

FIREFIGHTER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | DECEMBER 2019/JANUARY 2020

**FBU
CONTAMINANTS
SURVEY**

20 minutes of your time
will help firefighters for
years to come

SEE P7

GRENELL REPORT

UNION DEFENDS FIREFIGHTERS

UNFAIR CRITICISM

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS

SEE P12

**MEMBERS'
MEETINGS**

SEE P10

**CONTAMINANTS
RESEARCH**

SEE P7, 8&9

**FIREFIGHTERS
100 LOTTERY**

SEE P16





MATT WRACK

THE COMING WEEKS WILL DECIDE OUR FUTURE

GENERAL ELECTION

As we go to press, the country faces the starkest choice of any election in living memory: the prospect of a new government with the chance for real change or another five years of Tory rule that will do untold damage to the lives of working people.

For firefighters, the contrast is starker still: between a manifesto that was written in consultation with their union, which pledges to rebuild the fire and rescue service, with national standards, national accountability and a long-overdue pay rise; or another five years of brutal cuts.

As we think about the election, let's remember the huge attacks we have faced under the Tory/Liberal Democrat coalition between 2010 and 2015 and the Tory government since.

Our pensions have been attacked, our pay has been frozen and we have seen the worst cuts in the history of the modern fire service. Stations have closed, fire engines axed and conditions of service have been under attack service by service.

Even the disaster at Grenfell has not made Theresa May or Boris Johnson change direction: the cuts and the attack on our living standards have continued without pause.

Let's ensure that the keys to Downing Street are not handed to the man who, as Mayor of London, pushed through the biggest cuts of any UK fire service in



Firefighters at an FBU members' meeting in Derbyshire

modern history. Make no mistake – it is the future of our service that is at stake.

MEETING MEMBERS ACROSS THE UK

In recent weeks, I have been lucky enough to visit fire stations across the country, hearing your views, your concerns, and offering you the support of the union.

While every place I have visited has been unique, the common thread through all of my conversations has been that firefighters are expected to do more work, for less money, and with fewer resources.

Years of brutal cuts have pushed firefighters to breaking point. The status quo is utterly unsustainable – it is unfair and it is unsafe.

Our legal victory over pensions proved that we are strongest when we fight together. Now is the time to do more than just get angry – it is time to get organised.

Please follow developments closely – it is about the future for all of us.

GRENFELL

Since our last issue, firefighters have faced a difficult amount of scrutiny, including much unjust and unfair criticism from the media, after the publication of the first phase report of the inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire. We cover this in some detail in this magazine.

That night firefighters acted – and I do not use this word lightly – with absolute heroism. Faced with impossible circumstances, they did everything in their power to save lives.

The first phase of the inquiry examined only the response on the night, placing unfair scrutiny on firefighters, leaving examination of those who turned the building into a death trap until phase two, not due to begin until early next year.

That being said, many of the recommendations arising from phase one are long overdue and the FBU, as the only organisation willing to speak up for firefighters, is taking a leading role pushing

for their implementation.

We have called for all those needed, to meet urgently to discuss the rapid and efficient implementation of the various recommendations.

Many of these have resource implications and we will demand that government meets its obligations.

CONTAMINANTS

The FBU, has fought tooth and nail against the decimation of our service, taken on the government over the theft of our pensions, and fought for a better, safer fire and rescue service nationally and locally.

Now we are fighting for your future, with groundbreaking research into the toxic contaminants encountered by firefighters and their links to cancer and other illnesses.

In cooperation with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), we are working to prove the links between firefighting and these devastating illnesses. But we cannot do it without your help. I am asking all of you, every serving firefighter, to help us by filling out the survey developed by UCLan, available from bit.ly/FBUcontaminants.

And please remember, this research is part funded by the Firefighters 100 Lottery. Please back this and other initiatives by supporting the lottery at bit.ly/FF100Lottery.

Finally, on behalf of myself and the executive council, please accept our best wishes to you, your family and friends for the festive season and the New Year.



CONTENTS

DECEMBER 2019/JANUARY 2020

NEWS

- 4** Government ignores flood threat once again
- 5** Fighting cuts in Surrey and Devon and Somerset
- 6** Bolton fire 'indictment of inaction' after Grenfell

FEATURES

- 10** Members' meetings
- 12** Grenfell report misses the point
- 16** Firefighters 100 Lottery 2019 round-up
- 18** 43 years at one station

REGULARS

- 5** Sounding off
Labour's green new deal
- 7** News focus
FBU survey is key part of cancer research
- 8** Aerial ladder platform
Contaminants project testing is now under way
- 20** Equalities
FBU sectional schools
- 21** Legal Beagle
Brexit and workers' rights
- 22** Noticeboard
The Firefighters' Story film now available online
- 23** Station Cat
Promises abound, cuts continue
- 24** 25 year badges



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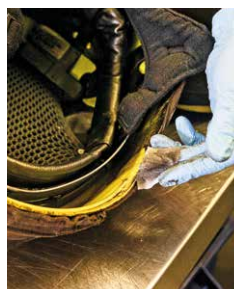
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NEWS

'SHOCKING INDICTMENT'

FBU: Bolton fire a shocking indictment of government inaction after Grenfell and complete failure of UK fire safety p6



CONTAMINANTS

Survey has key role in establishing links between firefighters' work, cancer and other illnesses p7

TORIES' FLOOD RESPONSE: NO STATUTORY DUTY IN ENGLAND, NO NATIONAL EMERGENCY

FLOODS

Hundreds of flood alerts and warnings left crews "overstretched and under-resourced" as firefighters have responded to mass flooding across England.

Once again, they did this vital work without the mandate and funding that would be provided by a statutory duty for fire and rescue services to respond to floods – a long-standing demand of the FBU.

Yorkshire and the Midlands were worst hit. Sheffield weather station recorded its wettest ever autumn. Large parts of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire were flooded after the rivers Severn and Avon burst their banks.

The prime minister resisted calls from Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn to declare a national emergency.

Boris Johnson's visit to flood sites was derailed by angry residents, with one asserting: "You've not helped us. I don't know what you're here today for."

England is the only part of the UK where firefighters do not have a statutory duty to respond to flooding, as they do in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Labour has committed to extend the statutory duty to England if elected.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "Once again, we see government ministers, including the prime minister, come up with fine words, praise and plaudits. And, once again, we've got to point out that that's not good enough.

"We need a clear statutory duty for the fire and rescue service to respond to floods and we need investment in the jobs, the equipment, the training and resources that we



Doncaster: A South Yorkshire firefighter rescues a child after severe flooding on 8 November this year

need to do the job."

South Yorkshire, one of the worst flood-hit areas, has seen 27% of firefighter jobs slashed since 2010 and has had funding from central government cut by £3.4m since 2016/17.

South Yorkshire fire and rescue service's high-volume pumping appliance, vital for flooding response, was unavailable for a period of time due to staffing shortages, according to Pete Smith, FBU executive council member for Yorkshire and Humberside.

Matt Wrack said the climate emergency means that the country is likely to see more large-scale

flood incidents, placing a strain on fire and rescue service resources.

"We can't keep scrambling like this," he said. "Firefighters are on the frontline here – they must be central in our planning to protect people in the face of the climate emergency."

Ahead of a visit to flood sites, Jeremy Corbyn said: "Not only are the government's plans to tackle the climate emergency weak, they've failed to prepare communities by investing in flood prevention and Tory cuts have stretched emergency services to breaking point."

CHRISTOPHER RUIZ/GETTY

ACTION BALLOT OVER SAFETY THREAT OF HUGE JOB LOSSES

SURREY

Surrey firefighters are voting on industrial action, after exhausting all other avenues, to prevent dangerous cuts to their fire and rescue service. Should they vote in favour, industrial action short-of-strike could commence on Christmas Eve.

The FBU is engaged in a long dispute against proposals including the loss of 70 firefighter jobs on top of the 131 cut since 2010. If the planned cuts go ahead, the total reduction will be more than one in five – 22% – of the county's firefighters.

Drastic reductions to fire cover at night with the removal of seven fire engines, resulting in a significant slowing of response times, are also proposed. Last year, 75% of fire deaths occurred between 18.00 and 09.00.

More than two thirds of people who responded to an official consultation opposed the cuts, with less than a fifth approving. Some 13,000 people signed a petition demanding the council scrap the cuts, but councillors rubber-stamped the proposals in September.

The FBU lodged a trade dispute, with a deadline for the service to address union concerns. As *Firefighter* went to press, members were voting on industrial action. The ballot was due to close on 10 December.

Lee Belsten, FBU Surrey brigade secretary, said: "We've tried to negotiate with the brigade and the council to keep Surrey safe, but they will not budge. We have no choice but to go to our last resort – industrial action."

"There is no other way to stop these cuts. It's vital that every Surrey firefighter votes 'Yes' for industrial action."



Members of the public joined an FBU protest outside Surrey County Hall

MPs URGED TO ACT TO HALT CUTS

DEVON & SOMERSET

Devon and Somerset firefighters lobbied MPs in Westminster over devastating cuts to intervene and stop the fire authority going ahead with its plans.

They took with them to parliament on 23 October a petition signed by 30,000 local people. It calls on Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service to scrap planned cuts which include closing

eight fire stations and scrapping more than 30 fire engines across the two counties. The FBU has warned that the plans will "demolish" frontline services, leaving public safety at risk.

James Leslie, FBU Devon and Somerset brigade secretary, said: "Firefighters have warned from the start that these cuts pose a threat to public safety and it's clear that the public agree with us. We appreciate the MPs

who came to talk to us and listen to our concerns, including shadow fire minister Karen Lee, but now they must respect the wishes of firefighters and their constituents and tell fire service senior management that these cuts must be shelved."

Devon and Somerset fire authority is scheduled to meet on 18 December to discuss responses to the public consultation and to make a decision on the cuts.

SOUNDING OFF

A green new deal will require a revival of labour militancy, says Ed McNally, co-director, Labour for a Green New Deal

LABOUR'S GREEN NEW DEAL AND TRADE UNIONS

At the Labour Party conference in September, hundreds of activists and trade unionists came together to pass a motion, moved by the FBU, for "Labour's Socialist Green New Deal".

Much of both the substance and ambition of our motion is reflected in Labour's inspiring manifesto, which embeds tackling the climate emergency throughout its radical programme for government, laying out what a path to net zero emissions by 2030 will look like.

Disagreement at conference over the importance of a target date for decarbonisation was widely misreported as a clash between party members and trade unions.

The reality was quite the opposite: the essence of the final motion, a commitment to rapid and just decarbonisation, was the collective work of CLP and trade union delegates, and shows why only Labour can tackle the climate emergency.

Matt Wrack in his speech in Brighton rightly insisted that the climate crisis, and the social transformation we need to combat it, impacts every worker and every industry, all across the world.

Of course energy workers must be actively empowered and engaged in the process of transitioning away from fossil fuels, and the rise in global temperatures is starker for firefighters than anyone else.

But halting capitalism's destruction of the world will take every part of our movement, and delivering a green new deal in practice will require a historic revival of labour militancy.

This is why the commitment in Labour's manifesto secured by the FBU to repealing anti-trade union laws is so crucial.

Regardless of the election outcome, we will continue to organise together across the labour movement to fight for climate justice.





BOLTON FIRE 'SHOCKING INDICTMENT' OF GOVERNMENT INACTION AFTER GRENFELL

GREATER MANCHESTER

The fire that destroyed a student accommodation block in Bolton has highlighted the Tory government's failure to tackle the fire safety crisis in the UK.

Forty fire engines and 200 firefighters responded to the blaze, evacuating the building and rescuing two people. One person was rescued by crews using an aerial platform.

Two students were treated at the scene for minor injuries.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, congratulated the "amazing work" of

crews in "incredibly difficult circumstances". He called the fire a "shocking indictment of the government's shameful inaction after Grenfell" and condemned the "complete failure" of the UK's fire safety system.

"This is not how any building should react to a fire in the 21st century, let alone a building in which people live ... it's time for a complete overhaul of UK fire safety before it's too late," said Wrack.

Students living in the privately owned The Cube accommodation block had been assured two years ago that the building was not clad with the

same dangerous aluminium composite material (ACM) as Grenfell. But it was wrapped in high-pressure laminate (HPL) cladding, which is combustible in certain combinations.

The FBU's interim recommendations to the Grenfell Tower inquiry a year ago called for "the immediate identification and assessment" of other flammable cladding systems, but the government did not begin testing until after news reports about HPL in the spring.

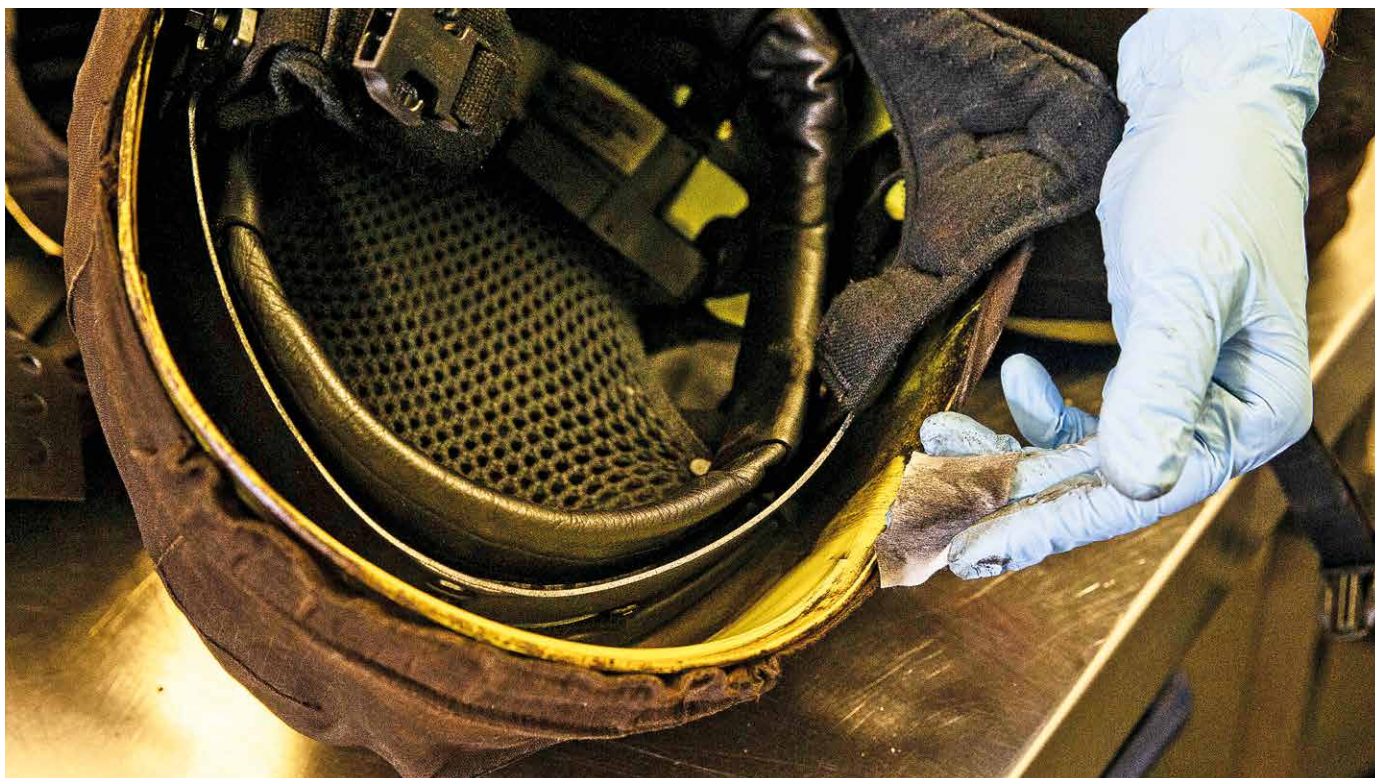
When government tests confirmed that HPL cladding was unsafe in July, Wrack said it was "outrageous" that it had taken so long to recognise the risk.

The FBU called for "swift action" to keep people safe, but ministers refused to act. There has still been no comprehensive programme of testing other potentially flammable materials.

With support from other services, the fire was tackled by Greater Manchester FRS, which has been fighting off cuts from mayor Andy Burnham.

"Greater Manchester has lost more than 600 firefighters since 2010," said Les Skarratts, FBU executive council member for the North West. "Alarmingly, Andy Burnham is trying to cut another six fire engines, including one in Bolton."





MARK THOMAS

FBU SURVEY IS KEY PART OF RESEARCH INTO FIREFIGHTING, CONTAMINANTS AND CANCER

The FBU and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) are conducting a major survey as part of ground-breaking research into firefighting and toxic contaminants.

It is a key part of a multi-stage project to establish the link between firefighting and a host of diseases, including cancer and will help researchers to understand how firefighters encounter contaminants and how personal protective equipment (PPE) is used, feeding into recommendations to minimise contamination.

Firefighters who respond to the online survey (that should take less than 20 minutes to complete) will remain anonymous. The FBU is urging as many as possible to take part.

Every fire contains a mixture of toxic chemicals and research suggests that in the UK firefighters are more likely to develop cancer and other illnesses than the general population.

Steve Barclay, a fire and rescue training instructor in Essex, has seen colleagues develop cancer.

"It's difficult to tell whether that's through the fire service or not," he says. "It could well be from their job, it could well be from something else. The nature of our job puts us more in that risk area of contracting some sort of cancer."

When firefighters develop cancer in

some countries, including parts of the US, Canada, and Australia, the disease is automatically presumed to be linked to their exposure to contaminants through their work.

"Presumptive legislation" in those countries places the burden of proof on the employer – if a fire service employer attempts to refuse compensation, it must prove that the affected firefighter did not develop the disease as a result of their work.

In the UK, the burden of proof is instead placed on firefighters, who must prove that their disease is a result of firefighting. This is partly because there is not yet UK-based research proving

that firefighting and cancer are linked.

The research, of which the survey is a part, is intended to fill that vacuum and, ultimately, change the law.

Sean Starbuck, FBU national officer, said: "That's one of our aims, but we can only get that if we've got evidence.

"I view this slightly differently ...

Our job is to stop firefighters getting cancer in the first place. But because of the nature of the job, we cannot prevent everybody getting it, so we should be trying to minimise the unnecessary contamination."

UCLan is currently undertaking the environmental testing stage of the research in fire stations across the country. It involves testing for contaminants in the air, on surfaces, and on both clean and dirty PPE.

Professor Anna Stec from UCLan wants to find out what contaminants firefighters are bringing back into the workplace – "What they are potentially taking on the clothes, and taking home with them."

The FBU is asking brigades for help to gather the data. "At the end of the day, it's firefighters' health and their life," says Stec.

■ The FBU contaminants survey is open to current firefighters until 5 January 2020. Visit bit.ly/FBUcontaminants

'AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S FIREFIGHTERS' HEALTH AND THEIR LIFE'

CONTAMINANTS RESEARCH PROJECT GETS UNDER WAY

As part of a groundbreaking three-year research project into firefighting and toxic contaminants, the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is undertaking the environmental testing stage of the research in fire stations across the country.

Testing began in November. Shown here: testing at a former airbase, MDP Wethersfield, near Braintree, Essex. The test measured contaminants in the air, surfaces, and on both clean and dirty PPE.

A contaminants survey to collect data from serving firefighters is open until 5 January – see page 7.

The project is jointly funded by the Firefighters 100 Lottery and UCLan.

PICTURE: MARK THOMAS





FIGHTING CUTS, DEFENDING PENSIONS, AND DEMANDING PROPER PAY

Tam McFarlane, FBU national officer, reports on the first series of members' meetings organised by the union



As part of a wider campaign to make the case for investment in our service, including addressing the urgent need for increased pay, a series of large-scale meetings are taking place where senior union officials are updating members and hearing their views on the issues that matter most to them.

Over the past couple of weeks, hundreds of FBU members, from a range of workplaces and duty systems and from across the UK, have taken part in 14 roadshow meetings, in the East Midlands, Northern Ireland, North East England, Wales, Yorkshire and Humberside and Essex.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

The first, in Derby, was kicked off by general secretary Matt Wrack, who highlighted how the national standards created after the Second World War, overseen by the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council (since abolished) and inspected by the fire service inspectorate, had been torn apart by successive governments and that, since 2002/03, standards set locally,

based on integrated risk management planning (IRMP), had introduced more dangerous working practices in order to drive through austerity cuts. This was confirmed by East Midland members, who told the general secretary and FBU president Ian Murray that some fire crews in their region have been reduced to just three firefighters.

Members were praised for standing up for the fire service in the midst of austerity and budget cuts and the meetings highlighted recent FBU successes in fighting off cuts

**'THE UNION WILL
CONTINUE TO FIGHT
FOR THE SAFETY OF
FIREFIGHTERS AND
THE PUBLIC'**

in Merseyside, South Yorkshire and elsewhere.

"The only organisation that has stood up for firefighters and the fire service is the FBU," Wrack said, pledging that the union will continue to fight for the safety of firefighters and the public.

Wrack and Murray stressed that the union continues to fight for firefighters and is challenging cuts in Surrey, Devon and Somerset and Manchester. Members in the North East of England and Northern Ireland, who are also facing cuts, welcomed the support.

MAJOR VICTORY

Wrack's account of the union's major victory on public sector pensions drew applause: "We can be proud that our union, a relatively small union, was the only organisation to take on the UK government in the courts – and we beat them."

Members were assured by Murray that the union "will continue to fight for all firefighters' pensions", including demanding that any new scheme is fit for purpose.

Other issues on the agenda were slower response times, the real impact of



General secretary Matt Wrack and president Ian Murray, along with regional officials, addressed meetings and met members in the East Midlands, Northern Ireland, the North East, Wales, Yorkshire and Humberside and Essex

PICTURES: JOHN HARRIS/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK AND CHRIS GURNHILL

deregulation, flood response capability and role expansion. The pay freeze and cuts since 2010 have had a huge impact on firefighters, with the only people seemingly protected being chief fire officers whose pay in many cases has increased massively above inflation – a reward for delivering cuts – whereas a firefighter has seen a relative pay cut of at least £4,000 (when measured by the consumer price index (CPI)).

At a local level across the UK, firefighters' jobs are being changed by stealth with increasing levels of non-contractual work being demanded by employers. This work is being done across all services, at varying levels of pay and, in some brigades, for no additional pay at all. This is totally unacceptable and needs to be addressed urgently.

Wrack recalled the epic 1977 strike, a huge sacrifice for firefighters, but a sacrifice which won a pay formula and a whole host of conditions which subsequent generations of firefighters have benefitted from.

FIGHTING SPIRIT

Wrack called on members to galvanise their fighting spirit to address the issues of firefighter pay and non-contractual work. Members at all the meetings to date agreed, as he said that these issues need to be “tackled head on, or else nothing will change”.

Firefighters needed to unite, he said, to deal with all non-contractual work until they are properly paid for it.

It is more important than ever that firefighters are ready to take a stand and with their union fight to take back control of their workplace.

Meeting venues were filled with raised hands as members were asked if they were ready to take a stand.

More meetings will be arranged and members are encouraged to keep an eye on the FBU website for details.

GRENFELL REPORT MISSES THE POINT

While its recommendations are welcome, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report unfairly criticises firefighters and control staff, letting off the real culprits – the politicians and construction firms, says FBU general secretary **Matt Wrack**

The Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017 killed 72 people and scarred a whole community, including the firefighters who attended.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) phase 1 report, published on 30 October, unfairly criticises firefighters and emergency control staff, while failing to identify the real culprits.

Twenty firefighters were dispatched to a fire in a flat on the fourth floor of the 25-storey residential tower block. The first two pumps arrived within five minutes at 00.59. By 01.08 the first BA team entered to tackle the kitchen fire. By 01.21 they had put the fire out.

The GTI report recognises the professional work of firefighters. We welcome the comment that:

There can be no doubt that the rank and file firefighters who attended the fire displayed enormous courage and selfless devotion to duty. In many cases they pushed themselves to, and even beyond, the limits of endurance in their attempt to fight the fire and to rescue those who remained in the building.

There is “no suggestion” that the initial response “could have been materially quicker”. It commends firefighters, who “acted as swiftly as they reasonably could”. Tragically, the fire had already spread to the cladding on the external walls which was alight by 01.14. In the next 12 minutes, the fire spread 19 floors to the top of the tower and had entered 20 flats. It then continued across the clad architectural crown and down the other sides. An hour after the fire began, more than 30 flats were ablaze.

CENTRAL FLAW

While the FBU has welcomed many of the GTI’s recommendations, the report has a central flaw running through 900 pages. It concludes that “prompt evacuation would have resulted in the saving of many more lives”. Martin Moore-Bick, the retired judge chairing the GTI wrote:

It was, or should have been, obvious that only a supervised mass evacuation would minimise the number of casualties. That point had been reached by 01.30 at the earliest and by 01.50 at the latest.”

The union does not accept the judge’s opinion that more people could have been saved if Grenfell

Tower had been evacuated earlier. This view contradicts professional firefighting knowledge and the facts on the night.

The report says, in hindsight, that incident commanders, operational firefighters and control staff should have disregarded standard operating procedures, ignored their training and, with few resources and no plan, gambled by announcing an evacuation and then hoping more people would get out of their own volition.

Yet these conclusions are unsupported by evidence. In particular, the chair did not have any expert firefighting opinion, despite having such an expert, retired chief fire officer Steve McGuirk, already appointed and available to the inquiry. This is all the more shocking when no such mass “evacuation” of a residential block has taken place during a major fire before.

Lawyers and others can speculate, but should not pretend to understand these practicalities and criticise the work of firefighters trying their best to save life on the night.

It is unacceptable that the GTI decides this crucial question without the benefit of expert firefighting opinion and it reduces our confidence in its findings.

NO GUIDANCE

Before the Grenfell fire, no fire and rescue service in the UK had prepared, researched, tested or planned for the mass evacuation of a high rise residential building.

Government guidance (known as GRA 3.2) and building safety

**BUILDING OWNERS,
COUNCILS AND FIRE
EMPLOYERS ALL
PUBLISHED GUIDANCE,
BUT NONE EXPLAIN HOW
TO COMPLETELY EMPTY
A TOWER BLOCK AT
NIGHT DOWN A SINGLE,
NARROW STAIRWAY**

TIMELINE THE FIRST HOUR OF THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE



01.09

The fire began to break out of the kitchen of flat 16, floor 4



01.13

The fire began to spread up the building’s external walls



01.27

The fire reached the top of the building in 12 minutes



01.36

All the 'flat 6s' between floors 4 and 23 are affected by the external fire

INCIDENT COMMAND WAS LEFT TO THREE WATCH MANAGERS. THERE WERE NO FIREFIGHTERS WITH EXTENDED-DURATION BREATHING APPARATUS. NO AERIAL LADDER. AND NO COMMAND UNIT ON SCENE

guidance (Approved Document B) suggest that evacuation may be necessary as an exception, but provide no clarity about when such a decision should be made or about how one might be carried out.

Published guidance from building owners, councils and fire service employers, all fail to explain how a residential tower block could be evacuated at night down a single narrow stairway, while firefighting operations were also under way.

The underlying assumption was that total building failure was considered impossible.

The report criticises the London Fire Brigade (LFB) for its high-rise policy, which was worse than even the sketchy guidance issued by national authorities.

LFB certainly failed to prepare and train its employees for mass evacuation – but this was a failure of fire service management nationally and ultimately a failure of central government ministers.

Moore-Bick seems to expect firefighters to have invented a strategy on the spot to get people out without taking into account the practicalities of firefighting or potential issues that are likely to have arisen, including the need to act in breach of existing procedures in making the attempt.

NO LIST OF RESIDENTS

Grenfell Tower was owned by Kensington and Chelsea council and run by its tenant management organisation.

Neither had a list of residents, nor any idea of how disabled or vulnerable people could escape.

By 01.30, 115 out of 297 residents were out, but nobody knew how

many were still inside or where they were located.

The owners and managers had made no plans for the evacuation of wheelchair users or others with mobility problems, nor for those suffering from dementia or emphysema or other health conditions. Yet the judge expected firefighters to devise an ad hoc rescue plan and implement it within 20 minutes.

At 01.30, six fire engines with 30 firefighters had arrived at Grenfell Tower. Incident command was left to three watch managers. There were no firefighters equipped with extended-duration breathing apparatus. No aerial ladder. No command unit on scene. The block had no central communications system, nor a central alarm to inform all residents to evacuate.

The report goes into minute detail about when decisions ought to have been made, but in the actual situation firefighters faced an impossible choice: every decision could result in catastrophic loss of life. Any incident commander would have to ensure that both residents and firefighters could get out.

SMOKE-LOGGING

Early evidence of smoke-logging throughout the building drew into question whether the means of escape was secure and whether it was safe to tell residents to leave their flat, cross their lobbies and then come down the stairs.

Residents leaving the building were showing unmistakable signs of smoke inhalation. Toxic smoke can impair and ultimately render the victims of fire unconscious in minutes. Every firefighter is trained for these risks.

The report states that firefighters found heavy smoke-logging in the lobbies on floors 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 16 by around 01.30. Residents and those who made 999 calls said that lobbies on floors 8, 10, and 12 had become significantly smoke-logged by this time, with at least light smoke also reported in the lobbies on floors 5, 11, 14, 17, 19, 21, 22 and 23.

The situation got worse swiftly, but the judge believes this was the time firefighters should have told residents to get out.

We now know that many residents tried to leave their flats before 02.00, only to be driven back by heat and smoke. Others made it to the stairs, yet still returned to their flats. Shortly after 01.30 firefighters had already rescued a man who had collapsed

EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL

On the night of the Grenfell Tower fire, 11 LFB control room operators (CROs) were on duty at Stratford, London's back up control room. They took hundreds of calls on the night, including more than 150 fire survival guidance calls (FSGs). Control staff in North West Fire Control, Essex, Kent, Surrey and Merseyside also played an invaluable role. Even the report recognises this:

It cannot be doubted that CROs saved the lives of many, and some of the residents of Grenfell Tower have been able to express their gratitude to the CROs who helped them.

However, the report names individuals and itemises the decisions they made on the night in a highly pressured, real-time situation. It does not conclude that these "led to adverse consequences for any particular individual, let alone materially contributed to any death". It seems, therefore, unjust to single out these individuals for unfair criticism.

in the 16th floor lobby. Elsewhere, three people left the smoke-logged lift on the tenth floor. Tragically, they collapsed and died.

By 01.50, just over half of all residents (168 out of 297) were out. But no further residents were able to leave in the next 20 minutes. The report itself shows almost every resident who escaped after that point required some form of physical assistance from firefighters. LFB estimated that firefighters rescued 65 people, while more than 100 were assisted by firefighters leaving.

EXPERTS IGNORED

The GTI commissioned several experts, but the report ignores their findings and reservations. Dr Barbara Lane, the inquiry's expert witness, said it was not "reasonable" to expect firefighters to prevent a fire in

a high rise residential building with combustible cladding.

Steve McGuirk, appointed to advise on firefighting policy, chose not to comment on evacuation.

What the GTI report demands is not evacuation but a mass rescue. It offers no guidance about how firefighters could have done that differently on the night. If firefighters had gambled and people had died trying to escape, would we now be having a public inquiry chastising them for disregarding their procedures and training?

The conclusion that more lives could have been saved is speculative guesswork. All it will do is divide firefighters from the community, when, in fact, we share a common demand for justice.

Despite the report's many unfair criticisms, the reforms of the London Fire Brigade it recommends are correct.

AMPLE WARNING

There was ample warning that a fire like Grenfell was possible, and fire and rescue services at a national level (not simply in London) should have ensured they were prepared for such an incident.

Any resulting changes must be applied nationally to every fire and rescue service in the UK.

As we look to phase two of the GTI, it needs to ensure that blame lies with those truly responsible – with the politicians who promoted deregulation and on the businesses that sold and installed the cladding, doors, windows and other safety failures that caused the scale of the fire at Grenfell Tower.

IF FIREFIGHTERS HAD
GAMBLED AND PEOPLE
HAD DIED TRYING TO
ESCAPE, WOULD WE NOW
BE HAVING A PUBLIC
INQUIRY CHASTISING
THEM FOR DISREGARDING
THEIR PROCEDURES
AND TRAINING?



01.44

Burning at the architectural crown, as well as lateral fire spread



02.00

Flames began to spread to other sides of the tower

TESTING

As part of a ground-breaking research project into contaminants, Professor Anna Stec from UCLan manages one of a series of tests involving firefighters – more info on p 7, 8-9



LOTTERY ROUND-UP 2019

The red plaque scheme has shown that firefighters are determined that their fallen colleagues will always be remembered and the Firefighters 100 Lottery makes that possible, says **Helen Hague**

A new FBU tradition is taking root as more red plaques are unveiled across regions, commemorating the bravery of firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Alongside this, much-needed research into cancer-causing fire scene contaminants is now under way – helping protect today's firefighters and those who come after.

Both of these initiatives are being bankrolled, in part, by the Firefighters 100 lottery, launched three years ago in the run-up to the union's centenary. It has already raised more than £435,851 for good causes.

Over the same period it has paid out £250,443 in cash prizes to supporters – about £1,500 a month

Every commemoration of a firefighter death is a chastening reminder that the job of protecting communities has always been fraught with risk.

Some date back many decades. And some prompted lasting changes, improving public safety.

When an oil storage tank exploded in Dudgeon's Wharf on the Isle of Dogs in East London 50 years ago five London firefighters were killed – the biggest loss since World War Two.

The tragic event influenced the Hazchem Code, which boosted safety by making it simpler to identify dangerous chemicals. A red plaque in memory of Michael Gamble, Alfred Smee, John Appleby, Terrance Breen and Paul Carvosso was unveiled and a dedication

RED PLAQUES

Remembering a quiet hero. Firefighter Jeff Naylor died as a result of burn injuries sustained at a house fire in Keighley. The last serving firefighter in West Yorkshire to die on active duty, he is remembered there as a hero
<https://bit.ly/2OH7MOz>



service held at the wharf on 17 July – the anniversary of their deaths.

German bombers blitzed Portsmouth in World War Two – its naval dockyard a strategic target. A red plaque honouring the 21 local firefighters killed while protecting the city was unveiled in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard – now a major tourist attraction.

Cambridgeshire firefighter John Humphries was honoured in Peterborough on 22 March – exactly 30 years after he was killed in an explosion in what was then an industrial area of the city.

Now his red plaque, unveiled at a ceremony in a memorial garden backing on to the Cathedral grounds, is there for all to see.

FLASHOVER

In Keighley, West Yorkshire, firefighter Jeff Naylor died in 1983 from severe flashover burns, ten weeks after saving children trapped in a burning house.

He had been commended by his chief fire officer the year before and was buried with full fire service honours. White watch colleagues were his pallbearers. The Queen honoured him posthumously and a station appliance was named after him. A modest, quiet man, dying in the line of duty.

His red plaque, in Lund Park, near to the fire scene, was unveiled this year, amid much ceremony.

John Noble died when his fire appliance was involved in a fatal



**FIREFIGHTERS 100
LOTTERY**

FIRE BRIGADES UNION | SERVING FIREFIGHTERS SINCE 1918

**THE LOTTERY HAS
PAID OUT £250,443
IN CASH PRIZES TO
SUPPORTERS SO
FAR – ABOUT £1,500
A MONTH**

collision on a call out to a primary school in Dollar, Central Scotland. He was honoured with a red plaque on 23 January this year – 11 years after his untimely death.

James Mair was fatally injured when a wall collapsed in a fire at a fireclay works in Paisley, West Scotland, in 1899, leaving a widow and five children. Family members came from America when his red plaque was unveiled this summer, 120 years after his death. At his funeral, his upturned helmet was used as

a collecting pot – there was no financial support for the bereaved families back then. His death highlighted that need. That helmet is now on display at the Heritage Museum in Greenock.

Twenty-five years after his death, a red plaque honouring leading firefighter Michael “Sonny” Liston is now on display at Liskeard Looe rugby club in Cornwall where he played. When attending a barn fire, he had been unknowingly exposed to phosgene gas – responsible for 85 per cent of chemical weapon fatalities in the First World War. He died two days later – having just scored a try during a rugby match.

GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH

This glimpse into the shocking effects of unwitting exposure to hazardous substances underscores the importance of the survey at bit.ly/FBUcontaminants – part of groundbreaking research into toxic contaminants jointly funded by the University of Central Lancashire and the Firefighters 100 lottery.

It takes only 20 minutes to complete and is applicable to current serving firefighters.

With over 2,300 firefighters known to have lost their lives in the line of duty, the FBU's red plaque tradition is set to spread – commemorating those who died serving others – in memorial gardens, parks, museums, rugby clubs, historic dockyards or wherever best honours the memory of those who died too soon.

■ www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk



43 YEARS AT ONE STATION

From the 1977 national FBU strike to the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace, Kevin Bicknell has plenty to look back on as he gets ready to retire after a long career serving the public. He spoke to **Helen Hague**

When you learn that Kevin Bicknell has worked for 43 years as a frontline firefighter it's easy to assume that he must have joined up straight from school. Easy maybe – but also wrong.

For the veteran Hampshire firefighter, who retired at the end of September, had not just one, but two jobs before joining the fire service at the end of the long hot summer of 1976. And since then he has forged a formidable career fighting fires and keeping the public safe at the same fire station on the outskirts of Southampton.

Kevin left school at 16 to work as a junior draughtsman. But, though he liked the idea, the reality of being cooped up in an office all week really did not suit. So he packed it in to join the Royal Artillery for three years, which included a stint in Northern Ireland and a posting to Germany.

The discipline, respect for rank, physical fitness, not to mention bravery, that comes with military service proved a good grounding for life as a firefighter – as the many former military recruits to the service have found.



Kevin receives his FBU 40-year badge from Mark Chapman, Hampshire FBU chair

Kevin was very keen to join. But it was not that easy to get in. Neither London nor West Sussex – he grew up in Bognor Regis – was recruiting when he applied while still serving with the Royal Artillery in Germany. Only Hampshire showed interest – but he would have to move there to be considered.

He did just that and was the first person to be taken on for seven years when he joined white watch at Redbridge after three months training. It proved a good decision – Kevin, one of the longest serving firefighters in Hampshire, will have served all 43 years at the same station when he works his last shift.

The defining event of Kevin's early years in the service was the first ever national firefighters' strike, which started in November 1977.

For Kevin, fresh from military service

Kevin Bicknell, back row, third from right, in London on 1 March 1977 for a demonstration during the FBU national pay strike of that year



Kevin and his wife Lynne at the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace in May 2016

where unions were not recognised, it was a baptism of fire in solidarity. It shaped his thinking, deepened his support for the union and will stay with him forever:

"It had never happened before and nobody thought it would last long," he recalls. But, in the depths of a long hard winter, firefighters would be out for nine long hard weeks.

Kevin remembers the heartening support from the public as pickets gathered by the braziers outside Redbridge station and the exhilaration of meeting firefighters from across the country on the march along London's embankment in the early days of the strike.

EFFORT AND SACRIFICE

But, most of all, he recalls the "tremendous resilience" of striking crew members with young families and no pay: "The amount of effort and sacrifice those men put in was phenomenal. There was a lot of hardship, but people got through," says Kevin, who, as a 21-year-old single man living at home with his parents back in Bognor, felt cushioned to some extent from the hardship some of his colleagues were facing.

The strike won a pay formula that would deliver decent pay for more than two decades. It also led to a new watch. Kevin moved from white watch to green watch at Redbridge and has been happy to remain there ever since. He has loved

his job as a frontline firefighter and had no desire to rise through the ranks: "I didn't want to go for promotion," he says.

Kevin has seen some big changes – from equipment to uniforms. The formal dress which he wore alongside fellow FBU members from Redbridge fire station on the union's march through London back in 1977 is no longer standard issue. But one thing has remained constant – the mutual trust forged on the watch during arduous and challenging shouts: "You go through so much together, it's like another family."

His contribution has not gone unacknowledged. Kevin has been to the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace – his name put forward by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. Earlier this summer, Mark Chapman, Hampshire FBU chair, presented Kevin, "a true gentleman" with his 40-year FBU badge which he proudly wore at the formal dinner on a cruise round the Baltic soon after.

And he's unlikely to be bored in retirement. The creative spark that led him to consider a career as a draughtsman all those years back has not been hosed down. This is a man who makes his own furniture, produces astonishing decorative rope work – and even made functional wooden wedges for colleagues from the old fire station door. Who knows? Another career may yet beckon ...

'YOU GO THROUGH SO MUCH TOGETHER, IT'S LIKE ANOTHER FAMILY'

INSIGHTS AND PASSION AT FBU SECTIONAL SCHOOLS



B&EMM

Cameron Matthews, B&EMM national chair, on this year's FBU black and ethnic minority members school which was well attended by FBU members from all over the UK

The school provides an opportunity for members to focus on and debate equality issues, as well as to receive education on the means by which we can deliver a more inclusive workplace.

Students had the pleasure of meeting and hearing from guest speaker Roger McKenzie, the assistant general secretary of Unison, the largest trade union in the UK.

Roger stressed the importance of organisation and collectivism, both in terms of tackling equality issues in the workplace, and also for addressing broader issues faced by all in our class.

Students heard the sobering and heartbreaking story of Zane, a young boy who died in horrific circumstances. Zane's father, Kye Gbangbola, explained the avoidable circumstances in which poisonous gases, which authorities knew were a foreseeable risk, took his life. We encourage all firefighters to visit the website set up by his family, read the story and support the family's fight for truth and justice: www.truthaboutzane.com

Other sessions ranged from FBU structure and processes to feedback from a visit to a refugee camp in France organised by Care4Calais (see previous issue of *Firefighter*).

B&EMM school is a productive and valuable annual event which, we hope, sends students away with a passion to get involved and active in all aspects of the FBU and general trade union activism, and an understanding that equality and inclusion is a core tenet of our union.

Only through collectivism and unity can we ensure our combined strength, to deliver the workplace, profession and emergency service we all deserve.

LGBT

London firefighter **Gemma Wright** on this year's FBU LGBT+ school

Comedian Jezza Donovan from the charity Gendered Intelligence opened this year's FBU LGBT school, speaking about transgender identity and gender fluidity.

It was an engaging and entertaining presentation.

While talking to an already largely informed audience, Jezza's approach was accessible and clear, explaining what appear to be complex issues in a simple way.

Jezza's witty delivery on a lesser understood subject would be a fantastic resource to be shared across all fire stations.

Another guest speaker, Susie Green, CEO of Mermaids (a charity set up to help support young people who are transgender or gender diverse) gave a moving personal account of her daughter's transition. Mermaids educates, campaigns, supports, advises and works closely with doctors, social workers and other professionals.

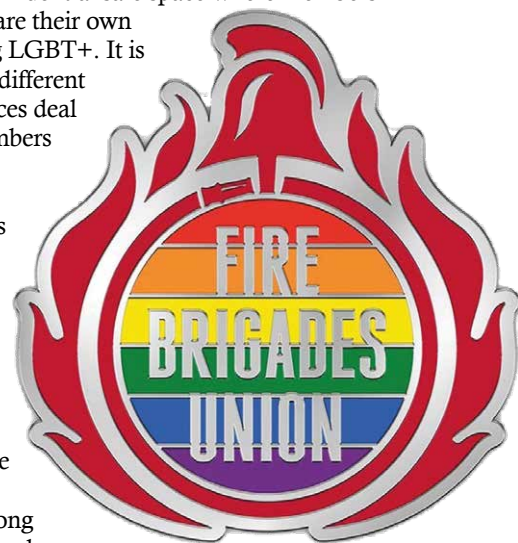
The talk gave a real insight into the difficulties faced by members of the LGBT community and would be an invaluable resource. I can signpost anyone who might benefit from the charity's fantastic and award-winning work. It really does save lives.

An upbeat talk from FBU national officer Tam MacFarlane about equalities and intersectional work preceded the closed group session – a confidential safe space where members in small groups can share their own experiences of being LGBT+. It is helpful to hear how different fire and rescue services deal with difficulties members encounter at work.

The final guest speaker, Helen Jones from Mind Out, a mental health charity for LGBT+ people, gave some sobering statistics on the high rates of mental health problems and suicide rates in the LGBT+ community and among emergency service workers.

Group work involved sharing self-care strategies and discussions on how we, as individuals, and as a fire and rescue service, can improve the ways in which we support those with poor mental health.

In addition to these inspiring talks, we learnt about the structure of the FBU, the fantastic work past, present and future, of the LGBT+ section, and how we can play an active role in our union.



BREXIT WORKERS' RIGHTS AFTER BRITAIN LEAVES THE EU

Richard Arthur, national coordinator for trade union strategy at Thompsons solicitors, discusses the impact that Brexit could have on workers' rights

Boris Johnson's withdrawal agreement and political declaration provide no protection whatsoever for workers' rights that emanate from the EU, but which many workers currently take for granted as part of the suite of rights that they enjoy.

In fact, the agreement and declaration do the exact opposite and actively or implicitly undermine workers' rights in the UK.

Johnson's deal is significantly worse for workers' rights in the UK than Theresa May's withdrawal agreement and political declaration.

It is, for workers, as bad as no deal.

The European Union (EU) sets minimum standards for a wide range of workers' rights that member states (which includes the UK for now) must legally comply with. It is not only the existence of these rights that is important, it is that workers can enforce them against employers and the government.

HOW COULD BREXIT AFFECT WORKING HOURS?

The EU has limits on night work and requirements for daily and weekly rest breaks.

It also sets a 48-hour limit on the working week. If we leave the EU and this law has not been protected in UK law, employers could expect their workers to work any hours they choose to set and get rid of rest periods, without any legal repercussions.

WHAT ABOUT ANNUAL LEAVE?

Under current EU law workers have the right to four weeks' paid annual leave. If the UK government does not carry across that law after we leave, the government could set new lower limits or let employers decide what time off their employees can have.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR DISCRIMINATION PROTECTION?

Some areas of law from the EU that we have adopted in the UK are unlikely to be significantly changed – for example the law around discrimination on the grounds of sex, race and disability. But if we do not sign up to EU standards, more recent discrimination laws, such as certain LGBT rights and religion or belief protections, paid holiday and some family-friendly rights are at risk of change.

There is a widespread expectation that age discrimination provisions will be

removed, meaning there will be little or no protection for employees under 18 in certain areas, such as night work.

WILL AGENCY WORKERS STILL BE PROTECTED?

Current law from the EU under the Agency Workers Directive gives agency workers (many of whom are employed in the NHS and care services) the right to the same working and employment conditions as employees in areas such as pay and annual leave and protection against unfair dismissal.

We expect there to be changes around the protection agency workers' currently enjoy with the removal of their entitlement to equal treatment. This means we could see some employers taking advantage of agency staff by refusing time off and introducing pay cuts.

WILL MATERNITY LEAVE RIGHTS CHANGE?

EU law entitles workers to at least four months' parental leave on the birth or adoption of a child until a given age, while pregnant workers get 14 weeks' minimum maternity leave and pay as well as health and safety at work protections.

If we do not continue to apply these laws, an employer could fire a pregnant employee to avoid paying maternity leave.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EQUAL PAY?

EU law sets standards about equal treatment for women in relation to employment, training, working conditions, including equal pay and occupational social security schemes. If the UK government did not sign up to them, it could cause a significant reduction in equal opportunities for women.



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MARK THOMAS

THE FIREFIGHTERS' STORY – A MUST SEE FILM NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The widely acclaimed documentary *The Firefighters' Story: 100 years of the Fire Brigades Union* is now available on the internet for the first time since its commission.

The 60-minute film, narrated by Sue Johnson of *Royle Family* fame, traces the history of the Fire Brigades Union since its inception at the end of the First World War, and the contribution the union has made over ten decades to improve public and firefighter safety through its campaigning work.

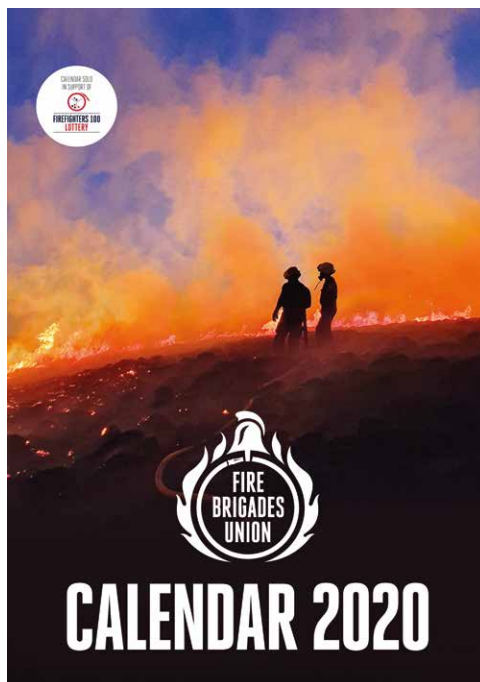
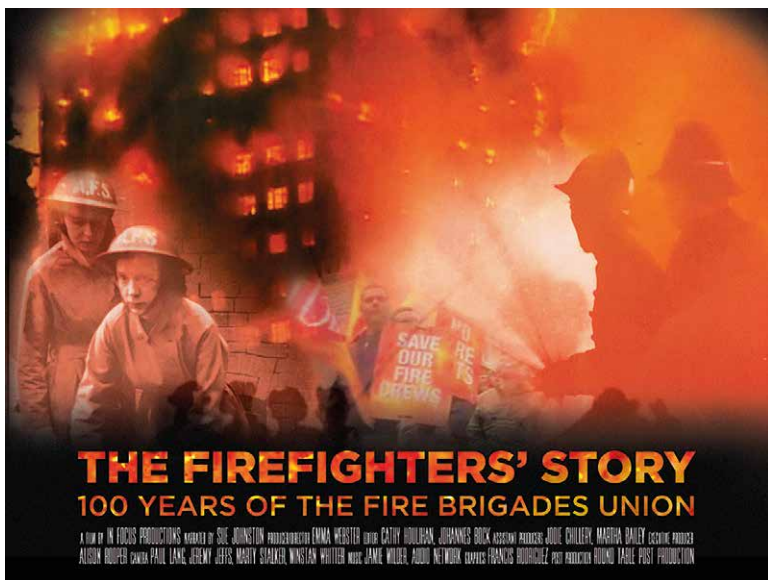
Produced by In Focus Productions to mark the centenary of the FBU, the film uses archive footage throughout, including remarkable shots of the Blitz showing the bravery of the firefighters whom Churchill called "heroes with dirty faces".

The film also examines the

appalling conditions early firefighters worked under, and the role of the union in building the modern fire and rescue service.

The film has been praised highly at a series of invitation-only screenings. At each screening audiences have called for it to be shown to as wide an audience as possible. This call has now been met and the film has been published in high definition on the FBU's YouTube channel at <http://bit.ly/FirefightersStory>

The union is encouraging members and supporters to arrange group viewings of the film, using the link to screen it into workplaces and elsewhere. Make sure that you see *The Firefighters' Story* – it's a fitting tribute to our remarkable profession and our incredible union.



A copy of the FBU calendar is on its way to every branch. To order your own copy, visit the FBU shop at <https://shop.fbu.org.uk>

GIVE A GOODWILL GIFT WITH A DIFFERENCE

Why not make relatives and friends a present of a Firefighters 100 Lottery voucher? You can pick ticket

values from £5 to £100. Vouchers can be sent online or printed for postal or personal delivery.

Your present would offer recipients a chance to win a large cash sum and would be a perfect and different way to make your gifts truly representative of the season of goodwill.

■ firefighters100lottery.co.uk/gift/buy



STATION CAT PROMISES ABOUND, BUT CUTS CONTINUE

Nothing to see here
– Leslie Nielsen
in *Naked Gun:
From the Files
of Police Squad*.
See What could
possibly go wrong?



I HEARD THE NEWS TODAY, OH BOY!

Some incredible news recently floated into your Cat's basket.

The *Scarborough News* brought it to public attention with the headline "Fire service called out FIVE times in just one shift".

Implausible as it may seem, firefighters have apparently been going to work and doing their job.

It must have been a slow news day in North Yorkshire.

NAMING AND SHAMING

Famous names from history can often give an idea of the personalities of their owners and the feats and legacies they have left behind.

Vlad the Impaler wasn't renowned for his cup-cakes, Richard the Lionheart wasn't shy in coming forwards and Alexander the Great wasn't, we presume, particularly modest.

Just hours after 200 firefighters were deployed to tackle the blaze which ripped through The Cube student accommodation in Bolton, a package of savings officially came into force.

The measures will see Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) reduce its fleet of fire engines from 56 to 50. Another three could be axed next year.

GMFRS has lost more than 600 firefighters since 2010 and is trying to potentially cut another nine fire



Jacob
Rees-Mogg
reclines in
the House of
Commons

engines, including one at Bolton.

Your Cat sincerely hopes that the man presiding over the cuts, Manchester mayor Andy Burnham, does not join the ranks of Vlad, Richard and Alexander.

WHILE THE MONEY TREE'S IN BLOOM ...

After years of austerity it's good to see everything in the garden is rosy again and the money tree is in full fruit.

There is money available for practically everything.

Although, to date, your Cat hasn't noticed any mention from the Conservatives of money for a properly funded fire service.

So, would it be reasonable to ask for more beer and bigger chips?

And perhaps a large tin of pilchards?

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) *Making Surrey Safer* plan for 2020–2023 proposes to cut night-time cover at seven stations in favour of an increased focus on prevention and protection work. Defending the plan, chief fire officer Steve Owen-Hughes insisted that "no bad things are going to happen" as a result of planned changes.

Since hearing of Mr Owen-Hughes's reassurances your Cat cannot get an image out of her mind. It's the scene from the 1988 film, *Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad*. Leslie Nielsen, playing the bumbling police lieutenant Frank Drebin, tries to persuade onlookers that there's "nothing to see here" as a fireworks factory explodes in the background.

Readers unfamiliar with the scene can check it online at youtu.be/CpKmJCLSIQk

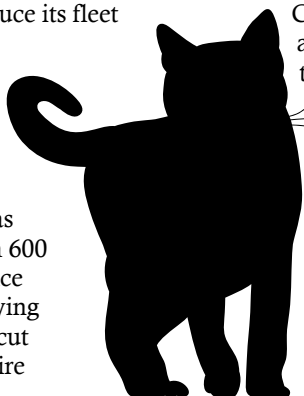
AN EXPERT IN FAILURE

So, Jacob Semi-Recumbent Mogg said in a recent radio interview that victims in the 2017 London Grenfell Tower fire should have used "common sense" and ignored the "stay-put" policy.

Mr Semi-Recumbent is a fire expert too is he? Expertise from a man who is not capable of sitting up straight in the debating chamber in the House of Commons.

Can your Cat suggest that the cuts and suffering imposed upon the UK in the name of austerity have been compounded by politicians like Mr Rees-Mogg ignoring expert advice and doing their own thing.

Incidentally a moggy is a cat, typically one that doesn't have a pedigree or is otherwise unremarkable, often an alley cat ...



25-YEAR BADGES



Gary Edwards (l), Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from Wythenshawe branch chair Paul Hardman



Roger Sutton (r), red watch, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rob Smith



Mick Gallagher (l), Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Paul Hardman



Joe McNestry (l), Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Brian Harris



Ian Payne (r), Maidstone, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Marcus Bell



Rab Middlemiss (r), Inverness officer branch, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Robbie McDougall



Paul Gowling (r), white watch, Aberdare, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from former branch rep Sean Cayford



Tony Smith (l), fire prevention, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Derek MacLeod with colleagues at Hertford County Hall



Graeme Hall (centre), green watch, Durham, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Holly Ferguson with participants of the Strongarm Challenge 2019 looking on. Durham firefighters, who take part in the challenge each year, have raised tens of thousands for charity through it in memory of their late colleague Peter Metcalfe



James McHattie (l), amber watch, Ayr, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from West area vice-chair Jamie McCallum with colleagues looking on



Ali Hosie (r), Edinburgh, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Ali Campbell



Paul Staden (l), white watch, Maesteg, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Ciaran Gibbons



Anthony Evans (l), officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Dai Hancock (l), business fire safety, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Mark Davies (l), business fire safety, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Sean Dolan (r), health and safety, headquarters, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Andrew Nicholson (l), Driffield, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Adam Hayton



John White (r), Tolvaddon, Camborne, Cornwall, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Sandy Gourley



Wendy Hardy (l), control, Humberside, receives her 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Mike Lewis (l), business fire safety, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Mick Robins (l), Dartford, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from group rep Julian Light with colleagues looking on



Noel Thompson (l), USAR, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Craig Turner (l), business fire safety, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Graham Jenkins (l), community fire safety, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Rob Rayner (l), operational response, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Debbie Hibling, green watch, Salfords, Surrey, receives her 25-year badge from H&S rep and brigade organiser Mick Wyatt with colleagues (l-r) Paul Monkhouse, Henry French and Colin Davis



Tony Harrison (l), operational response, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Alan Soutar (r), blue watch, Kingsway East, Dundee, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Stuart Nicoll with members of blue watch looking on



John Jones (l), operational response, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Andrew Richards (l), operational response, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer branch colleagues looking on



Robert Thomson (r), green watch, McDonald Road, Edinburgh, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Bertram

25-YEAR BADGES



Alex Meade (l), RDS, Poole, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from section rep Rich Cole with Poole retained members looking on



Mike Bailey (l), West Bromwich, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Carl Goode



Ian Thompson (l), Birley, Sheffield, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Matt Fothergill



Jim Broome (r), blue watch, Carlton, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Patricia Hadfield (r), Tooting, London, receives her 25-year badge from South West brigade organiser Leoni Munslow



Ady Thorpe (r), black watch, Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Carl Jones (l), and Mark Jones (r), Birley, Sheffield, receive their 25-year badges from branch rep Matt Fothergill



Carl Raymond (r), blue watch, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Martin Summers (r), RDS, East Leake, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Mark Edwards (r), Castle Cary, Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dave Lock with colleagues looking on



Martyn Candler (r), white watch, Highfields, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Michael Murphy (l), blue watch, East Hull, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Steve Steers (r), orange watch, Retford, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from his brother and Newark branch rep Tony Steers with colleagues looking on



Paul Goodwin (r), green watch, Arnold, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stillwell



Geraint Davies, (l), operational response, officer branch, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Simon Jones with officer colleagues looking on



Sean Compton (r), Lincolnshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Stephen Waters



Trevor French (r), recently elected EC member for the FBU's South West region, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary Matt Wrack



Karen Adams (r), brigade secretary, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives her 25-year badge from Kate Scott at Gillingham fire station with reps from across the service looking on



Colin Gildon (r), RDS, Spalding, Lincolnshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Stephen Waters



Adam Harper (centre left), Handsworth, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Steve Price-Hunt (r) with EC member Matt Lamb (l) and fellow members of the brigade committee

Please send good quality, high resolution digital files or prints to:
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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1 Carlton Court, 5th Avenue, Team
Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0AZ
0191 487 4142, 03rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 4 Yorks and Humberside

9 Marsh Street, Rothwell,
Leeds, LS26 0AG
0113 288 7000, 04rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 5 Greater Manchester, Lancs, Isle of Man, Cumbria, Merseyside, Cheshire

The Lighthouse, Lower Mersey St,
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0151 357 4400, 05rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 6 Derbyshire, Notts, Lincs, Leics, Northants

19-21 Musters Road, West Bridgford,
Nottingham NG2 7PP
0115 981 7489, Region06@fbu.org.uk

Region 7 West Mids, Staffs, Warks, Hereford & Worcester, Shropshire

195/7 Halesowen Rd, Old Hill,
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01384 413633, 07rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 8 Mid and West Wales, North Wales, South Wales

2nd floor, Hastings House, Fitzalan
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Region 10 London

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020 7359 3638, london@fbu.org.uk

Region 11 Bucks, Berks, Hants, Oxon, Isle of Wight, Kent, Surrey, E Sussex, W Sussex

Unit 11, Hunns Mere Way,
Woodingdean, Brighton, BN2 6AH
11rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 12 Cornwall, Devon & Somerset, Avon, Gloucs, Wilts, Dorset

158 Muller Road, Horfield,
Bristol, BS7 9RE
0117 935 5132, 13rs@fbu.org.uk

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

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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.

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