not bother about tendering processes and pay good money for a document management system like that.

Anyone got David Cameron's mobile number? Just asking for a friend.

## HIGH PRINCIPLES

Fire and rescue crews left the scene of a demonstration at the UAV Tactical Systems factory in Thorpe Astley, Leicester, after the FBU stepped in to support the right to protest.

The union says it reminded senior managers that a firefighter's role does not include "law enforcement" after Palestine Action protesters scaled the wall of the Israeli-owned



arms manufacturer and stayed on the roof.

Your Cat is proud to see firefighters standing up for what is right and reminding management that they work in a humanitarian service which does not include law enforcement.

The Leicester protest comes at a time when Home Secretary

Priti Patel's new policing bill threatens everyone's right to protest.

Should the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill become law, critics are seriously concerned that it would criminalise what had been, until then, lawful demonstrations.

Your Cat has to wonder how long it will take government spin doctors to turn the FBU's act of humanity into a "crime" against the Tory state.

Wales rugby league captain Elliot Kear in action – see Will he become part of the union?

REUTERS/ALAMY



## WILL HE BECOME PART OF THE UNION?

Wales rugby league captain Elliot Kear has decided to leave Salford Red Devils and become a firefighter in West Yorkshire; he will continue to play for Bradford Bulls on a part-time basis.

The decision might have caught some people on the *blindsight*, but Elliot says his family are at the *centre* of his *drive* to reach his *goal*. At least being based in Bradford Elliot will not have to *fly-half* way around the *British Lions*.

The rugby player is looking *forward* to *tackling* basic *training* and hopes to show everyone he is not a *dummy* and there will be no *obstruction* to him gaining a good *pass*, hopefully with *bonus points*, but realises it is not *straight forward* and he will not be *winging* it.

*Rucking* to the future, if Elliot keeps a *tight-head* on his *shoulder pads* he should make his *mark*, *pitching* in and being on the *front row* when anything *kicks-off*.

Your Cat was curious – was Elliott blowing the *final whistle* on his international career or was he just *trying* to *turnover* a new *phase* in his life.

Whatever the reason it was a good *punt*, there is always a *scrum* for firefighter *positions*.

Elliot is expected to *kick off* his new career at the end of May. Is your Cat being too hopeful in wanting Elliot to go the whole **22 metres** and *drop kick* rugby league into *touch* and embrace the union?

The Fire Brigades Union that is.



# 25-YEAR BADGES



**Mick Callan** (l), Hindley, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mike Willis



**Kevin Keenan** (l), Paisley, West Area, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Ian Sim



**Brian Thompson** (l), South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dai Evans



**Scott Blandford** (r), Springbourne, Dorset & Wiltshire brigade organiser, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Karen Adams with blue watch members (l-r), Chris Hornsby, Chris Mitchell, Paul Milton and Jason Giddings



**Steve Broad** (r), West Moors training centre, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Scott Blandford, with colleagues (l-r) Chris Wood, Diane Critchlow, Ian Read and Ash Griffiths and centre support staff



**Paul Hawke** (l), Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from South West regional chair Scott Young – late due to Covid-19



**Ian Howe** (r), red watch, Stockport, receives his 25-year badge from Neil Howard on behalf of the Greater Manchester committee



**Warren Dore** (r), blue watch, Eccles, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from GMC chair Ross Strother



**Barry McSherry** (r), Byker, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Alan Heatley



**Colin Winterbottom** (r), protection, Derbyshire, receives his 25-year badge from Buxton branch secretary Dom McGlynn



**Barry Cunningham** (l), green watch, Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Matt Fryer



**Steve Owens** (l), RDS, Belford, Northumberland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Mick Tully



**Jason Brattle** (l), blue watch, Redbridge, Hampshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rich Brown





**Kirk Pendlebury** (l), red watch, Moss Side, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from Drew Leeming



**Paul Brooks** (l), green watch, Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Matt Fryer



**Graham Coulson** (r), Barrow, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Mark Sharpe



**Ian Hall** (l), Oldham, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Steve Wiswell, with blue and red watch colleagues looking on (l-r) Shaun Zastawny, Sam Taylor, Steven Broadhurst, Martin Kay, Phil Stephenson, Kieron Brown, Marcus Amrooni and Lee Moran



**Karl Gockel** (l), green watch, Stanground, Cambridgeshire, receives his 25-year badge from Matt House with colleagues (l-r) branch rep Simon Robinson, Georgie Ivens, Philip Coates, Matt Gosney and Sam Pearce



**Gary Cooper** (r), Barrow, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Mark Sharpe



**Paul Hardman** (r), branch chair, Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Matt Fryer, with colleagues looking on



**Pete Everett** (r), Bohemia Road, Hastings, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from colleague Max Gilbert



**Lee Sanders** (r), red watch, Tamworth, Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Chris Craddock with colleagues looking on



**Richard House** (l), Greenbank, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Paul Bolding



**Tim Hill** (l), and **Rob Smith**, blue watch, Berwick, Northumberland, receive their 25-year badges from brigade secretary Guy Tiffin with colleague Steve Hanley looking on



**Mark Hotchin** (l), Buxton RDS, Derbyshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Kev Townson



**Richard Maddams** (l), Essex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Alan Chinn-Shaw



# 25-YEAR BADGES



**Steve Coote** (l), green watch, Whitefield, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Stephen Wiswell



**Dean Hastie** (l), group support, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from South West regional chair Scott Young



**Rod Crook** (r), red watch, Maidenhead, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep James Bennewith with colleagues looking on



**Matt Johnson** (l), Plymouth, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from Southwest regional chair Scott Young at the Plymouth Blitz red plaque ceremony with blue watch, Greenbank, looking on



**Jim Bradley** (r), red watch, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade rep Sean McKenna with colleagues looking on



**Scott Young** (l), Southwest regional chair, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from recently retired Southwest EC member Trevor French at the Plymouth Blitz red plaque ceremony



**Neil Murren** (r), Skelmersdale, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Kev Wilkie with colleagues looking on



**Colin Davis** (l), Salfords, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Simon Harris



**Kari Knutsen** (l), white watch, Bridgend, South Wales, receives her 25-year badge from branch rep Sean Cayford



**Matt Perrin** (r), South division, Lincolnshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU vice president Ben Selby at Grantham with colleagues (l-r) Royce Atkinson, Danny Hill, Harry Bell, Sophie Brownridge, Keith Farr and Laurel Ray looking on



**Mark Kent** (r), red watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ricki Pemberton



**Philip Dearden** (r), green watch, Atherton, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Matt Fryer



**Alan Gilson** (l), blue watch, Paignton, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from FBU rep Chris Balcombe, with colleagues (l-r) Dave Cook, Ben Greedus, Jimmy Cheung and Gavin Holland looking on



# 40-YEAR BADGES



**Dave Davies (r),** Leek, Staffordshire, receives his 40-year badge from brigade chair **Chris Craddock** with red watch colleagues looking on

**Graham Ayres (r),** Brackley fire station, Northamptonshire, receives his 40-year badge from brigade chair **John Wadsworth** with colleagues (l-r) **Tom Marchant, Ryan Knight, Lee Dawson, Clive Boon** and **Tom Barton**



**Jennie Griffiths (r),** control, South Wales, receives her 40-year badge from brigade organiser **Dai Evans**

**Mick Tulley (r),** Belford retained branch rep, Northumberland, receives his 40-year badge from recently retired North East region EC member and vice-president **Andy Noble** with colleagues looking on



Please send high resolution digital files or prints to: [firefighter@fbu.org.uk](mailto:firefighter@fbu.org.uk) or Firefighter, FBU, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE

For your image to look its best, we need the original, full-resolution image. One lifted from a website may not do justice to a unique occasion. We do our best with images that are low resolution, taken directly into a bright light or suffer from camera-shake, or have other problems, but cannot perform miracles. Please include details for each image – full names of everyone who is in it; their station/brigade/watch etc; where they are in the picture (eg: left to right); their union posts/branch if relevant; and where/when it was taken.

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**Change of address or next of kin**  
Advise your brigade organiser of any change of address and head office of changes to next of kin or nominations for benefits.

## FBU FREEPHONE LEGAL ADVICE LINE

**0808 100 6061**

ENGLAND, WALES AND N IRELAND

**0800 089 1331**

SCOTLAND

The line provides advice for personal injury, family law, wills, conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues. For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU representative.

**T THOMPSONS SOLICITORS**



# SIGN UP FOR THE UK FIREFIGHTERS CANCER AND DISEASE REGISTRY



We need to hear from **all firefighters** both serving and retired, from those who have never received a cancer or disease diagnosis and from those who have had or currently have cancer or other serious or chronic illness

**The aim** of the UK Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry (FCDR) is to develop a better understanding of the increased occurrence of cancers and diseases among firefighters and to identify the association between a firefighter's occupation and exposure to fire effluents and residues.

Research study **objectives** are:

- **To identify** the association between firefighters' work characteristics and exposure to fire effluents.
- **To identify** the frequency and severity of the most common diseases and cancers suffered by firefighters.
- **To investigate** trends and

variations of cancers and other diseases with specific work practices.

- **To evaluate** the risk of cancer among firefighters when compared to the rest of the UK population.
- **To offer** preventative health screening, education and support that is specifically designed to protect firefighters' health.

### **Why is it so important to join this registry?**

More responses means more data which, scientifically, make this research more valid.

**2127**  
PARTICIPANTS  
SO FAR



**TO SIGN UP AND FOR MORE INFORMATION  
GO TO [WWW.UCLAN.AC.UK/FCDR](http://WWW.UCLAN.AC.UK/FCDR)**

