

FIREFIGHTER



THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021

DECON

TO PREVENT & PROTECT

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

**NEW FBU CAMPAIGN
ON CONTAMINANTS**

SEE P8

**BA: BIGGEST THREAT
FOR DECADES**

See P4

**THE LESSONS OF
GILLENDER STREET**

See P14

**FIRE SERVICE COVID
WHY THE SECRECY?**

See P5





MATT WRACK

WE MUST FIGHT FOR OUR SAFETY AND OUR RIGHTS

DECON TRAINING

Next month, the union will launch a major new campaign that will help improve the safety of firefighters across the country.

Three years ago, with the help of the Firefighters100 lottery, we started working with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to investigate the links between fire contaminants and cancer and other diseases in firefighters.

We wanted to find out if there were links and what we could do about them.

So far, we have surveyed 10,000 firefighters, received information from 80% of fire and rescue services, and the UCLan team has been out to fire and rescue services to test for contaminants in the workplace.

We are using the research we have done to create a new campaign called DECON.

Delivered through FBU branches, it consists of training and awareness-building materials.

It focusses on straight-forward actions that members can take before, during and after fires – actions which will keep your kit, workplaces and homes contaminant free, and will help protect you, your colleagues and your family.

The campaign will be launched on 7 September.



BREATHING APPARATUS SAFETY

The FBU has already successfully contested a dangerous new policy that London Fire Brigade was trying to introduce which would have allowed for firefighters to go beyond the entry control point not under air in tall building fires.

We have now found that more fire and rescue services are trying to bring in similar policies.

Needless to say, the FBU believes strongly that this policy is not acceptable and will fight it at every step.

BA is designed to be started up in clean air, but the new policy scraps

decades of good practice.

Perhaps worst of all, under the new policy firefighters could well end up deeper into the risk area than the duration of a BA set, if they start with it off.

That means if they run into trouble they could be beyond the point where an emergency BA team could reach them.

Thought up by the National Fire Chiefs Council as a response to Grenfell, this policy places an unacceptable burden on firefighters.

It does nothing to address the fundamental issue that Grenfell highlighted: dire building safety across the country.

The NFCC should revoke

this guidance, and the FBU will fight until it does.

GOVERNMENT ATTACK ON FIREFIGHTERS

As a union we are readying for the government attack on our rights that is coming this autumn.

The government is likely to attack collective bargaining and the Grey Book as part of a raft of reforms.

This may include a pay review body, reducing the influence of firefighters and control operators.

Needless to say, we will oppose these attacks with everything we have.

Firefighters deserve to have a proper say over their own pay and conditions.



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NEWS

BUILDING SAFETY BILL

Bill will not resolve issues for existing buildings and those who live in them p7



RED PLAQUES

More plaques unveiled for Hector Keeley, Derek Potts, John Davies and David Morris p6



Firefighters with BA tackle a tower block blaze in Deptford, South East London

NEW BA PROCEDURES 'BIGGEST THREAT IN DECADES' FBU WARNS

BREATHING APPARATUS

Unsafe and probably unlawful breathing apparatus (BA) procedures, permitted in National Fire Chiefs Council guidance, are being brought in by a small but increasing number of fire and rescue services.

FBU national officer Riccardo la Torre said "we are facing one of our biggest threats to safety in decades".

The policies permit firefighters to be deployed beyond the BA entry control point whilst not under air.

At the moment, the practice relates to fires in tall buildings, but the FBU believes that this will only be a starting point, with the NFCC likely to argue that "if this can be done 100 metres above ground level, it can be done anywhere".

The removal of BA safety in these circumstances would pose multiple dangers to firefighters.

The FBU argues that BA sets are designed to be started up in fresh air (which cannot be guaranteed beyond

the entry control point), that under the policy any faults with BA sets would likely only be discovered in the risk area, and that deploying firefighters deeper into the building than the duration of a BA set places firefighters beyond the point where an emergency BA team could rescue them.

The FBU has stated that the new procedures are illegal under health and safety law, and could also place officer members at risk of criminal charges.

The policy has already been successfully challenged and rejected at the London Fire Brigade health and safety panel.

The panel was independently chaired by a former Health and Safety Executive

'THE RUSH TO "DO SOMETHING" MUST NEVER COME AT THE EXPENSE OF FIREFIGHTERS' LIVES'

inspector who had responsibility for fire service matters.

Following this, the union wrote to the chair of the NFCC and requested the guidance be retracted immediately. The NFCC has not done this.

Chief fire officers have argued that this new policy is necessary in response to Grenfell and the building safety crisis.

The FBU, however, has pointed to a lack of identifiable benefit, and stated that, in any case, "the rush to 'do something' must never come at the expense of firefighters' lives".

General secretary Matt Wrack argued that this is also a matter of public safety as "dead or injured firefighters cannot rescue anyone".

In an FBU campaign briefing on the subject, members are being called on to hold branch meetings to discuss the policy, and the FBU campaign to challenge it.

More information can be found on the FBU website at <https://bit.ly/FBU-BAsafety>

■ **Lessons of the Gillender Street fire**
- P14

GOVERNMENT IS STALLING ON FIRE SERVICE COVID FIGURES

COVID

The Westminster government has, for the second time, failed to provide details of the number of Covid deaths and disease reported by fire service employers.

A request to the Health and Safety Executive, a government agency, under freedom of information regulations and now a parliamentary question have both gone unanswered.

The FBU is concerned that the government is hiding the failure of fire and rescue service employers to report Covid figures properly.

Employers must report cases of Covid exposure, infection and death as a result

of a person's work. The TUC believes many are not complying.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "The least the government can do is to help keep track of the situation, and provide data which will help to improve working conditions and support those workers who need it. Unless cases are reported correctly, we simply cannot plan properly to keep firefighters safe."

Grahame Morris MP asked the parliamentary question on 8 July requesting the number of Covid disease, death, dangerous occurrences and workplace outbreaks in 2021. The answer did not give these figures.



PAUL WOOD

PENSIONS: UNION ACTS TO END EMPLOYERS' CONTINUED DELAYS

PENSIONS

The FBU has applied for a summary judgement in its continuing legal fight to force fire and rescue authorities to pay retired members the pensions they are entitled to.

The hearing will be 20 or 21 October.

A summary judgment application can be made during legal proceedings if one party believes that it has an overwhelmingly strong case.

The union began legal proceedings in the High Court on 3 March this year on behalf of an initial three test claimants who are retired and receiving a smaller pension than they are entitled to.

The FBU won a major victory on pension provision for members who were discriminated against on the grounds of their age by "transitional

protection" introduced following the imposition of new pension schemes in 2015.

However, employers have continued to pay pensions on the existing basis.

The FBU believes that success on behalf of the three would set a precedent for the treatment of hundreds of other retired members currently being denied their correct pension, and for those yet to retire.

The union has entered into dialogue with the employers to try to resolve the claims without the need for legal action.

However, it is clear that the summary judgement hearing date is the deadline for these talks to conclude.

■ A circular giving more details was issued on 19 July: bit.ly/FBU-pension-update-190721

SOUNDING OFF

Our money should be funding the essential services we all rely on, not lining the pockets of wealthy shareholders, says Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

STOP THE SELL-OFF OF LOCAL GP SURGERIES

It will come as no surprise to anyone that the Tories have been using the pandemic as another excuse to privatise essential services.

From PPE shortages to the failure of our privatised test and trace system, we have seen what happens when essential health services are sold off to companies for private gain.

However, the sale of local GP surgeries to a giant American company is brazen even by Tory standards. It comes alongside their NHS corporate takeover bill as a harsh reminder that, for Tories, life and health are just items for sale.

US health conglomerate Centene acquired London's largest healthcare provider, AT Medics, in October last year, taking over 49 GP surgeries and more than 370,000 patients in London. Three of these surgeries are in my own constituency of Streatham.

Local surgeries are never going to be safe in the hands of US conglomerates, whose responsibility to shareholders will always come before the needs of patients.

Operose Health, the company's UK subsidiary, has stated openly that its market strategy is to exit NHS contracts that do not make a profit.

In practice, this will mean corner-cutting and could even mean surgery closures.

I have been proud to join NHS workers and campaigners from We Own It, Keep Our NHS Public and Doctors in Unite to raise awareness about these damaging changes on a local and national scale. In Parliament recently, I echoed their calls to stop the sell-off of local surgeries.

The money we put into our NHS (and all our public services) should be going into the running of those services, not into the pockets of wealthy shareholders.





Yannick Dubois with the FBU LGBT banner at London Pride in 2015

AU REVOIR YANNICK

LGBT SECTION

Yannick Dubois retired on 31 July this year after more than 30 years in the fire service and a longstanding role as chair of the FBU's national LGBT section.

Officially the last of the very original members of the section from when it was established more than 20 years ago, she has been at the heart of the section planning every LGBT school.

Yannick was a recipient of the award for Outstanding

Leadership in the Fire and Rescue Service for Equality and Diversity.

This was probably one of the section's proudest moments as the award was given by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Local Government Association.

Those three organisations do not normally like to acknowledge anything positive the FBU achieve, but on that occasion they did.

FIREFIGHTER COMMENDED IN TUC MEDIA AWARDS

Firefighter magazine was highly commended in the best membership communication category in this year's TUC media awards.

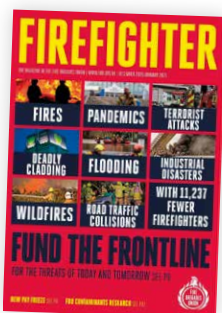
One judge praised a feature on California firefighters as "a brilliant read, with some stunning imagery". Another described it as "a bold and significant feature about

climate change and how it is a trade union issue". A

third noted that "the content of the magazine is incredibly well thought through".

The winner in this category was *U* magazine, published by Unison, which has more than 1,250,000

members compared to the FBU's 32,000.



RED PLAQUES

Daphne Leeder with the red plaque for her father outside The Grange pub in Boreham



HECTOR KEELEY

Firefighter Hector Keeley, 42, died in a tragic accident on 29 July 1950 while attending a fire in Boreham near Chelmsford.

His daughter Daphne Leeder, attended the red plaque unveiling 71 years after his death.

Adam Barrett, a former Chelmsford firefighter now based at the urban search and rescue team in Lexden, arranged for the plaque to be installed.

During his career, Hector



was part of the war effort, fighting fires in Coventry and London during the Blitz.

JOHN DAVIES AND DAVID MORRIS

A red plaque was unveiled at the Queenswood Country Park in Herefordshire to honour firefighters John Davies from Leominster, 34, and David Morris from Hereford, 35, who died in the line of duty on 6 September 1993, fighting a huge fire at the Sun Valley factory in Hereford.



DEREK POTTS

A red plaque was unveiled at Islington fire station in London for firefighter Derek Potts who died aged 37 in the line of duty on 26 June 1983, while fighting a blaze at Compton Road in Islington.

REDPLAQUE.ORG.UK

Hazardous cladding removal at Norden Point tower on the Whitefields Estate in Brent Cross, West London

JOHN STURROCK/REPORTAGE.CO.UK

SAFETY BILL FAILS TO RESOLVE CRISIS FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

The Building Safety Bill, the most significant legislative response to Grenfell to date, passed its second reading in Parliament on 21 July.

It aims to improve building safety by introducing measures such as a new building safety regulator, new regulations for high-rise buildings, and an “accountable person” for high-rises.

The bill will also extend the time leaseholders can sue developers for shoddy workmanship from six to 15 years after construction.

However, the bill has been widely criticised for not doing enough to resolve the building safety crisis which has been exposed in the wake of Grenfell.

Since the disaster, it has become clear that hundreds of thousands of people, at least, are living in homes that are not fire safe. Many of them face bills of tens of thousands of pounds to fix issues.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said that while “this bill puts in place some good protections for new buildings, we would like to see this bill resolve the building safety crisis in existing buildings”.

Labour shadow secretary of state for housing Lucy Powell said that the bill abandons leaseholders already trapped in the building safety crisis and criticised it for not explicitly stating that leaseholders should not have to pay for problems.

She also referred to Labour party research which found that the bill would, in fact, increase costs for leaseholders.

There are more issues with

the bill. FBU research has found that it would see the new building safety regulator allowed to turn to private firms for assistance with fire matters.

Matt Wrack said that the bill would be “vitally flawed” if it did allow this. He pointed out that “building safety cannot be an opportunity for profiteering; this risks public safety, as history shows us.

“The answer is to invest in the public fire and rescue service, by recruiting and

'BUILDING SAFETY CANNOT BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFITEERING - THIS RISKS PUBLIC SAFETY, AS HISTORY SHOWS US. THE ANSWER IS TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN SUFFICIENT FIREFIGHTERS TO CARRY OUT THESE DUTIES'

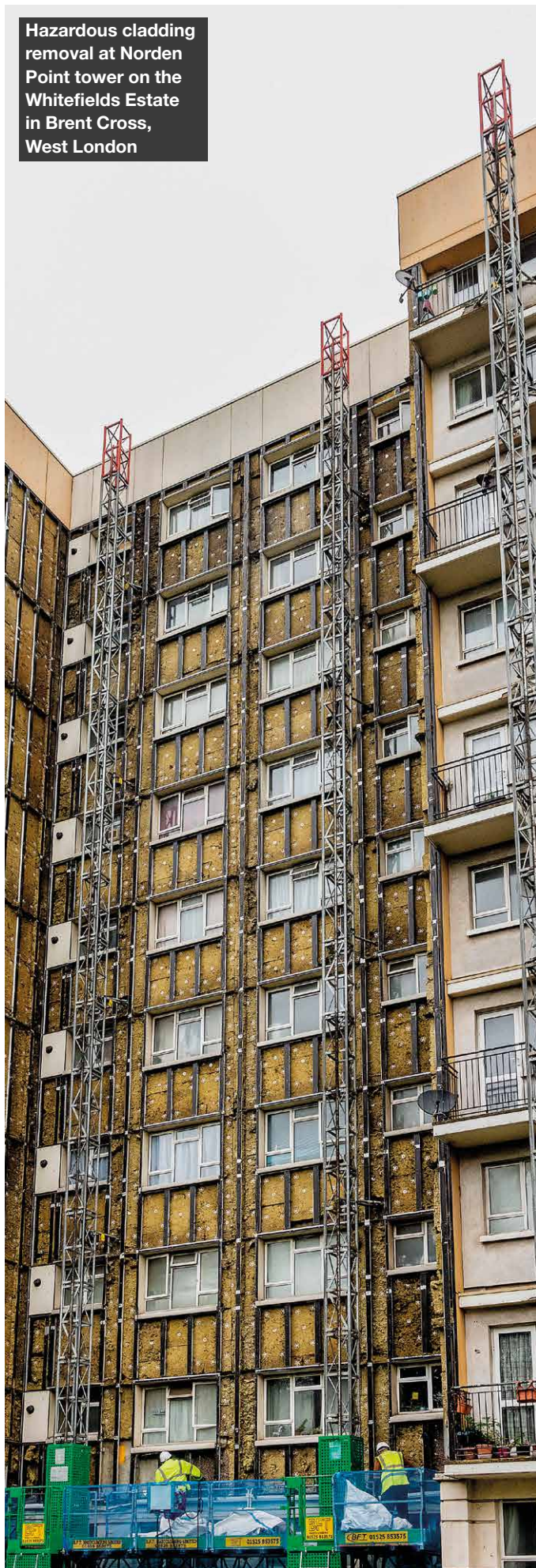
training sufficient firefighters to carry out these duties.”

Both Lucy Powell and Rushanara Ali MP quoted the FBU in the parliamentary debate, referring to the union's views on defining high-rises and government support for leaseholders.

There was controversy when housing secretary Robert Jenrick released a vital statement on the bill only minutes before it was debated.

The statement said that a fire safety form (EWS1) will no longer be required by lenders for mortgages on buildings below 18 metres high.

Further considerations of the bill will take place from 9 September.



DECON

TO PREVENT & PROTECT



Fire contaminants are directly linked to and can increase the risk of cancer and other diseases. The FBU has launched its trailblazing new campaign DECON to inform firefighters on how to better protect themselves, their co-workers and family.

FBU national officer **Riccardo la Torre** shares what firefighters can expect to learn and how to get involved.

IMAGE: MARK THOMAS



THE RESEARCH

The FBU has always been at the forefront of the fight for improved health and safety standards in the UK fire and rescue service.

For the past three years, the union has been working closely with researchers at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to better understand the links between firefighters' exposure to toxic contaminants and their increased risk of developing cancer and other diseases.

A report was published in November last year detailing the findings of this groundbreaking research so far. It includes a number of recommendations for fire services to implement urgently to reduce firefighters' exposure to contaminants.

Some fire and rescue services have already begun to make positive changes and the FBU is continuing to work closely with senior management to ensure that the report's recommendations are applied across the UK.

But there are also simple changes that firefighters can make at work and at home to help protect their health and the health of their co-workers and family.



Training videos will be available from the FBU website

WHAT IS DECON?

There has been a long-standing culture in the fire service of viewing dirty kit as a "badge of honour" to be worn with pride.

DECON aims to change this mindset and educate firefighters on the dangers of toxic fire effluents and the steps they can take to protect themselves and others from these harmful contaminants.

Using UCLan's research, DECON encourages firefighters to take actions before, during, and after

every fire incident to help reduce their exposure to contaminants.

A training package consisting of short videos to view and discuss as a watch, will be available from the FBU website.

Posters and stickers will be sent to stations to reinforce habits learnt during the training.

The FBU will ask all UK fire and rescue services to officially adopt and deliver this training to firefighters.

VIDEO TRAINING PACKAGE

Firefighters and cancer

Every firefighter will know a co-worker or a former co-worker who has been diagnosed with cancer or another serious disease.

The training package shares the real-life stories of firefighters who have suffered from cancer.

FBU research with UCLan has found that UK firefighters are four times more likely to be diagnosed with cancer than the general population, and that skin, head and neck cancers are more common than average.

For Essex firefighter Sid McNally, this became a reality in 2012 when he was diagnosed with cancer at the base of his tongue.

He made a full recovery, but tragically his colleague and friend Steve, who had been diagnosed with the same head and neck cancer, died several years later.

Kerry Baigent, a former firefighter for Cambridgeshire fire and rescue service, was also recently diagnosed with cancer.

She says three firefighters from her first watch in the fire service have sadly passed away with cancer, and reflects on whether the environment she worked in put herself, her co-workers and her family at risk.

It is always devastating when a member of our firefighting family develops cancer or other serious disease – but firefighters can help make this less frequent by taking contaminants seriously and following the precautions set out in DECON.

FBU and UCLan research

In another of the videos firefighters will gain an understanding of the FBU and UCLan research findings from lead researcher Anna Stec, professor in fire chemistry and toxicity.

They will learn about the types of toxicants produced in fires, how they take in these contaminants, and how the toxins build up in the body and develop into cancer and other diseases.

Our research has shown that one dominant cancer among firefighters is skin cancer, which indicates that skin is not necessarily protected and that most of the intake of contaminants is through dermal absorption.

The risk to firefighters is not just through inhalation alone.

Some of the studies have shown that a body temperature increase of just five degrees increases the risk of the dermal intake of these contaminants by over 400%.

These findings have shaped the recommendations and DECON habits that firefighters will learn about throughout the training.

The FBU and UCLan are now building a database called the Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry to prove the occupational risk of contaminants for firefighters and to develop decontamination approaches and methods to combat it.

It is vital that every serving firefighter who undertakes the training and every retired firefighter who has suffered, or is suffering, from cancer signs up to this registry – see back cover.

Without the input from firefighters, we will not be able to provide preventative health screening, support and the educational information that will protect firefighters' health.

Learning new behaviours

After learning about the risks of contaminants and developing cancers, in the final video, firefighters will learn about the 11 simple habits they can adopt to better protect their health.

These actions are intended to help decrease the risk to firefighters while attending incidents and to prevent the cross-contamination at fire stations that puts co-workers' health at risk.

While many of the actions focus on the steps firefighters should take at the station, the threat of contaminants does not stop at incidents or at the station doors.

Firefighters should keep in mind that, even if they cannot see contaminants, they are there and can unwittingly be carried home, putting their families at risk.

By following the habits set out in the video at the station, at incidents, and at home, firefighters will help minimise this risk.

**The
DECON
campaign will
launch officially on
7 September with
an online interactive
event, keep an eye
on Rollcall and the
FBU website for
details**

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE FIRE SERVICE

DECON is not a one-time event. It is a permanent change in behaviour – and, to make a real difference, we need every firefighter across the UK to step up and commit to DECON throughout their career.

Once firefighters have completed the training, they should pledge to follow the DECON habits and spread the word about DECON by signing and sharing the DECON rollcall and talking about the training with other firefighters.

This will help us to reach more firefighters and, ultimately, to save more lives.

There is more work to do to understand contaminants and make firefighting safer – but DECON is a positive change that will help shape firefighters' futures and the future of the fire and rescue service.

This vital work on understanding how we can protect the lives and health of firefighters was funded by the FBU's Firefighters100Lottery.

You can support this important project going forwards by playing the Firefighters100Lottery and encouraging friends and family to do the same at firefighters100lottery.co.uk



DECON TRAINING

BEFORE THE INCIDENT



1 Clean kit regularly. PPE should be cleaned regularly and after fire incidents. While cleaning your kit, always cover any exposed skin, wear disposable gloves, and wear a face mask.



2 Handle dirty kit with care. If you have to touch dirty kit, use disposable gloves.

DURING THE INCIDENT



3 BA on until the job is done. Wear BA while firefighting and keep it on during salvage, turning over and damping down.



4 Contain your dirty kit. Seal any clothing or PPE exposed to fire in an airtight bag or box before taking it into the appliance.

AT THE STATION



5 Shower within an hour. Shower at the station within an hour of attending a fire. Use soap, scrub your skin, and wash and dry your hair. If you need to go straight to another incident, use wipes or soap and water.



6 Scrub before grub. Only eat or drink at the station, get water from the cooler, or enter the mess room once you have washed and changed.



7 Watch out for wear and tear. Check your kit for visible damage every shift and make sure your brigade gets it checked every three months by a professional.

AT HOME



8 DECON before you drive. If you have attended a fire, shower and change your clothes before getting in the car. Carry any clothes exposed to fire in a sealed airtight bag or box, and wipe down your steering wheel, handles and dashboard.



9 Clean what you carry. Regularly wipe down your phone, wallet and other belongings you take into work. Wash any bags you take to the station and run the rinse and spin cycle afterwards.



10 Straight to the shower. If you could not shower at the station, get straight in the shower once you get home. Don't hug, kiss or touch anyone until you have washed and changed.



11 Dirty clothes in the machine. If you have taken home clothes that have been near a fire, put them straight in the washing machine. Don't touch them with bare hands or let them mix with other laundry.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DECON, TALK TO YOUR FBU HEALTH AND SAFETY REP/ BRIGADE REP OR VISIT FBU.ORG.UK/DECON

A DAY THAT LIVES WITH EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US

Attempts to roll back breathing apparatus safety fly in the face of history, experience and the lessons of tragedies like the Gillender Street fire of 1991, says FBU general secretary **Matt Wrack**

It is 30 years since Terry Hunt and David Stokoe were killed in a fire on Gillender Street in East London.

A fire had broken out at Hays Business Services, a document storage warehouse in Bromley-by-Bow. Firefighters at the scene were faced with fiercely hot and smoke-logged conditions.

Additionally, the building was a maze of wire cages.

Four firefighters got into difficulties, and Terry and David lost their lives after they ran out of air.

The station from which Terry and David mobilised was Silvertown. That was the same watch and station where I had started my fire service career in 1983.

I then transferred to Kingsland fire station in Hackney and had worked on the same watch as Terry until he, in turn, moved on to Silvertown.

I attended the incident to commence a safety investigation on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union. I lived only a five minute walk away.

To one degree or another, I personally knew the great majority of people who attended the incident, and many were personal friends.

BROKEN BY DEATHS

I remember later speaking to and interviewing people who had taught me the ropes as a new, young firefighter. I saw people who had seemed strong, almost invincible, quite broken by the two deaths. The two families were utterly devastated. Some of the firefighters involved were never able to get over it. I suspect it is a day that lives with every single one of us.

UNLAWFUL KILLING

Report on Coroner's inquest, Gillender Street, Bow



David Stokoe



Terry Hunt

Between Tuesday 14th and Friday 24th January 1992, an inquest was held at St. Pancras Coroner's Court into the deaths of two London Firefighters on 10th July, last year: Brothers Terry Hunt and David Stokoe. The London Region, through Robin Thompsons, retained barrister Alan Gore to represent the dependants at the inquest.

DAY ONE

Mr. Gore was on his feet most of the day establishing points. The London Fire and Civil Defence Authority (LFCDA) were represented by a barrister and a QC. Our barrister managed during the course of Tuesday to establish several important points.

QC for the LFCDA, a Mr. Samuel, introduced a line of questioning which was portrayed by the media as our members being guilty of "disobedience to orders". This was received with hostility by both family and colleagues. The families were further incensed when the QC was later heard to loudly comment that Mr. Alan Gore our barrister had been wasting time all week even during his efforts to thank the rescue crews on behalf of the families for their efforts to save Terry and David.

We began our safety investigation into what had gone wrong. The management team from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) assured us that we would work jointly and that information would be fully shared.

This changed within days. The FBU team were excluded from the LFB investigation room. We ended up doing separate investigations.

It was clear that top-level management were doing this to protect the corporate interests of the employer.

Of course, this is what happens time and again. At first, there is lots of praise for those whose lives are lost. There is a pledge to support the families. There is a big funeral supported by the fire service.

But, as time passes, the bereaved families learn that to uncover the truth, or to gain some sort of justice through compensation, is a battle.

It is a battle that the FBU fights with them



Top: Firefighter report in March 1992 on the coroner's inquest into the deaths of Terry Hunt and David Stokoe

Above: Matt Wrack unveils a Red Plaque in their honour

MARK THOMAS

An exhausted firefighter is assisted by a co-worker at the Gillender Street fire

against the resistance of the people running the fire service.

In one particularly disgraceful case, the chief fire officer claimed that he had to deny liability because the insurers of his service demanded it. He eventually lost the case and compensation was paid.

As we investigated the Gillender Street deaths, we identified many faults and failings.

One thing we identified was that important research about wearing breathing apparatus had been ignored.

Breathing apparatus rules were later improved. This tragedy was one of several fires to contribute to this.

Safety procedures relied on every day by firefighters across the UK are better and safer as a result of these improvements.

BROAD CONSENSUS

That these improvements happened is, in a way, no surprise. For a long time there was a broad consensus in the fire service that tragedies should always be used to secure safety improvements.

That is something we can find happening way back in 1958. Two firefighters died in a large fire which destroyed much of London's Smithfield Market. After, the FBU, the fire service and government cooperated to deliver significant safety improvements – on breathing apparatus.

So it is shocking today to see one-sided attempts to roll back breathing apparatus safety protections, flying in the face of what we should have learnt from decades of previous tragedies.

In the aftermath of Grenfell, a number of fire service employers are seeking to change policy on BA. They want firefighters at high-rise fires to go beyond the bridgehead without their BA turned on.

This is doubly alarming as we now know that the risks to firefighters come not simply from being unable to breathe in a fire.

Firefighters also face long term health risks from the numerous contaminants present in modern fires. Contaminants are materials



East London Advertiser report on the fire and fatalities

including, but by no means limited to, asbestos that can cause cancers and other diseases.

The position of those trying to roll back these policies is illogical, ill-thought-out and probably unlawful.

RISKING THE LIVES OF FIREFIGHTERS

Grenfell should not mean risking the lives of firefighters. We deserve to be able to breathe. Dead or injured firefighters cannot save anyone and cannot put fires out.

Instead of attacking firefighter safety, the response to Grenfell should focus on the fire safety failures that caused the disaster and the dangerous cladding which remains on buildings today.

Sadly, far from learning the lessons of Gillender Street, the pressure today is to reduce safety standards in the hope that nothing serious will happen. That is exactly the sort of failed approach which will lead to further disaster.

FAR FROM LEARNING THE LESSONS OF GILLENDER STREET, THE PRESSURE TODAY IS TO REDUCE SAFETY STANDARDS IN THE HOPE THAT NOTHING SERIOUS WILL HAPPEN

INQUIRY STILL GETS IT BACK TO FRONT

By examining immediate issues outside the context of a long history of cuts and deregulation, the Grenfell inquiry continues to overlook the big picture and risks scapegoating firefighters, warns **Mark Rowe**



JESS HURD

This autumn, the focus of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry will move from examining the failures of the refurbishment of the tower to exploring the provisions the London Fire Brigade (LFB) had in place for firefighting in high-rise residential buildings.

Module 5 (Firefighting) will consider evidence from LFB witnesses, and representatives of the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and the Kensington & Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO).

It will also hear from experts on firefighting (former CFO Steve McGuirk) and communications (Professor C Johnson), among others.

Module 5 is due to begin in September and covers the following issues:

- Evacuation and stay put
- Section 7(2)(d) visits
- Training for fighting fires in high-rise buildings
- LFB communications for the purposes of fighting fires in high-rise buildings
- Fire service and LFB policy development and their interaction with government
- Equipment – including water supply/pressure.

Over the past few months, the FBU has been carefully reviewing the evidence and preparing submissions for what it considers to be a critical phase of the inquiry.

The union has repeatedly argued that the inquiry has considered issues in the wrong order and that government guidance and regulations should have been examined before LFB firefighting policies. While there may have been significant shortcomings in the leadership and decision-making of the LFB, these were underpinned by central government decisions that have weakened fire and rescue services across England and the UK.

EXTREME CUTS

The LFB, in particular, suffered extreme cuts under government austerity policies, causing reduced staffing levels and depleted equipment in fire safety departments, operational firefighting and control.

While mayor of London from 2008 to 2016 Boris Johnson imposed funding cuts on LFB that resulted in loss of reserves, station closures, appliances lost and more than 1,200 firefighter jobs cut.

All of which is to say LFB capacity was significantly reduced before the Grenfell Tower fire.

Nationally, the fire and rescue service faced austerity cuts of 30% of



North Kensington firefighters' guard of honour on 14 June – marking four years since the fire in which 72 people died

central funding between 2011 and 2015, according to the National Audit Office. This led to a 14% reduction in firefighter numbers nationally, including a drastic reduction of the number of inspectors, and to a 30% reduction in audits and inspections.

GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

The government's role in regulating and managing fire safety in the UK will not be examined until Module 6, which is due to begin towards the end of this year.

The FBU has consistently argued that a decades-long history of deregulation in building control, fire safety and the provision of fire and rescue services lies at the root of the devastation seen at Grenfell.

It created a culture of non-compliance in the industry and allowed building owners to relegate fire safety management to the bottom of the pile – as seen in the shocking evidence from the RBKC and KCTMO. Both systematically downplayed fire safety warnings.

It led to complacency about the recommendations of inquiries into previous fires, with calls to review and amend building safety guidance and regulations ignored.

Ultimately, it is responsible for the cladding and fire safety crisis revealed by the Grenfell fire that now affects hundreds of thousands of people across the country

and has generated rafts of new legislation.

Steve McGuirk's appointment to the inquiry as a firefighting expert was opposed by the FBU on the grounds that he was compromised in his duty to be impartial and independent.

McGuirk was a chief fire officer from 1999 until 2015 and president of the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) just before the Lakanal House fire in which six people died in Camberwell, South London, in 2009.

Throughout this time, the CFOA and the National Fire Chiefs Council failed to assess the risks of catastrophic

DEREGULATION IN BUILDING CONTROL, FIRE SAFETY AND THE PROVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES LIES AT THE ROOT OF THE DEVASTATION SEEN AT GRENFELL



Matt Wrack and members of the FBU were among those laying wreaths near the site of the tower on the fourth anniversary of the fire

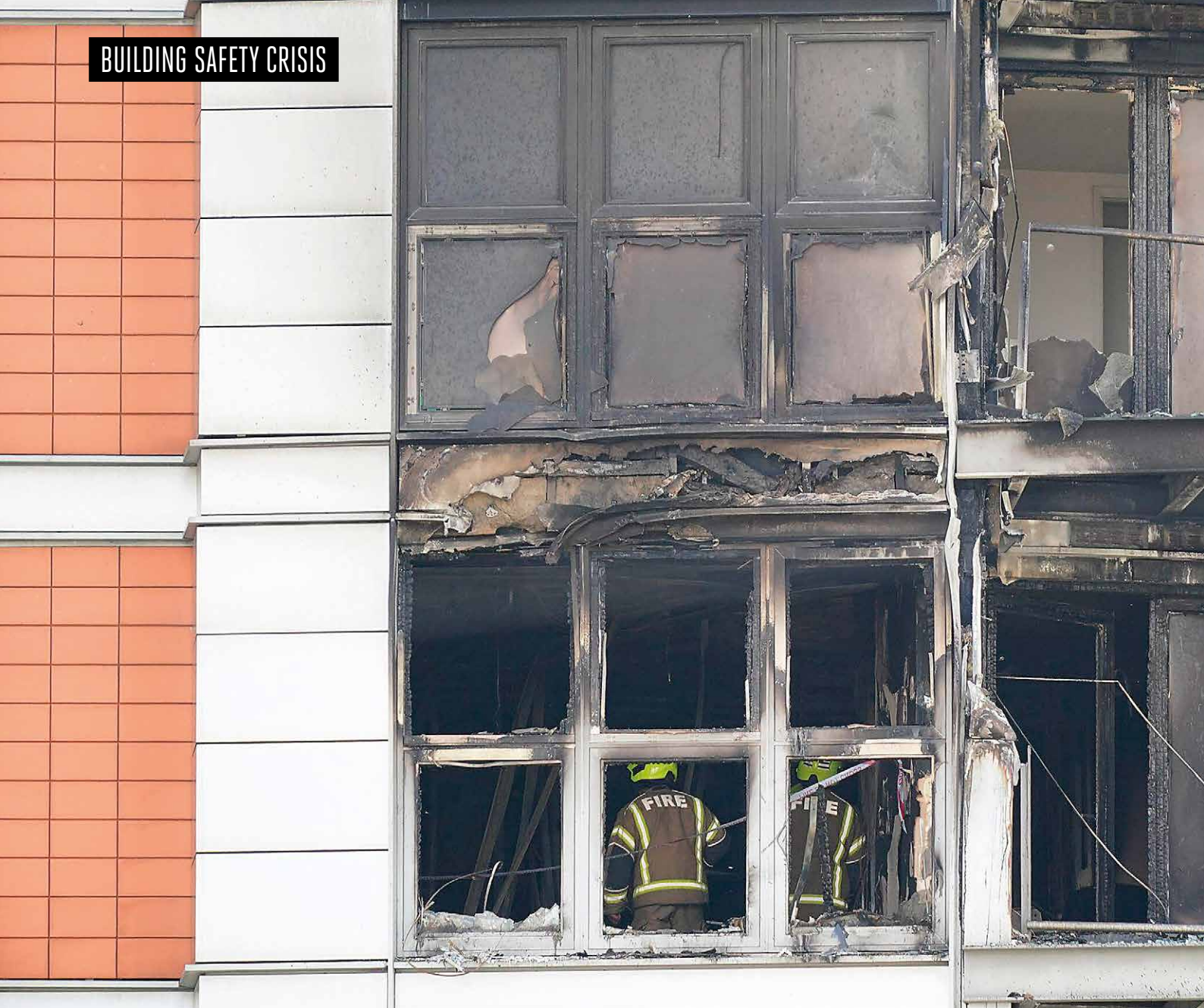
building failure and to warn ministers of the dangers of cladding and related hazards.

McGuirk should be asked why CFOA oversaw a deregulated fire safety regime and failed to warn ministers or the public that such a regime put the public at risk.

Module 5 is expected to begin on Monday 6 September, with hearings running from 10am to 4:30pm, Monday to Thursday.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, attendance at the inquiry continues to be limited, but hearings can be accessed online through the Grenfell Inquiry website: grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk

The FBU is committed to working inside and outside of the inquiry to make sure firefighters are not scapegoated for this tragedy and that the truth about why Grenfell happened is uncovered and understood.



A WAKING NIGHTMARE

The building safety crisis is ruining the lives of people in buildings with combustible cladding and other safety shortfalls. **Helen Hague** talked to residents of a private development about living in fear in your own home

At 8.50am on 7 May, Nadim Ahmad was taking a work call at home when his wife Aneela phoned with words he hoped he would never hear: “There’s a fire in the building – get out”.

Aneela and their three young daughters had left the family’s 14th floor apartment in New Providence Wharf near the Thames in London’s East End minutes earlier to start the ride to school.

They had taken the lift as usual – something Nadim says should not have been possible if smoke detectors had sensed that the flat on the eighth floor in the same block was ablaze and spreading to the flats above.

It was one of many apparent safety failings he was to experience that morning.

The building is part clad in aluminium composite material (ACM), which fuelled the flames that had shot up Grenfell tower nearly four years earlier, killing 72 people.

New Providence Wharf leaseholders



YUI MOK/PA/ALAMY

Firefighters inspect damage at New Providence Wharf

have been aware of this threat to their safety since shortly after Grenfell.

Sleeping through the night can be hard with such knowledge – as Nadim and thousands of others living in buildings with combustible cladding know all too well.

For Nadim, getting out that morning was to prove nerve-shreddingly difficult.

First, he ran down the corridor knocking on doors, then, on opening the fire-door to the stairwell, was “knocked back two metres” and engulfed in thick black plumes of smoke.

He ran back to his flat, called his wife saying he could not get out – prompting screams of “Daddy, Daddy” from his daughters, who heard it all on the carphone speaker.

He knew he had to have another go. When he made the descent, grabbing on to the shirt of another escapee, they heard screams from above – a mother

was trying to escape with her three tiny daughters.

Nadim was soon cradling a one-year-old down the stairs to safety through dark toxic smoke.

As a chief finance officer, Nadim has experience of checking safety protocols in buildings and found much that appeared to be amiss that morning.

He said that key safety measures, including fire protocols and control mechanisms, failed – leaving residents feeling someone was playing “Russian roulette” with their safety.

New Providence Wharf leaseholders had been pressing developers Ballymore to get rid of the cladding for more than three and a half years – there had been frustrating wrangles, meetings and protests over the developer’s attempts to make leaseholders foot part of the bill for the cladding crisis.

Work was finally due to start three days after the fire. No cladding had been removed by early August.

ALERTED BY WHATSAPP GROUP

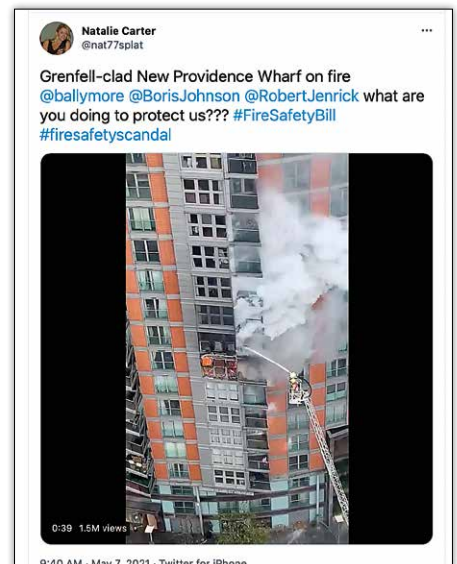
Leaseholder and safety campaigner Natalie Carter, whose third-floor flat faces the river, installed her own escape ladder when she learned the building had ACM cladding.

She was among those who only learned there was fire in the building through the residents’ WhatsApp group.

She certainly did not hear about it from the “waking watch”, which charges leaseholders £47,000 a month to patrol the building 24/7 and raise the alarm if needed. They could not get beyond the seventh floor when the fire broke out that morning.

“There are no alarms, no sprinkler systems. If it had happened in the middle of the night, people could well have died”, said Natalie, a vigorous campaigner against building safety failures and rocketing service charges – up 53 per cent over four years.

Leaseholders in New Providence Wharf feel trapped. It’s cash buyers only



Natalie Carter's Tweet demanding action from government and developers

if they want to sell and move – no lender will approve a mortgage to buy a flat there – and prices are plummeting.

This has left some leaseholders facing bankruptcy alongside acute stress and even mental health problems.

They do not feel safe while the cladding remains. But that is far from their only problem.

An initial report by the London Fire Brigade found that the blaze which started in a fuse box in an eighth-floor flat spread upwards through timber decking on balconies.

Smoke detectors should have operated automatically opening vents, but none of them actuated.

The stairwell was flooded with black smoke.

Leaseholders at New Providence Wharf want developers, builders and those responsible for safety failures to be accountable – and not force costs on those who bought homes in good faith.

Nadim and Natalie, unafraid to speak out, will be looking for the justice they rightly feel is long overdue.



WINNING A LOCAL ELECTION SOCIAL MEDIA VENOM WAS MY SECRET WEAPON

FBU LGBT committee secretary **Pat Carberry** explains how he won a local council by-election in his home town of Leighton Buzzard as the Labour party candidate and became the council's first out LGBT councillor

I decided to stand as a councillor in my local town back in February 2020 following the resignation of a Conservative councillor in my ward triggering a by-election.

My first challenge was to convince my local constituency Labour party that I would be a good candidate.

There were three others hoping to get their name on the ballot paper as Labour candidate. On the first round of selection I managed to poll 80% of the vote, so was officially endorsed by the party.

The election was due to take place in May to coincide with police and crime commissioner elections, but Covid struck and all elections were suspended. It would be a year before electors would cast their votes.

Leighton Buzzard is a Conservative stronghold with only one Labour and 13 Conservative councillors.

The council had never had an out LGBT member serve and the town voted overwhelmingly in favour of Brexit.

To stand as a Labour candidate who has been outspoken in opposition to Brexit, who is gay and Irish, did present some challenges – as did how to mount an election campaign during a pandemic and lockdown.

I identified a number of the town's Facebook groups that had over 10,000 members and recognised this as a means to get

myself known.

The world of social media is a strange and often hostile place. However, it is a useful tool for expressing ideas and thoughts. By creating discussion threads, debates were stimulated.

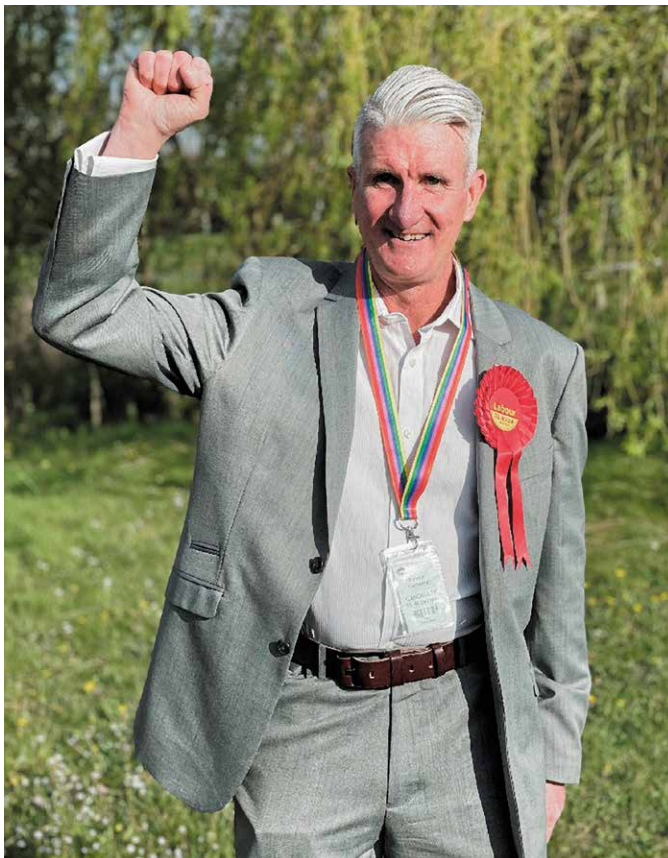
Being pro-Labour and vocal in criticism of the Conservatives' handling of the pandemic and Brexit led to many attacks and venom being directed at me. The criticism, though unpleasant, was, I believe, the secret to winning the election.

When debating on social media there are some people

you will never convince, but it is important that regardless of how abusive comments become you respond in a respectful evidence-based manner.

It is not those who abuse you on public forums that are your target audience, but the many hundreds, sometimes thousands, who read and follow the discussion thread.

In addition to a social media campaign, I also did a number of interviews with local newspapers and, once safety approval from the party was granted, two leaflet drops were delivered



IT IS NOT THOSE WHO ABUSE YOU THAT ARE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE, BUT THE MANY HUNDREDS, SOMETIMES THOUSANDS, WHO FOLLOW THE DISCUSSION

to the electorate in the month running up to polling day.

When I first decided to stand as a candidate, I was urged by many to stand as an independent, but this, I believe, would have been a betrayal of my political principles.

I was also told that in Leighton Buzzard if Labour fielded a candidate and the Conservatives put up a dead cat as a candidate the cat would surely win.

On this occasion, the local Conservatives put up a candidate who had been the town's mayor. The Liberal Democrats and the English Democrats also fielded candidates.

Despite the odds being stacked against me, when it came to the ballot result, I polled 46% of the vote with the Conservatives taking 40%.

The elections on 6 May this year were disappointing for Labour across the country as the Conservatives rode on the bounce of the success of the vaccination program, but in this small corner of England we managed to buck the trend.

FIRE AND REHIRE WHY WE NEED MORE THAN A 'LIGHT TOUCH' APPROACH

Neil Todd, senior trade union law specialist at social justice law firm Thompsons Solicitors, outlines the legal issues around 'fire and rehire' and why employers must not use Covid-19 as an excuse to restrict workers' rights

While not a new concept, the practice of firing and then re-hiring staff on less favourable terms and conditions has been widespread during the pandemic.

It is being used to erode rights that have been hard fought for to protect some of the lowest paid in society.

A report published by the TUC in January 2021 estimated that 9 per cent of workers had been told to reapply for jobs on worse terms since March 2020.

But what are the legalities around fire and rehire?

FIRE AND REHIRE – WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Fire and rehire is not automatically unlawful. It can, however, potentially be unlawful where specific circumstances apply or as a result of the way in which it is carried out.

For example, the court has noted in the past that if an employer targets a specific set of workers (for instance in the fire and rescue sector that might be only those on Grey Book terms) and makes unfavourable changes to their

terms, while leaving the terms of other senior personnel in the organisation unaffected, that may make the exercise unfair and unlawful.

Even in scenarios where fire and rehire is deemed to be legal, it is unscrupulous and immoral – taking advantage of hard-working frontline workers at a time where they need more support than ever.

WHY WOULD AN EMPLOYER USE THESE TACTICS?

For an unscrupulous employer, the benefits are obvious – they can weaken the

terms and conditions of an employee's contract without having to bother to get the agreement of the employees or the trade unions that represent them.

Of course, doing this will quickly sow disharmony across the workforce and undermine trust and confidence in the employer.

Workers are an employer's greatest asset and unilaterally imposing changes like this – which are fundamentally to the disadvantage of the staff – will not engender loyalty or encourage productivity.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI



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

WWW.THOMPSONSTRADITION.LAW/TRADE-UNIONS/FBU

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING TO REGULATE THIS?

The government has talked the talk but not even attempted to walk the walk – there has been some weak verbal criticism of some employers for adopting fire and rehire tactics, but no attempt to legislate against the practice. This is not good enough.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) carried out an independent and impartial fact-finding exercise, but was not asked to present recommendations.

The government needs to intervene, not stand by as terms and conditions are slashed in a variety of sectors.

WHAT SHOULD EMPLOYERS DO?

While the government continues its light-touch approach to fire and rehire, we are urging all employers to think of the employees who maintained frontline services during the pandemic.

More than ever, their terms and conditions should be protected and indeed strengthened, not eroded.

ACCESSING SUPPORT FROM THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

Thompsons Solicitors has been standing with unions and fighting for workers' rights for 100 years and has used its specialist expertise to protect the rights and interests of millions of union members across the UK since 1921.

Thompsons remains open throughout the pandemic, working from home and available to support FBU members in personal injury claims and (on referral from the union) employment matters.

■ For more information, visit Thompsons Solicitors' FBU hub: thompsonstradeunion.law/trade-unions/fbu

CONTRIBUTION CHANGES 2021

As of 1 September 2021, FBU membership contributions will be increased by 1.5% in line with this year's pay award and payments will be adjusted accordingly.

Your membership contributions help to win damages for injured members and their families and support members in legal disputes over unfair treatment at work.

In the 12-month period to 30 June 2021, a total of £2.77m was recovered in damages for members, and legal advice was made available in 141 new employment rights claims, with £185,000 in compensation won in 16 separate cases.

The FBU gives members strength through a collective voice and provides direct support in the workplace through a network of trained reps who hold management to account, preventing the introduction of unsafe and badly thought out policies.

Nationally, our groundbreaking work on firefighter safety continues with the Firefighters Cancer and Disease registry gathering detailed data on serious illnesses affecting firefighters. In addition, an innovative new contaminants training programme to help firefighters stay safe in and out of work, has just been launched.

Our fight for pensions justice continues. The FBU issued legal proceedings in the High Court in July to force fire and rescue authorities to pay retired members the pension they are entitled to.

Operationally, the FBU has defended vital breathing apparatus safety procedures and won an important victory against dangerous proposed changes to BA wear in high rise fires.

All this work highlights our continued commitment to fight for and protect every single member, a commitment that has been at the heart of our union for more than 100 years.

You will find details of additional member benefits on the membership page of our website.

If you have any questions, please contact your brigade or regional officials whose contact details can also be found on the union's website www.fbu.org.uk



FBU PHOTO COMPETITION

Last shout for this year's photo competition – the closing date is 30 August 2021.

Send in your best photos representing a firefighter's working life; the more dramatic, creative, personal or humorous, the better.

There is a first prize of £500 plus two runners up prizes of £100.

The competition is open to current FBU members only.

For full details of how to enter please go to: <https://bit.ly/FBU-photo21>

JOIN THE FBU ONLINE

Breaking news! For the first time in the union's history, prospective members will be able to join the FBU online from early September. As part of the FBU's work towards a better, stronger connection with members and our commitment to better utilise digital channels, online joining will be available through the FBU's website. The process is designed to be quick and responsive and will make joining easier both for prospective members and officials. Please get in touch at firefighter@fbu.org.uk with any feedback you have.

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE FOR CHARITY

As *Firefighter* went to press, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough's red watch, took on the national Three Peaks challenge following a night shift.

The aim is to climb Ben Nevis in Scotland, Scafell Pike in the Lake District and Mount Snowdon in Wales

in under 24 hours.

We wish them the very best of luck.

All money raised will go to The Fire Fighters Charity, to help injured firefighters and their families when they need it most.

JustGiving page: <https://bit.ly/Dogsthorpe-3P>



STATION CAT KEEPING IT CLEAN

**Housing
secretary
Robert Jenrick
– see As safe
as houses**

RUSSELL HART/ALAMY



PRESIDENTIAL BEHAVIOUR

It is quite some time since your Cat's in-tray has been bothered by anything concerning the US president. Perhaps this one is just getting on with his job.

Then she heard from an American cousin that President Biden plans a wage hike for America's federal firefighters.

In what looks like a very forward-thinking policy that we in the UK can only dream about, the president said he also wants to discuss working partnerships to "strengthen prevention, preparedness and response efforts ahead of the upcoming wildfire season".

AS SAFE AS HOUSES

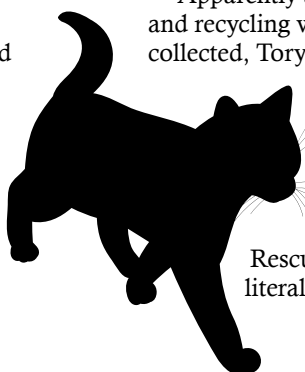
Opening the debate on the government's Building Safety Bill, housing secretary Robert Jenrick told MPs that the government had concluded that mortgage lenders should not ask for EWS1 safety forms assessing the safety of facades of buildings below 18 metres high, as there was "no evidence of systemic risk of fire in blocks of flats".

The forms were introduced by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in 2019 to provide a framework for surveyors to assess the compliance of a building's façade.

Your Cat curled up in her basket and slipped into a deep sleep safe in the knowledge the government had her back covered.

She woke with a start.

Robert Jenrick?



**Collecting waste in
the Derbyshire Dales
– see It's a dirty job**

NORTSCAPE/ALAMY

Wasn't he the minister who had been wheeled out by the Tories to explain why the prime minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were not going to isolate after a close contact with the Covid infected health secretary?

Someone pass me a blanket – a fire blanket that is!

IT'S A DIRTY JOB ...

When your outsourced bin collection service, which is supposedly more efficient and saves money, collapses and residents are getting angry, who do you call?

No. Not Ghostbusters.

The fire service (and the army), that's who. Well, it is if you live in the Derbyshire Dales.

Apparently as their rubbish and recycling was not being collected, Tory councillors

thought it would be a good idea to get Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service to literally do their

dirty work for them. And empty the bins!

Fortunately, their appeals for help failed.

Driver vacancies, self-isolation, Brexit, lockdown blocking driver training and the cost of salaries have all been put forward to explain the faltering bin collection service in the Derbyshire Dales.

The Conservative district council has already given conservative-friendly outsourcer Serco £250,000 extra to keep collections going through lockdown.

Serco missed 450,000 pickups in Derbyshire during the first lockdown.

Last August, the council gave Serco a further £101,185 to hire temporary collection vehicles. This was due to manufacturing delays on a new £3.6 million fleet being paid for by the council.

At the time, Serco had recorded a profit increase of 53 per cent to £77.6m – more than double the entire annual budget of the Conservative-run council. Isn't capitalism beautiful?

While your Cat appreciates

that fire and rescue is an emergency service, it is not there to clear up after yet another failed capitalist outsourcing venture.

It is hard to imagine that Serco would not be in the tendering process if ever a fire service was offered up for outsourcing.

At the time of writing no councillor had volunteered to help with the refuse collection.

HANDING OUT ADVICE

As Covid cases rose sharply in Cambridgeshire, leaders of public sector organisations, including the CFO, Chris Strickland, came together to make a collective plea for people to do whatever they could to reduce the transmission of Covid 19.

Measures included getting both doses of the vaccine, taking a rapid test twice a week and the now familiar wash your hands regularly.

In her time your Cat has come across several senior officers who don't like getting their hands dirty.

25-YEAR BADGES



Rob Ketteridge (r), red watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ricki Pemberton



Cyril Healy (r), red watch, Yeovil, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from acting brigade chair Dan Gillard with colleagues looking on



Steve Roach (r), red watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ricki Pemberton



Ian McMillan (l), white watch, Lowestoft South, Suffolk, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Phil Johnston with (l-r), Luke Wilkinson, Declan McAvoy, Martin Burglin and Darren Wilson looking on



Jim Boruszak (r), green watch, Blackburn, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mark Hoyle with colleagues looking on



Danny O'Rourke (l), blue watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ricki Pemberton



Chris Wile (r), blue watch, Highfields, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stilwell



Matt Peskett (l), Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Amanda Mills (pre-social distancing)



Mark Tickner (r), Rochester, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from group rep Russ Pritchard



Adam Eastwood (r), Folkestone, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from Nigel Collins



Steve Clark (r), Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Simon Harris



Richard Ferguson (l), blue watch, Highfields, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stilwell



Paul Meakin (l), green watch, Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stilwell with colleagues looking on



Mark Snell (r), blue watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from officers' branch rep Richie Green



Steve Smitherman (r), former branch rep, Whitstable, Kent (now retired), receives his 25-year badge from Rob Yates (l) and new branch rep Jamie Webb



Steve Buckland (l), Wallington, London, receives his 25-year badge from South West area secretary Dave Young



Gordon Lennox (r), white watch, West Hartford, Northumberland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Ash Fox



Jason Caines (r), Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Stilwell



Sean Walker (l) and **Paul Diamond** (r), Newcastle, Staffordshire, receive their 25-year badges from brigade secretary Chris Craddock



Paul Solan (r), Dartford, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Rob Parkin



Steve Mullen (l), green watch, Lowestoft South, Suffolk receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Phil Johnston with colleagues (l-r) Tom Jerny, Ben Marsham, Don Akim, Matty Brown looking on



Steve Anderson (l), training centre, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from fellow FBU member and friend Simon Belcher



Jon Parker (l), Brixton, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Chris Jones



Stuart Mills (l), Marple, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Steve Clarke



Stu Dixon (r), red watch, Berwick, Northumberland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Ash Fox



Paul Rogers (r), green watch, Harlow, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ricki Pemberton, with watch colleagues looking on



Alan Richens (l), Rewley Road, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Jimmy Harris with colleagues safely looking on

25-YEAR BADGES



Matt Gibbins (r), Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Simon Harris



Colin Chalk (l), Greenock Blue, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Murray Forbes



Steve Smith (r), Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Simon Harris



Lee Clough (r), white watch, Burnley, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary John Rivett with watch colleagues looking on



Dale Betts (l), red watch, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Chris Kemp with colleagues Ronnie Sherratt and Helen Durman looking on



Andy Weeks (r), Hampshire and Isle of Wight, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Stuart Eade



Jay Beaver (r), white watch, Esher, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from area rep Craig Colwill with colleagues Helen Holt and James Neal looking on



Rob Cummings (l), Wallington, London, receives his 25-year badge from South West London area secretary Dave Young



Karl Anderson (l), Leicestershire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jon Summers



Lee Mayes (r), Brixworth, Northamptonshire, receives his 25-year badge from RDS rep Tom Marchant



Chris Parsons (l), Leicestershire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jon Summers



Chris Storey and **Carl Sutton**, white watch, Runcorn, Cheshire, receive their 25-year badges with the rest of the watch, Dave MacGugan, Matt Lewis, Mathew Lawrence and Jimmy McGhee looking on



Stevie Woodhall (r) blue watch, Cardiff Central, receives his 25-year badge from Mike Herbert with watch colleagues looking on

25-YEAR BADGES



Gary Shanks (r), Greater Manchester training development centre, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair **Ross Strother**



Dawn Haigh (r), control, West Yorkshire, on her retirement, receives her 25-year badge from brigade vice chair **Rob Rutter**



Biddulph Pereira, white watch, Langley, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge



Steve Roach, **Rob Ketteridge** and **Mark Kent**, red watch, Harlow, Essex, with their 25-year badges, presented by branch rep **Ricki Pemberton**, and watch colleagues



Phil Cornford (l), protection department, North District, Suffolk, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair **Phil Johnston**, with Lowestoft South green watch, (l-r), **Tom Jermy**, **Luke Wright**, **Ben Marsham** and **Matty Brown** looking on

Please send 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.

FBU REGIONAL OFFICES

Region 1 Scotland

52 St Enoch Square, Glasgow,
Scotland G1 4AA
0141 221 2309, 01rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 2 N Ireland

14 Bachelors Walk, Lisburn,
Co Antrim, BT28 1XJ
02892 664622, 02rs@fbu.org

Region 3 Cleveland, Durham,

Northumberland, Tyne & Wear
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,
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 2AL
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,
West Midlands, B64 6HE
01384 413633, 07rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 8 Mid and West Wales, North

Wales, South Wales
2nd floor, Hastings House, Fitzalan
Court, Cardiff, CF24 0BL
029 2049 6474

Region 9 Herts, Beds, Cambs,

Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk
28 Atlantic Square, Station Road,
Witham, Essex, CM8 2TL
01376 521521, 09rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 10 London

John Horner Mews, Frome Street,
Islington, London, N1 8PB
020 7359 3638, london@fbu.org.uk

Region 11 East Sussex, Kent, Surrey,

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

Region 12 Bucks, Berks, Hampshire

and Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire

Region 13 Avon, Cornwall, Devon

& Somerset, Dorset & Wiltshire,
Gloucestershire
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

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

2,481
PARTICIPANTS
SO FAR



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.

- **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 firefighter's health.

Why is it so important to join this registry?

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

**TO SIGN UP AND FOR MORE INFORMATION
GO TO WWW.UCLAN.AC.UK/FCDR**