

FIREFIGHTER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017

GRENFELL TOWER

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

SPECIAL REPORT P8





MATT WRACK

GRENFELL TOWER: A DISASTER THAT SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED

The scale of the fire that engulfed Grenfell Tower in June was unprecedented.

Firefighters all around the world would have watched with horror as the fire took hold as it did.

In over 30 years working within the fire and rescue service I have never seen a fire pose such a huge threat to human life.

The firefighters' bravery and professionalism have caught the imagination of the whole country. It will have been the toughest shift of their lives, and the memory will run deep for a long time.

I have heard initial accounts from some of those who responded that night, including the remarkable response of those on duty in London's emergency fire control.

They dealt with unimaginable horrors but reacted with absolute professionalism and dedication. Fire control staff provide a crucial link in the chain of fire service emergency response. We all need to remember that.

The stories I have heard are only a tiny fraction of the remarkable series of events of that night as firefighters fought, against all odds, to save lives in a fire which should never have happened.

In those circumstances, normal procedures and practices could not be applied. Instead, our members drew on their knowledge, skills, teamwork and sheer determination to improvise and to maximise effectiveness.

They did all this because there were lives to save and they were determined to



do anything within their power to rescue those who were trapped.

We now face further challenges. The Grenfell disaster is at the heart of political debate today.

There is to be a public inquiry and the FBU needs to be central to that. We have unique experience in such processes.

Sadly, we are the only fire service organisation which is involved in every single inquest relating to the deaths of firefighters.

We therefore are uniquely placed to play a central role in investigating this incident and assessing events against previous discussions, debates and policy changes.

Grenfell has to be – must be – a moment for a major change of direction. The war

on public safety has to end.

The relentless attack on public services and those who deliver them has to end. The best tribute we can pay to those who lost their lives is to fight for justice and ensure a disaster like this never happens again.

PAY PROPOSALS

It will not have been lost on anyone that, within days of the Grenfell disaster, government ministers were re-emphasising their determination to stick to their 1% pay policy.

This was despite the Tories losing their majority in the general election.

Latest estimates say pay restraint has left firefighters more than £2,000 a year worse off.

There was a wide range of

views expressed in a consultation with members over the recent pay proposals from the national employers.

They offered a 2% increase if the discussions around the work trials continued. A 3% increase would follow (and increases for 2018, 2019 and 2020) but only on the basis that an agreement was concluded on the work trials.

It was a complicated proposal and we are in a difficult situation – not least because central funding to the service has been cut to such a huge extent.

In these circumstances we need to try to continue discussions in order to develop a clear position from the employers on which members can make a decision. Please follow these developments closely.



JESS HURD/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK



The FBU picked up two gongs at the TUC communications awards this July. Head of communications Lynne Wallis (far right) accepted the awards for best digital membership communication, for the union's e-bulletin Rollcall, and for best-designed communication for an infographic highlighting the risks faced by firefighters. Both were highly commended.

FIREFIGHTER

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FIREFIGHTERS 100 LOTTERY

FIRE BRIGADES UNION | SERVING FIREFIGHTERS SINCE 1918

MEMBERS ONLY PRIZE DRAWS
#FIREFIGHTERS100LOTTERY

PRIZES UP TO THE VALUE OF £1000

All FBU members who bought lottery tickets will automatically be entered into the members only quarterly draw.

The next members only draw takes place on 9 September.



THE THIRD DRAW PRIZE
WILL BE AN ELLIOT BROWN
PERSONALISED WATCH - SEE
FBU.ORG.UK/WATCHES

FOR MORE DETAILS AND TO BUY TICKETS PLEASE GO TO
www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk

Always play responsibly, if you need to talk to someone about your gambling please contact www.gambleaware.co.uk. Firefighters 100 Lottery is promoted by Fire Brigades Union, a Society Lottery licensed by the Gambling Commission. Gambling Commission Registration No: 000-046564-R-324800-002 © 2017 Gatherwell Ltd an External Lottery Manager (ELM)

NEWS

TRV TROUBLES

The hose on a half-sized fire appliance sent to a fire could not reach it

p6



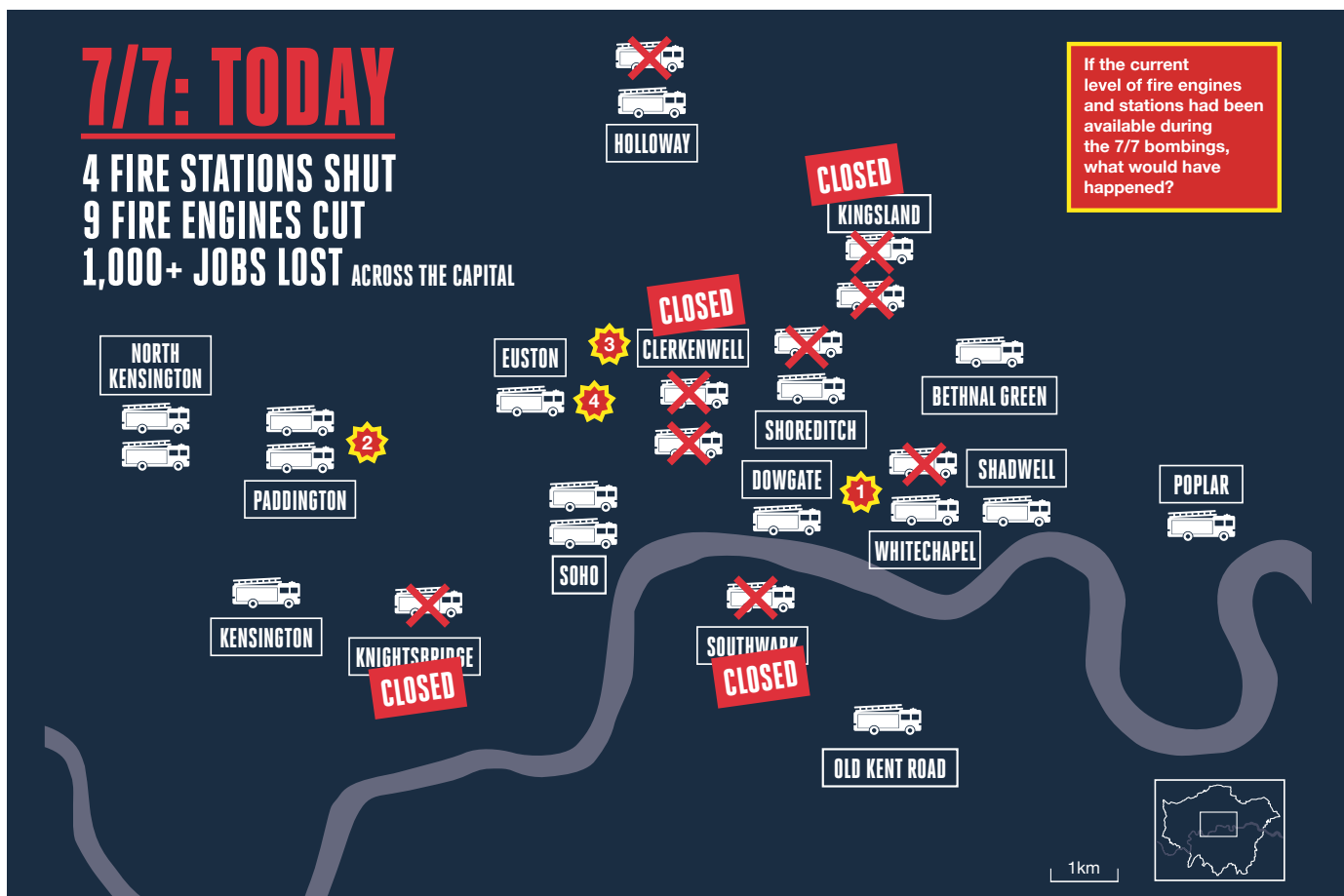
FIRST POLICE BOSS

FBU warns of effect on bargaining as joint police-fire commissioner announced

p6

7/7: TODAY

4 FIRE STATIONS SHUT
9 FIRE ENGINES CUT
1,000+ JOBS LOST ACROSS THE CAPITAL



CAMPAIGNS ADD TO THE PRESSURE FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION ON RESPONSE TIMES

TIME TO SAVE LIVES CAMPAIGN

A campaign to bring back national standards for fire response times has been launched alongside a new film dramatising the difficult choices firefighters face when they are waiting for backup.

In *The Firefighters' Dilemma*, a film produced by the FBU, a four-strong fire crew waits for backup so that they can commit to saving an old lady in a burning apartment.

The dilemma: to follow procedure and wait for backup, or to begin rescue operations, knowing the resources and personnel needed are not at the scene?

The film conveys the complexities and difficult choices that haunt firefighters as more fire services than ever cut crew sizes and numbers of fully equipped fire engines in service.

The #TimeToSaveLives campaign calls for the government to bring back national standards of fire response times and to make sure that fire crews have what they need on board in order to start saving lives straight away.

The film has been viewed more than 300,000 times and its accompanying petition has over 60,000 signatories.

In 2014, petition starter Karl Kosmo's best friend and neighbour Choi Yip died in a fire in Camden, north London,

when the fire response time was almost double the target.

In conjunction with the campaign, the FBU has begun a three-part series called *Emergencies Revisited* that aims to show how contemporary cuts to the fire and rescue service would have affected the response to major emergencies of the past.

The first of these (*above*) was released on the anniversary of the London bombings. It shows four fire stations that specifically sent resources to the sites of 7/7 bombings have been closed. Nine fire engines that responded to the terror attack have also been cut.

■ bit.ly/TTSL-campaign



STEFANO CAGNON

SOUNDING OFF

PCS union general secretary Mark Serwotka's life was saved by a heart transplant. He wants more people to have the same opportunity.

CHANGE THE LAW FOR LIFE

After having a transplant last December, organ donation is a subject very close to my new heart.

While Wales and Scotland have changed their donor registers so people have to choose to opt out rather than in, there is no such change planned in England.

The *Daily Mirror* is campaigning to make it UK-wide and it is no surprise that I support it. But it is something we should all care about.

I first developed a heart problem in 2010 after picking up a virus from my dog. You just don't know when something like that is going to strike.

I believe the case is unarguable. You only have to look at some of the figures.

One thousand people every year die waiting for an organ transplant. Of around 10,000 who need a donor, 200 are children.

In Wales the number of life-saving transplants increased by a third after the changeover.

The chances of an organ being usable and suitable are already very small. An opt-out system, sometimes called "presumed consent", can literally mean the difference between life and death.

I was lucky, I have been given the gift of life – a debt I will never be able to repay.

I want as many people as possible to have the same chance as me. Please spread the word and support the campaign.

■ bit.ly/CTLFL-Mirror



WORKING TOGETHER TO REMEMBER FALLEN HEROES

CELEBRATING BRAVERY

The Fire Brigades Union is working to support the Firefighters Memorial Trust in a series of initiatives to mark the courage and heroism of firefighters.

They include the addition of the names of 45 fallen firefighters to the Firefighters Memorial at St Paul's Cathedral in London which is being funded by the FBU's Firefighters 100 Lottery. The names will be unveiled at the Firefighters Memorial Trust annual service of remembrance on 10 September.

The two organisations will also work together to increase participation for the now annual Firefighters Memorial Day, the first of which was held on 4 May this year.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "A key part of planning for the union's centenary is to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of firefighters who have died or been injured in the line of duty.

"The Firefighters Memorial Trust is

the standard bearer in this area and we are delighted to work with the trust on such a positive project."

The Firefighters 100 Lottery will also fund restoration work at the National Arboretum in Staffordshire where a thanksgiving service is held for firefighters each May.

Colin J Livett BEM, chairman of the Firefighters Memorial Trust, said: "For many years, the Firefighters Memorial

Trust has endeavoured to commemorate the ultimate sacrifice of firefighters who have died in the line of duty whilst serving their communities. We are grateful that the FBU wishes to fully support the work of the trust. The support of the union will enable the trust to further enhance the awareness of the work and sacrifices made by the fire and rescue services of the UK."

■ Funds raised by the Firefighters 100 Lottery are vital to the commemorative works. If you haven't already done so, sign up at: www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk



UNION WARNS OF 'BACKWARD STEP' AS FIRST POLICE-FIRE BOSS IS NAMED

JOINT COMMISSIONER

Home secretary Amber Rudd has announced the first police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC).

The current police and crime commissioner in Essex, Roger Hirst (*below*), will have his remit expanded from October.

The FBU says the plans undermine the collective



bargaining arrangements and grey book conditions that all firefighters benefit from.

Alan Chinn-Shaw, Essex FBU secretary, said it was a backwards step away from a model of firefighting that had worked well for decades.

"Firefighters offer a purely humanitarian, neutral and life-saving service. We are not law enforcers. The neutrality of the fire service means we can gain access to areas of society where the attendance of police officers has not always been so welcome.

"It is vital that the fire service and police force maintain distinct and separate identities," he said.



PENSIONER, 63, AIDS FIREFIGHTERS AMID TRV TROUBLES

NORTH YORKSHIRE

A letter from a couple in Scarborough has laid bare the damaging consequences of introducing half-sized fire appliances.

In a complaint to the chief of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, seen by *Firefighter*, Heather and Clive Watson say it took nearly an hour before firefighters could put water onto a fire earlier this year at a neighbour's property.

The blaze began after flames spread from a garden bonfire, enveloping a two-storey outhouse and threatening buildings nearby.

A tactical response vehicle (TRV) was dispatched from Scarborough in place of a fully crewed fire appliance.

Heather Watson says that when the vehicle arrived she was surprised to find only three firefighters on board.

"I explained to an officer that the fire was quite a long way away. They very quickly got their hose off, but struggled to get to the fire due to the terrain and distance.

"At this point I had to help the firefighters pull the hose up the garden. I did not think I would be getting into firefighting at nearly 63 years

of age! The hose, after all that effort, was not long enough to reach the fire.

"At this point all we could do was watch the fire develop, whilst attempting to get near it with a garden hose."

Fire crews removed gas cylinders and petrol in a building next to the fire which was swiftly brought under control when a backup crew arrived on a fully equipped fire appliance.

Ian Murray, FBU vice-president, said that the incident confirmed the union's warnings about the introduction of smaller fire engines.

"Fire chiefs promised that these vehicles are 'reliable' replacements for fire engines," he said, "but all the evidence points otherwise. These vehicles have to be withdrawn from service immediately."

Introduced in January as cheaper replacements for standard appliances, the TRVs have been plagued by faults and failures.

One broke down en route to an emergency. Brakes and on-board water pumps have failed on other vehicles. There have been steering problems as the vehicles "snake" at high speeds.

IN BRIEF

MEMORABILIA WANTED TO TELL THE FBU STORY

The FBU is appealing for anyone who may have stories, photos or memorabilia related to firefighting or to the union over the past 100 years to get in touch. To mark the centenary of the FBU, in 2018, the union wants to celebrate the work of firefighters and the role the union has played in developing the service. If you want to contribute to this project, email the union on centenary@fbu.org.uk

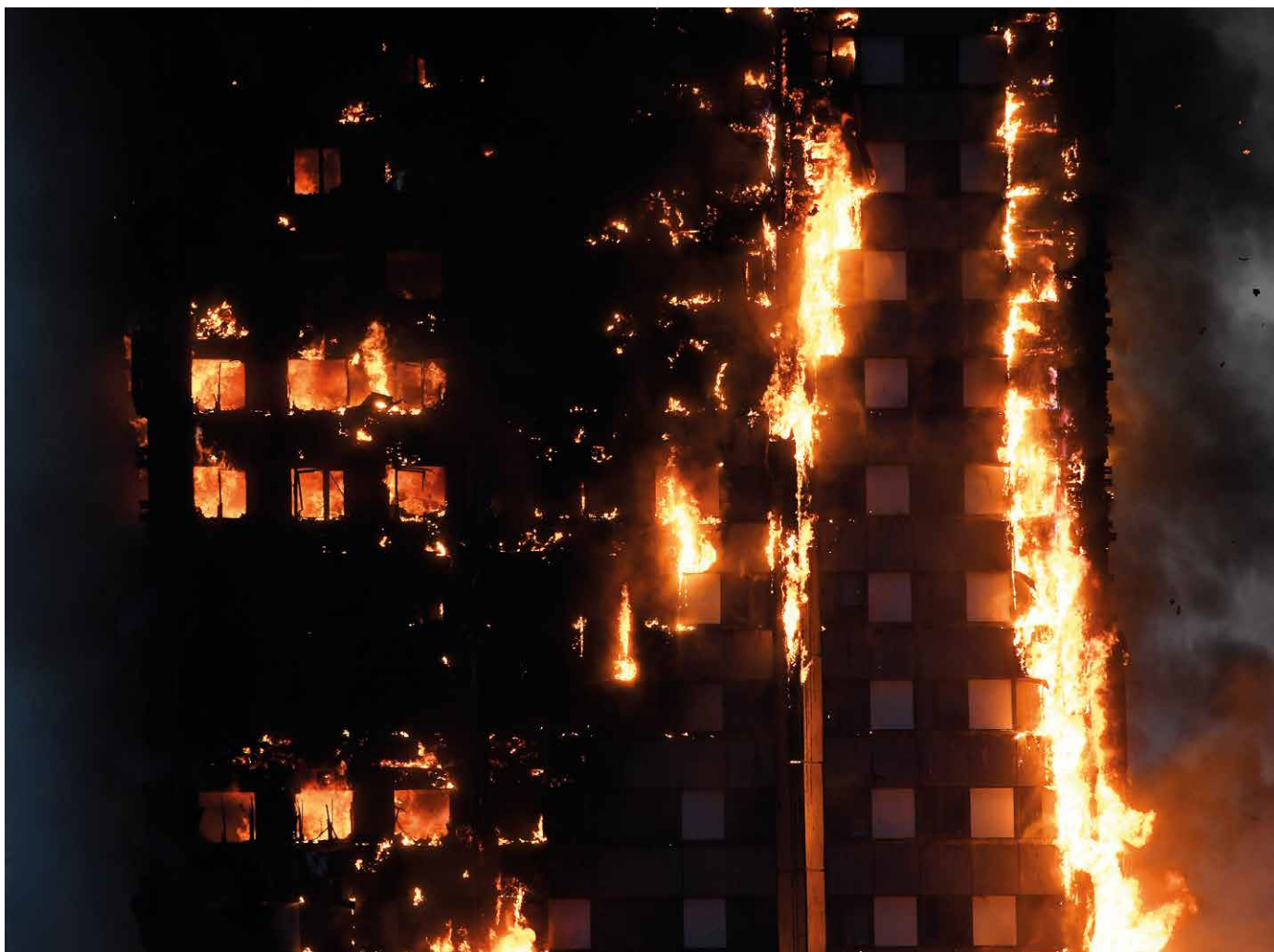
APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR THREE UNION SCHOOLS

Applications are now open to attend FBU schools this year. Three schools have been announced. The FBU National School, the Black & Ethnic Minority Members (B&EMM) School and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) School. Circulars have been sent to all branches with accompanying application forms.



POSITIVE REACTION TO ALCOHOLISM ARTICLE

A firefighter who opened up about alcohol addiction in the last issue of *Firefighter* has won praise for his honesty from colleagues. Christian Crabb (*above*) said the reaction to the health page on alcoholism had been very positive and he had been thanked for putting his face and name to the piece. Christian's motivation was to let others battling alcohol addiction know that help is available and that they could beat it.



TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY: FBU SAYS FAILURES IN SAFETY REGIME MUST BE EXAMINED

DEREGULATION

The public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower disaster must look at the failures in the fire safety regime that led to the worst residential blaze in the UK since World War Two, the Fire Brigades Union has said.

The demand will be a key part of the union's submission to the inquiry which is currently consulting on its terms of reference.

The FBU says the inquiry should cover:

- the reasons why a domestic fire could grow to such a devastating size
- the capacity of fire and rescue services nationally to respond to fires of this scale
- the defects, acts and omissions that resulted in Grenfell Tower being so vulnerable to fire
- matters that have impacted on the fire safety regime over recent years and have created the environment where the

aforementioned could arise.

The FBU believes that the long-running deregulation agenda – including the cutting of “red tape”, soft touch regulation and the reduction in fire prevention work – needs to be investigated if the inquiry is to have any meaningful impact.

Overall national fire resilience also needs to be examined. It would be insufficient for the inquiry to focus solely on the London Fire Brigade.

London is the largest fire and rescue service in England with more resources than other services.

The FBU believes that if a similar

THE DEREGULATION AGENDA, INCLUDING THE CUTTING OF 'RED TAPE', SOFT TOUCH REGULATION AND THE REDUCTION IN FIRE PREVENTION WORK, NEEDS TO BE INVESTIGATED

tower block fire happened in another part of the UK the resources might not be available.

It is vital that the inquiry hears the wide range of voices of those affected by the tragedy.

This would include the former residents of Grenfell Tower, those living in the immediate surroundings of the block and the families of people killed in the fire.

It would also mean listening to the FBU which represents the firefighters who took the calls, fought the fire, made the rescues and will assist with the fire safety investigation.

The union has unrivalled experience of inquiries into high-rise block fires having in recent years assisted with the Harrow Court, Shirley Towers and Lakanal House investigations.

The inquiry, which is being led by retired judge Sir Martin Moore-Bick, is expected to agree its terms of reference by mid-August.

GRENFELL

HOW? WHY? WHAT

A disaster that should never have happened has altered the debate around austerity, deregulation and public services. It also put the work of the fire service centre stage, writes **William Murphy**





Firefighters spray
water onto Grenfell
Tower two days after
the disastrous fire
HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS

NEXT?



A

24-storey vertical graveyard dominates the skyline of west London. The blackened Grenfell Tower is the site of the worst loss of life in a fire in Britain since the Second World War.

At the time of *Firefighter* going to press at least 80 people are confirmed to have died in the fire, although a complete death toll is not expected for many months. A 42-strong forensics team has the huge task of identifying the victims' charred remains – a painstakingly slow process.

So unprecedented was the inferno that normal firefighting procedures fell by the wayside.

Fire crews were re-committed to the burning building up to six times during one shift, leaving little time to recover from the intense heat.

This fire should never have been able to happen in one of the wealthiest capital cities in the world. But happen it did. The question is: how?

During extensive renovation last year, cladding was installed to the outside of the tower in an effort to insulate the 1970s building and to make it appear more attractive. That cladding, however, was flammable and had been linked to fires in France, Australia and the United Arab Emirates.

Early reports from the investigation have said the fire began on the fourth floor when a Hotpoint fridge-freezer caught fire. The flames soon caught the cladding and the fire is said to have spread up 14 floors in just eight minutes.

Watching the early stages of the fire on TV, FBU fire safety advisor Dave Sibert noted the unusual pattern of intense burning on each corner of the tower.

The cladding that had been installed on the corners, coupled with the smaller triangular sections on the face of the tower, acted as a chimney allowing the blaze to advance rapidly.

"If I'd actually wanted to design a block of flats to burn, that is the way I'd have done it," he said.

At the height of the blaze, the London Fire Brigade had 40 fire appliances and more than 250 firefighters on the scene.

One verbal report heard by the FBU paints a devastating picture of what members had to work through.

In order to avoid the flames, and with no realistic chance of being rescued,

several residents jumped from the tower.

One of the bodies landed just inches away from a firefighter who was immediately ordered off the fireground by an officer.

This was just one of the dozens of stories illustrating the horrific scenes that firefighters witnessed.

Attention now turns to the psychological wellbeing of everyone involved in responding to the completely unprecedented fire.

Shortly afterward, the FBU raised concerns about budget cuts instigated by former mayor of London Boris Johnson that reduced the number of counsellors in the brigade from 14 to just two.

A firefighter who attended the scene, and who asked to remain anonymous, told *Firefighter*. "It was absolutely horrific at Grenfell, and it's still very, very raw. I have seen some really horrible things that I've never experienced seeing before and hope I will never see again. It will stay with me all my life. We were offered a session with a counsellor which I took up, and it did help, but nothing will get those images out of my mind."

Images of the fire service response to the fire have become the iconic, defining images of the tragedy.

INTENSE HEAT

One shows exhausted fire crews in BA kits on the ground recovering from the intense heat of the blaze. In another, a lone firefighter cools himself down by pouring a bottle of water over his head.

Public sentiment was revealed when local residents clapped and cheered firefighters leaving the scene. It was a moment caught on camera before going viral on the web, a pertinent reminder of how popular firefighters are with the public, of how admired and respected they are.

Not pictured that night, but just as important, were the emergency fire control operators who fielded dozens of calls from people trapped in the tower.

In many cases, the operators would have been the last people to speak to victims who had no chance of ever reaching safety.

It was fortunate that the control room that night had 11 operators on duty – the minimum staffing level. "Most nights we're understaffed. Tonight, for instance, we'll only have eight operators," said London emergency fire control rep Steph Winter. "It was a very tough shift for our operators. To be the last person to speak to someone before they die in a fire is part of the job for us, but nothing can really prepare you for it."

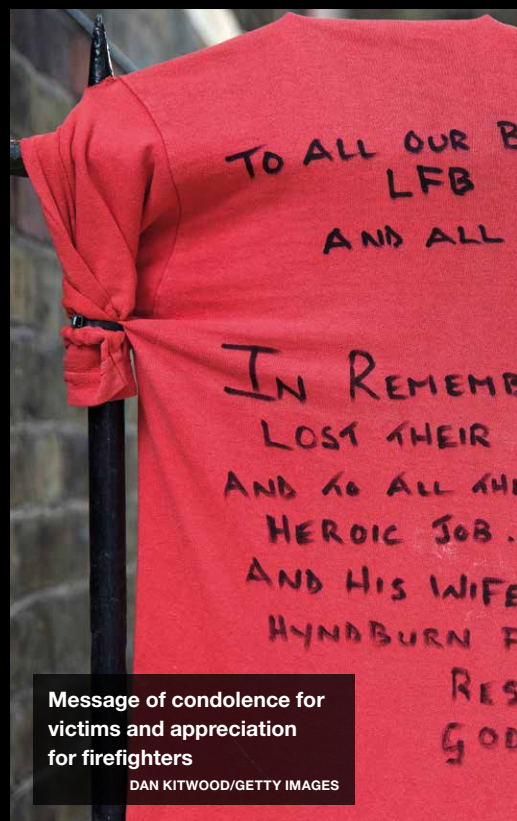
Since the fire, emergency fire control staff have been inundated with messages from the public and firefighters alike

Firefighters resting at the scene of the fire

GUILHEM BAKER/
LONDON NEWS PICTURES



NOT PICTURED THAT NIGHT,

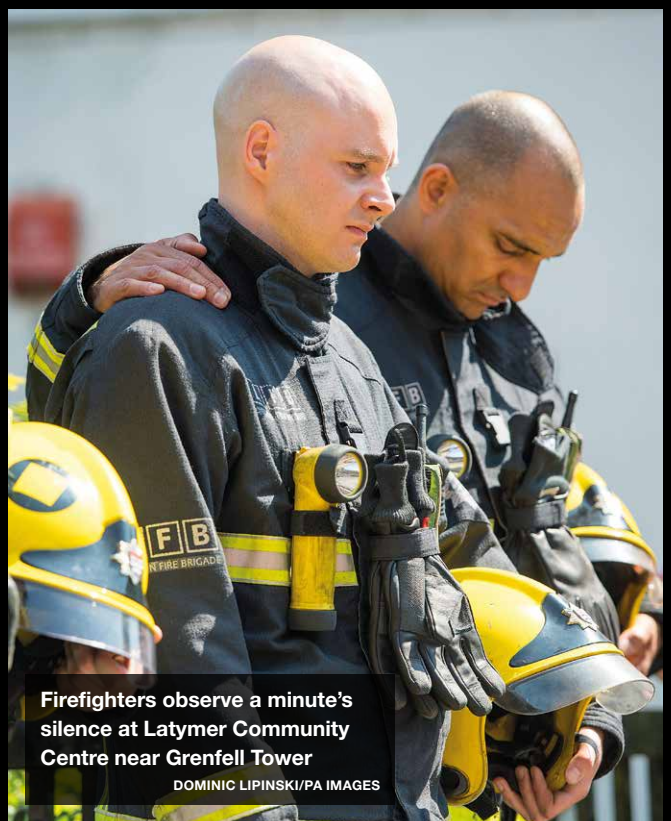
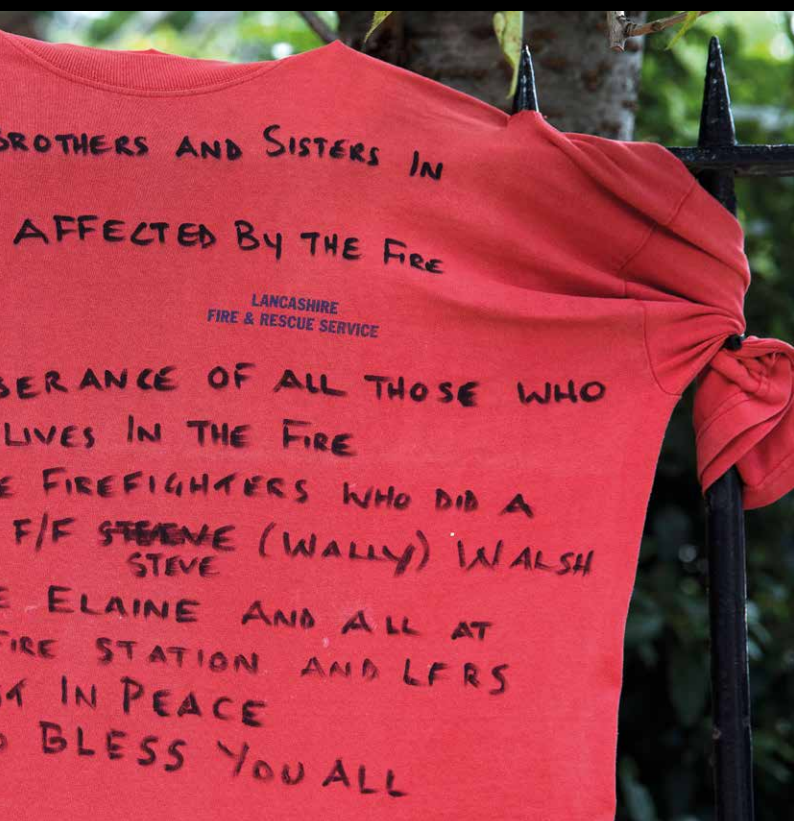


Message of condolence for victims and appreciation for firefighters

DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES



BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT, WERE THE EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL STAFF



Firefighters observe a minute's silence at Latymer Community Centre near Grenfell Tower

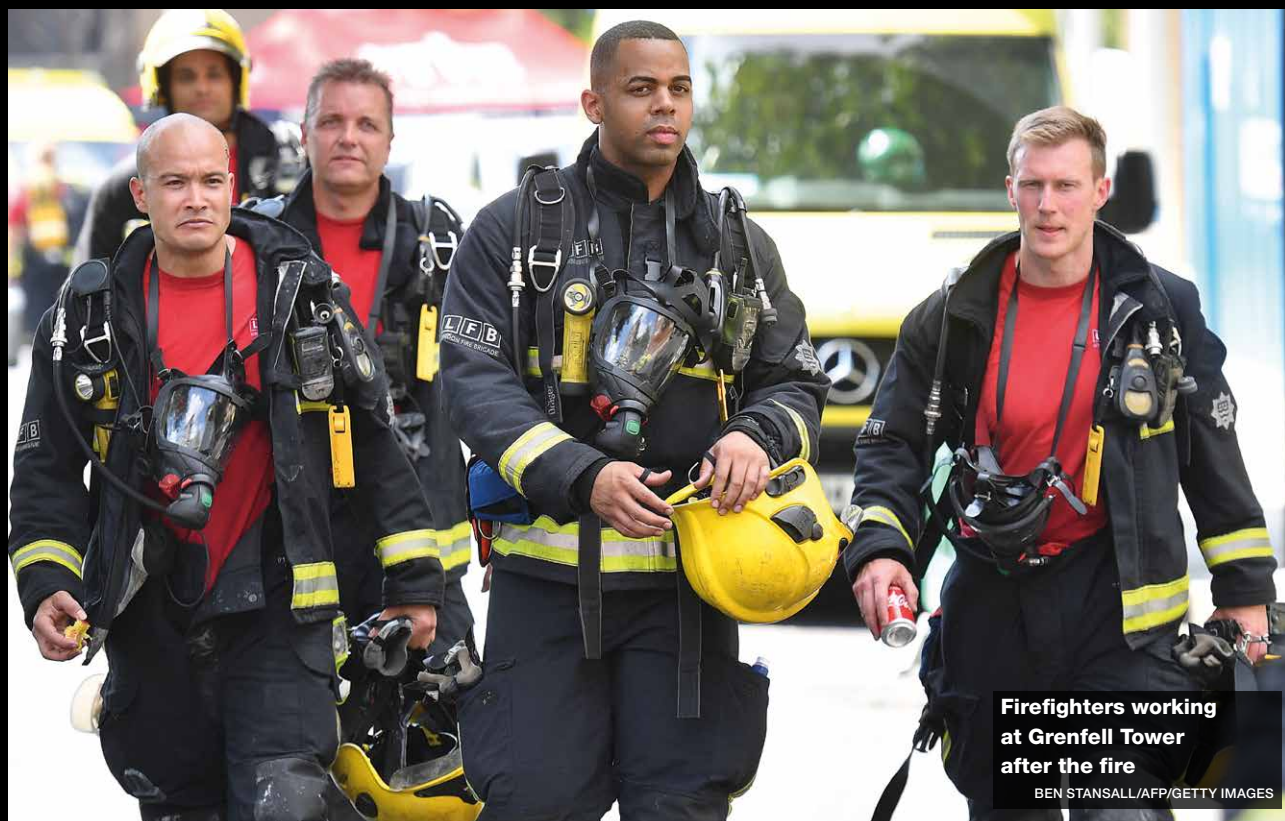
DOMINIC LIPINSKI/PA IMAGES



People gathered at Latymer Community Church near Grenfell Tower greet firefighters in the days after the fire

PICTURE: HENRY NICHOLLS/SWNS.COM

NEXT TIME THE PRESS TURN ON US, REMIND THEM: 'THAT'S WHAT TRADE



Firefighters working at Grenfell Tower after the fire

BEN STANSALL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



UNIONISTS LOOK LIKE'



Firefighters survey damage inside Grenfell Tower
RICK FINDLER/PA IMAGES

IN 1999 THEN FBU FIRE SAFETY ADVISOR GLYN EVANS TOLD MPS: 'THE PROBLEM WITH CLADDING IS THAT IT WILL, IF IT IS ABLE, SPREAD FIRE AND IT WILL SPREAD IT VERTICALLY. IF YOU GET MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS YOU WILL GET FIRE SPREAD UP THE OUTSIDE IF THE CLADDING WILL PERMIT IT'

thanking them for their work. "Our walls are plastered with thank you cards," she says.

The tragedy has dominated the news agenda and significantly altered the political debate around austerity, deregulation and political institutions. Grenfell has become a gruesome symbol for Austerity Britain – a country where the voices of working people and trade unionists are ignored in favour of business, profiteers and those politicians out of touch with the realities of everyday life.

As a result, trust in the government has been corroded at every level. From prime minister Theresa May's faltering response, when she initially refused to meet the victims of the fire, to the local authority – the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council – that downgraded the fireproof cladding that was initially going to be used on Grenfell Tower in order to save money.

Even the government's review of cladding used in other high rise blocks has come under increasing criticism.

What began as an exercise to identify buildings where similar, combustible cladding should be removed has now mutated into a perverse operation to see which buildings would be safe without removal of the combustible cladding. Every building inspection so far has shown the cladding to be combustible.

A headline used by several media outlets to describe Grenfell, *Chronicle of a Tragedy Foretold* – a riff on the title of a 1981 novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* – is grimly prescient.

The FBU had warned about the credible fire risk posed by combustible cladding as long ago as 1999.

Then FBU fire safety advisor Glyn Evans told MPs on the select committee on environment, transport and regional affairs: "The problem with cladding is that it will, if it is able, spread fire and it will spread it vertically. If you get multi-storey buildings you will get fire spread up the outside if the cladding will permit it."

The committee was investigating the use of cladding in high rise towers following a fatal fire in a tower block in Irvine, Ayrshire earlier that year.

The MPs eventually released a report which stated: "We do not believe that it should take a serious fire in which many people are killed before all reasonable steps are taken towards minimising the risks."

Yet the warnings went unheeded.

"If a fire occurs within a building it leaves the building through a window opening in an external wall, and the strong probability is that the cladding will be involved," Evans said.

Latterly, the union has warned that the ability of fire crews to respond to tower block fires promptly and professionally is a 'postcode lottery' due to the varying levels of resources that fire services allocate automatically to these types of fire.

The pre-determined attendance (PDA) to tower block fires in places such as Kent, Humberside and Nottinghamshire is just three fire engines and no aerial platforms, whereas in Hampshire the PDA is eight fire appliances and an aerial platform.

The union has written to the prime minister insisting that the government establish an urgent review to ensure the appropriate resources are available to firefighters attending tower block incidents in the future.

In an at times emotional speech to the Durham Miners' Gala a month after the disaster, FBU general secretary Matt Wrack told an audience of tens of thousands of people: "I have never seen firefighters have to deal with a fire on that scale and with such a risk to life.

"I have never seen firefighters need to do what was done on such a scale as was done that night ... the people going into that building were members of the FBU.

"So the next time the press turn on us, take a moment; look at those pictures of the firefighters queuing up in their breathing apparatus to enter that inferno. And remind them: 'That's what trade unionists look like'."

GRENELL LESSONS

Action to safeguard the public and firefighters from avoidable death and injury tends to follow disasters like Grenfell Tower. Lessons learned this time must end and reverse decades of ‘deregulation’ that was driven by greed and ignorance, says historian **Shane Ewen**

The Grenfell Tower disaster raises serious questions about the role of the state in ensuring public safety. There are many historical fire disasters that demonstrate the necessity of learning lessons quickly in order to reassure local communities that similar tragedies will not occur. But deregulation of public services and fire codes by successive governments has weakened the state’s hold over fire safety.

Governments in the UK have historically taken a reactive approach towards fire safety. For the first half of the twentieth century, regulations applied to industrial workplaces alone, and were only strengthened after major fires.

The 1960s saw an extension of safety regulation into other workplaces – licensed premises (1961) and shops, offices and railway premises (1963) – following fatal fires in a Liverpool department store and a Bolton nightclub.

The Fire Precautions Act (1971) was another reactive measure following a hotel fire in Saffron Walden.

It empowered fire authorities to enforce safety through inspection and certification of premises. It legitimated the fire service’s

growing expertise in fire prevention but, owing to strict enforcement, was criticised by business leaders and politicians in the 1980s and 1990s.

Beginning with Thatcher’s Conservative government, a 30-year period of deregulation of fire safety followed, justified by successive governments asserting that the abolition of “red tape” was good for both private business and public sector efficiency.

Deregulation continued under New Labour with the privatisation of fire safety research and the introduction of risk assessments. The 2005 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order ended certification by fire authorities and transferred responsibility for safety onto a combination of employer, employee, occupier and landlord.

The stated aim was to generate a more safety-conscious public, with individuals taking greater responsibility for their own safety, or for the safety of those they were responsible for. This was part of a government-wide shift away from direct enforcement, towards contracting out compliance to non-governmental bodies.

There has been little attempt to revise fire safety codes since 2006 despite fatal fires in multi-storey housing.

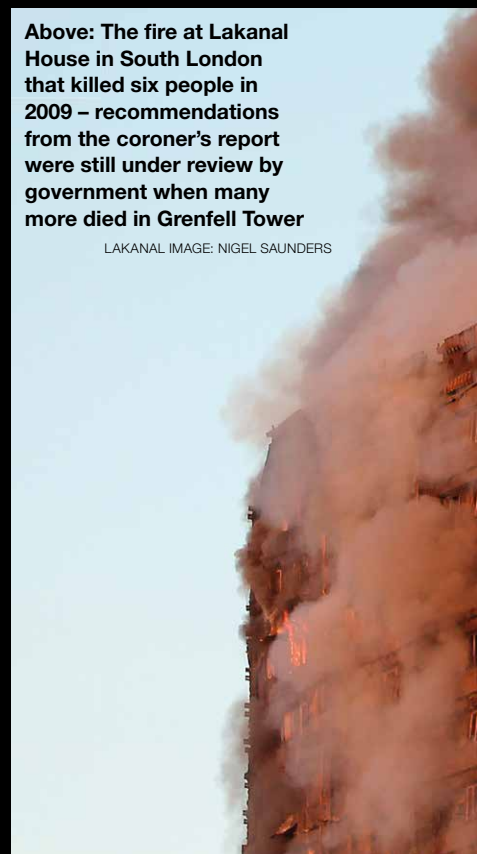
In 2009 a fire at Lakanal House in South London killed six people; a year later, a tower block fire in Southampton claimed the lives of two firefighters.

These fires have raised urgent questions about the effectiveness of the deregulated safety regime, especially in tower blocks refurbished with cheap flammable

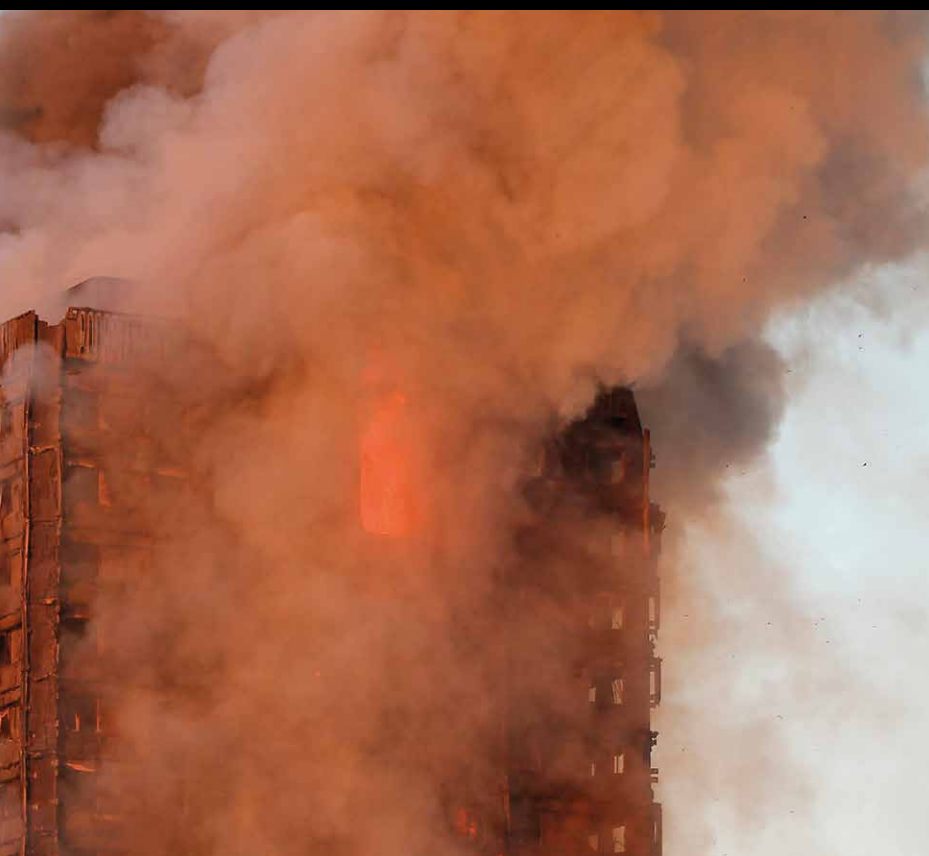


Above: The fire at Lakanal House in South London that killed six people in 2009 – recommendations from the coroner’s report were still under review by government when many more died in Grenfell Tower

LAKANAL IMAGE: NIGEL SAUNDERS



THE GOVERNMENT NE



EDS TO LISTEN TO ITS FIREFIGHTERS

materials and ineffectively inspected.

Lessons were not acted upon quickly enough in the opinion of the all-party parliamentary fire safety and rescue group. The coroner's report into the Lakanal fire was not published until 2013, and its main recommendations were still under review by government in 2016.

Questions have thus emerged about the state's duty of care to its citizens and the government's failure to act promptly to prevent similar incidents. Calls for a public inquiry into the causes of the Grenfell disaster have been heeded by the prime minister, but at the time of writing it is not clear how wide ranging it will be.

This is particularly important given the delayed response from the government and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to help survivors in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy. The inquiry must take evidence from everyone involved in the fire, including residents and firefighters.

RISK-TAKING

Firefighters will always risk their lives to save others, regardless of the conditions under which they work. Historic cases of firefighter deaths at major incidents demonstrate the way that risk-taking has been embedded into the service's working culture.

For example, a huge explosion at a warehouse fire in Glasgow in 1960 killed 19 firefighters. Action was triggered: the service's professional associations, in particular the FBU, embedded safety in training and reviewed the lessons again in the mid-1990s after yet more firefighter deaths.

The union did so through its membership of the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council (CFBAC), which was formed in 1947 to provide specialist advice on fire service policy to the home secretary. The CFBAC provided a national forum through which professional knowledge could be shared between partners. It also coordinated national policies in training, operational procedures, and standards of emergency response – until it was abolished in 2004 as part of the wider deregulation of public services.

Since then, the service has lacked a robust machinery for sharing professional experience and clear channels of communication with central government.

The FBU's repeated warnings of dangers have, until recently, fallen on deaf ears. The government needs to listen to its firefighters if it is going to address clear deficiencies in its fire safety standards, and implement the lessons learned from avoidable disasters such as Grenfell.

History shows that there is a precedent for doing so, and that the Grenfell tragedy must define a new era in fire safety.

BURNING SKIES

St Paul's Cathedral stands proud and defiant against a red glowing sky as huge fires rage all around. A wall from a bombed-out building is collapsing as two firefighters stand in its shadow. A uniformed firefighter, eyes half shut, gazes down at the skull cupped in his hand ...

These are just three of the images created by firefighter artists who signed up to serve in the Auxiliary Fire Service across the country before and after the Blitz. This group of artists created some of the most memorable and startling art to emerge from the Second World War.

These were not “official” war artists – though some went on to be so. Most were artists and designers turned wartime firefighters, drivers and emergency control staff who combined service on the Home Front with a mission to make work from their experience on the fireground, chronicling life under enemy bombardment.

A sketchbook and oil paints are hardly standard issue fire kit, but Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) artists were encouraged to record the extraordinary events they were living through.

In paintings, drawings and sketches, they evoked the flames, the rubble and the rescues as well as the cramped conditions and snatched naps in makeshift fire stations converted from schools and garages.

CAMARADERIE

In some works, the growing sense of camaraderie in shared adversity is deftly woven in. No single “style” predominates. Work ranges from the near documentary to unsettling symbolism, from bold swathes of colour to a surrealist take on breathing respirators.

There are a lot of flames and incandescent skies – and more than a shy showing



Helen Hague recalls ‘heroes with grimy faces’ who were also artists

of firefighters battling blazes. Some of the most poignant pictures show exhausted firefighters in the desolate aftermath, trying to grab a break – evoking recent images of firefighters outside Grenfell Tower.

Burning skies from these artists do not just come in standard-issue red. Paul Dessau’s depiction of a “spirit fire” – when whisky and brandy crates went up in a London warehouse – shows an intoxicating brew of billowing pastels framing brandy barrel carcasses in the foreground. You can almost smell the heady fumes – and sense how firefighters tackling that blaze must have felt.

The AFS artists were known as the “firemen artist group”. Nearly 80 years ago in 1940 the founding group, the Firemen Artists’ Organising Committee, was all male. It included Paul Dessau, Leonard Rosoman and Norman Hepple – the three artists whose works are cited at

the beginning of this story.

Women came to play a significant role and the group gained critical and public acclaim through high profile exhibitions, championed by Sir Kenneth Clark, director of the National Gallery. Paintings from the national and other galleries were now safe from enemy bombs in Welsh slate quarries. Art made by firefighters could help fill empty galleries.

LIFE ON STATION

Julia Lowenthal, based in Kilburn, West London, captured life on station. In *Rest After Blitz*, a fireman, still in uniform, crashes out on a trestle bed, helmet and belt on the floor. *Firewoman Dressing* shows a young woman, naked from the waist up, tying her boots as she sits on a makeshift bed.

At shows at the Royal Academy and other prestigious venues, these firefighter artists were able to share their work with fellow citizens during the war years – though *Firewoman Dressing* was not displayed during the war.

There were wartime shows in America and Canada too – Churchill called the firefighters “heroes with grimy faces”. Their work made a big impact on both public and government across the Atlantic.

Artist and novelist Mary Pitcairn became acting secretary and “Firemen Artists” exhibition organiser after joining the AFS in Kilburn. Her compelling image *Driving by Moonlight* shows Bermondsey AFS Firewoman Gillian “Bobbie” Tanner, focused and determined, gripping the steering wheel intently as she drives through London in the blackout, a single beam of light bouncing off the windscreen. It’s September 1940.

Firewoman Tanner had volunteered to deliver desperately needed two-gallon



A House Collapsing on Two Firemen, Shoe Lane, London, EC4, 1940, Leonard Rosoman

©IWM

petrol cans to trailer pumps across the city, even as bombs fell and fires raged in the early days of the Blitz. She was awarded the George Medal for her “coolness and courage throughout”. Pitcairn’s portrait captures this.

Months later, on the night of 29/30 December, Leonard Rosoman was on duty off Fleet Street when the Luftwaffe dropped 100,000 incendiary bombs on the City of London. It was the night St Paul’s survived, against the odds. Rosoman was dispatched to fight fires blazing in Shoe Lane with fellow auxiliaries Sidney

Holder and writer William Sansom. They were directing water into a burning building. Rosoman was called away to recce a nearby building.

SHOCKINGLY POWERFUL

He captured what happened moments later in a shockingly powerful painting – the imminent death of colleague Sidney Holder and an unknown helper, as a wall from the bombed-out building starts to collapse.

Rosoman went on to become an official war artist in 1943, and a member

of the Royal Academy. He died aged 98. His painting of the collapsing wall helped make his reputation.

The Fire Brigades Union played a part in nurturing Rosoman’s career, intervening when he received his army call-up papers even though he had joined the AFS when it was a reserved occupation.

This summer Rosoman’s work was again exhibited at the Royal Academy. Work from the “Firemen Artists” – including the talented women whose work was shown in wartime – deserves a major public show. The time is surely ripe.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

THE SIGNS TO WATCH OUT FOR

As the tragedy of Grenfell Tower unfolded before the nation's eyes, the bravery of the hundreds of firefighters battling the blaze was there for all to see.

What remains unseen, however, is the traumatic aftermath for those who waded into the Kensington fire and the possibility of it triggering post-traumatic stress disorder – PTSD.

Although the phrase was first used in the diagnosis of Vietnam War veterans, its roots had been planted long before.

PTSD has appeared in many other guises, including post-traumatic stress syndrome, shell shock, battle fatigue and combat stress.

As Grenfell Tower and countless other traumatic events have proved, PTSD is not limited to war.

With that in mind, what is it you need to be on the lookout for when judging if you or a colleague are suffering from PTSD?

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Christian Hughes, an NHS counsellor specialising in treating PTSD, has pin-pointed factors FBU members should watch out for:

- intrusive memories, flashbacks, or nightmares
- difficulty sleeping and concentrating, feeling jumpy, and being easily irritated and angered
- avoiding places, people, and activities that are reminders of the event
- ruminating about the event as though the mind is trying to find a different outcome.
- emotional numbness, unable to feel very much at all and struggling to connect with the people and activities



Firefighters help a man rescued from the Grenfell Tower fire

that we value.

Christian Hughes says he has worked with many people who have been affected by terrifying life-threatening events like Grenfell Tower.

"I have worked with emergency workers and first responders who have courageously put others ahead of themselves by running into danger to save lives," he told *Firefighter*.

"The Grenfell fire was historic in its scale and, sadly, many of the people affected will be the firefighters who put themselves in harm's way.

"That is why caring for yourself and your colleagues is vital after such an event.

"The mental health of you and your colleagues is as important as the maintenance of your equipment in keeping you safe, well and effective.

"You are best placed to notice any changes in yourself, or those around you, following an event like Grenfell.

STAY ALERT

"Staying alert to changes can mean getting help early, minimising distress and reducing the impact on individuals' lives and the functioning of your team.

"Many people will feel shaken for up to a month after a life-threatening event like Grenfell, but if things are not settling, noticing the signs that it is turning into something more serious, like PTSD, is vital."

If you notice any of these difficulties then help is available. Your GP can refer you, or you may be able to self-refer, to a local NHS

psychological therapy service.

You can find the details on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk, along with more details about PTSD and other mental health conditions.

Do not suffer in silence, the sooner you get access to help, the sooner you can be helped.

Tragedies can affect us in many different ways, and support is available if you need it.

If you are worried about a colleague, or you would like to talk to someone yourself, consider speaking to a professional.

■ www.counselling-directory.org.uk, has a nationwide database of qualified counsellors and psychotherapists; fact sheets and FAQs to explain common mental health concerns and types of therapy.

A UNION FOR EVERY STEP OF YOUR CAREER

A destructive, yet persistent, myth that affects all trade unions is being challenged by the FBU's officers' national committee (ONC).

It is that you can endear yourself to management, and therefore maximise your chances of receiving a promotion, by leaving the union.

"It was like an unwritten rule," says ONC national secretary Simon Amos, "but you could never prove it. There was a culture where people thought that being a member of the FBU was not conducive to promotion."

The ONC, which represents FBU members who are watch manager/station officer and above, has identified recruitment and retention of members as its top priority – and that means tackling the myth head on, primarily through education.

"If everyone stays in the FBU then there is just one pool of people to pick from for promotion," explains Amos, who has been a senior officer himself for 11 years.

EVERYONE BENEFITS

"This benefits everyone. The ONC plays an important role addressing officer issues around the country – having a large network of resources to tap into and access to head office pays dividends for our members.

"By staying in the union whilst

progressing up the career ladder you are helping to create a safer workplace and profession for you and your colleagues.

"People want to feel that they can be a member of something they can trust, that represents them," Amos says.

"As a representative body, the ONC feeds into decisions made on the FBU's highest decision-making body, the executive council, and we have a seat on the National Joint Council.

"We are that conduit. It's important that our members know we are here for every step of their career."

In recent years, the committee has impressively increased the percentage of middle managers in the London Fire Brigade who are also FBU members – from under 50% to over 70%.

These trends are being repeated

ACTIVE BY NAME, ACTIVE BY NATURE

A AWARENESS

Officer-related issues
FBU membership benefits

C CHALLENGES

Policies and procedures that affect officer members

T TRAINING

Development and education of officer members

I INFLUENCE

Local and national decision making

V VALUE

Individual contribution and collective strength

E EQUALITY

Representing all officer members at watch manager and above



Simon Amos: Safer profession

throughout the UK. Is this surprising? Perhaps not when you consider that the ONC offers a wealth of knowledge, expertise and best practice guidance for all members.

The ONC has developed a new organising mnemonic – ACTIVE – that will underpin its priorities over the coming years. A three-day seminar earlier this year with 22 officer members developed this theme further, with the aim of promoting more active officer officials.

ONC chair Craig Drinkald says: "It's really motivating to be able to gather together officer members from across the UK and share our experiences, our lessons and build an effective network which can support the promotion of the ONC's ACTIVE campaign."

VACANCIES

Three seats are currently vacant on the ONC, which is made up of an official from each of the FBU's 12 regions – those covering the North East, West Midlands and South West regions.

Simon Amos hopes that the new ACTIVE message will encourage more members to come forward and fill the gaps.

"No matter what your rank, there is always a place for you in the Fire Brigades Union," he says.



Craig Drinkald: Effective network

JOHN HARRIS / REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

JOHN HARRIS / REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

THANK YOU

Members of the public contacted the FBU after the Grenfell Tower disaster to offer respect and thanks to all firefighters for their work

KEEPING MY FAMILY SAFE

As an ordinary member of the public I have not given much thought to firemen (and women) and what they do. I walk past our local fire station oblivious to what goes on inside.

I watched the developing disaster at Grenfell and could not believe the bravery of the firefighters rushing into a building which, to me, looked like an inferno, with, apparently, no thoughts other than to try to save the people inside.

The word “heroes” does not come anywhere near describing those actions and I pray that they all came through without physical injury.

It brought home how much we owe to people who do the most dangerous and daunting job in society and reading how their jobs have been cut and salaries diminished leaves a nasty feeling in the pit of my stomach.

My heart goes out to those who now have the job of searching for bodies, a task which I could not visualise in my worst nightmares. They need, and should demand, the support of all those in “power”.

Please pass on my heartfelt thanks to all your members for what they do, not just in the glare of cameras in large disasters, but for what they do every day to keep me, my family and everyone safe.

Paul

MAKE SURE YOU GET ANSWERS

We were in Italy at the time of the horrendous London fire and sat transfixed at the amazing spectacle.

We want to say thank you to all fire crew whether man or woman, whether front line or support for their extremely hard work over very long hours in

conditions that are hard to imagine.

Please make sure that your questions at the forthcoming inquiry are exhaustive and pursued until answers are given.

Not only were you faced with fire, falling objects but poisonous fumes and, of course, the trauma of the event. Our very best wishes to you all.

Chris and Karen Dobson

HUMBLE RESPECT

I have seen the awful pictures on TV of the terrible fire in the block of apartments. My incredible and humble respect goes to the brave and tremendous work that the firefighters did and do, whenever required. Thank you for the work you do.

Gary Ward

ADMIRATION

I watched the interview on BBC1 *Breakfast* this morning with a spokesperson from the

FBU. I would like to thank her for a very dignified, clear and informative interview. She made some points I hadn't thought of, for example the effect on control room staff receiving calls. Like many people in our country at this moment, I stand in admiration of the fire service.

Clive Parker

HEARTFELT THANKS

Heartfelt thanks to all your members from myself and millions of others for all your efforts, especially over the last few days. Save our Fire Stations!

Michael Kennedy

EVERYBODY WANTED TO SIGN

When something big like Grenfell Tower happens you can feel like there's nothing you can do but stand by and watch in horror.

I've volunteered as an aid worker for disasters abroad so have some sense of the mix of emotions when “the call” comes. It must have been terrifying for the firefighters who rushed to the scene.

With that in mind I wanted to ask my local community if they would be happy to show their support by signing a card to say thank you.

We're a close community of three roads and we had a “Great Get Together” street party to honour [murdered MP] Jo Cox.

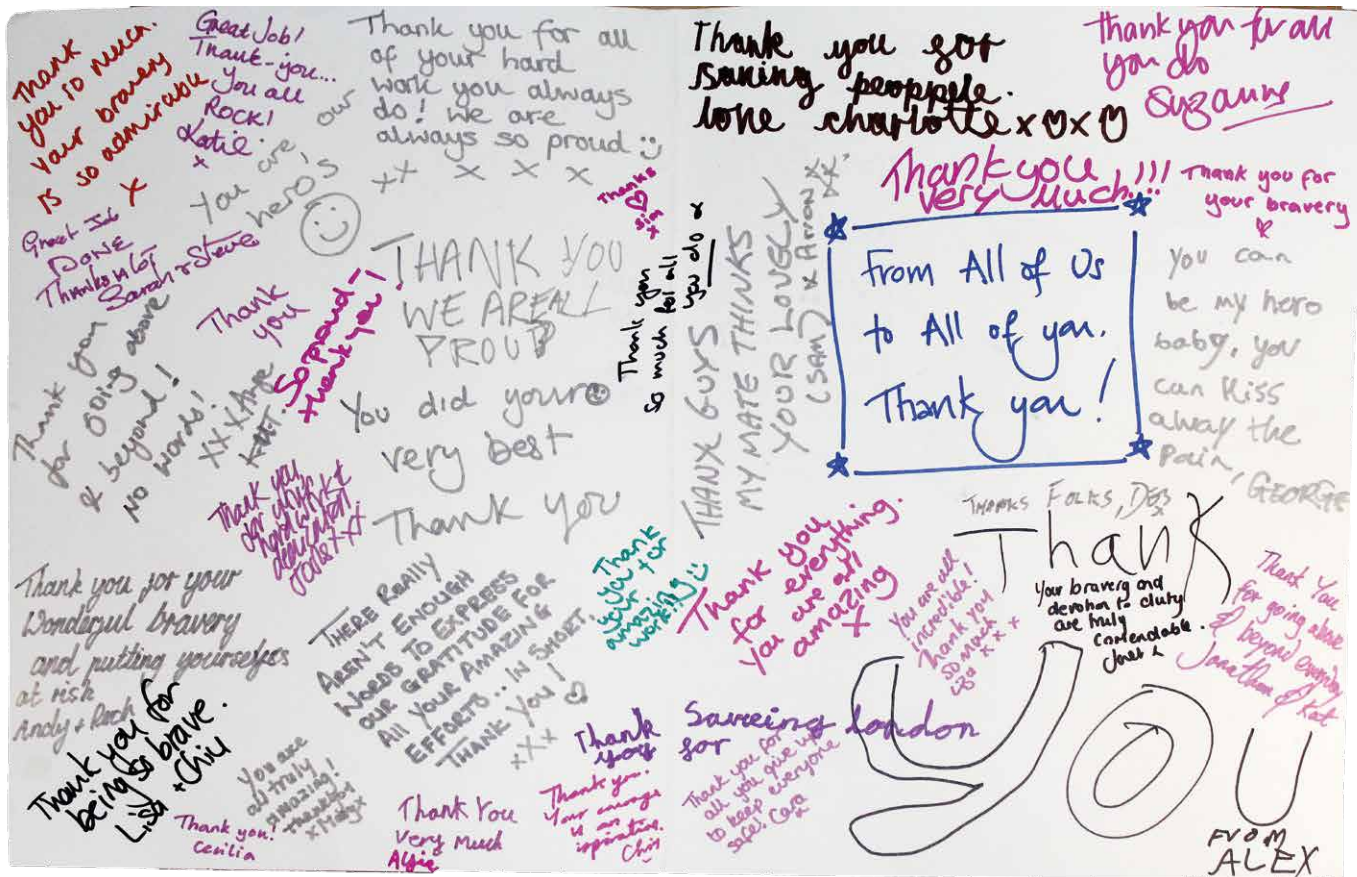
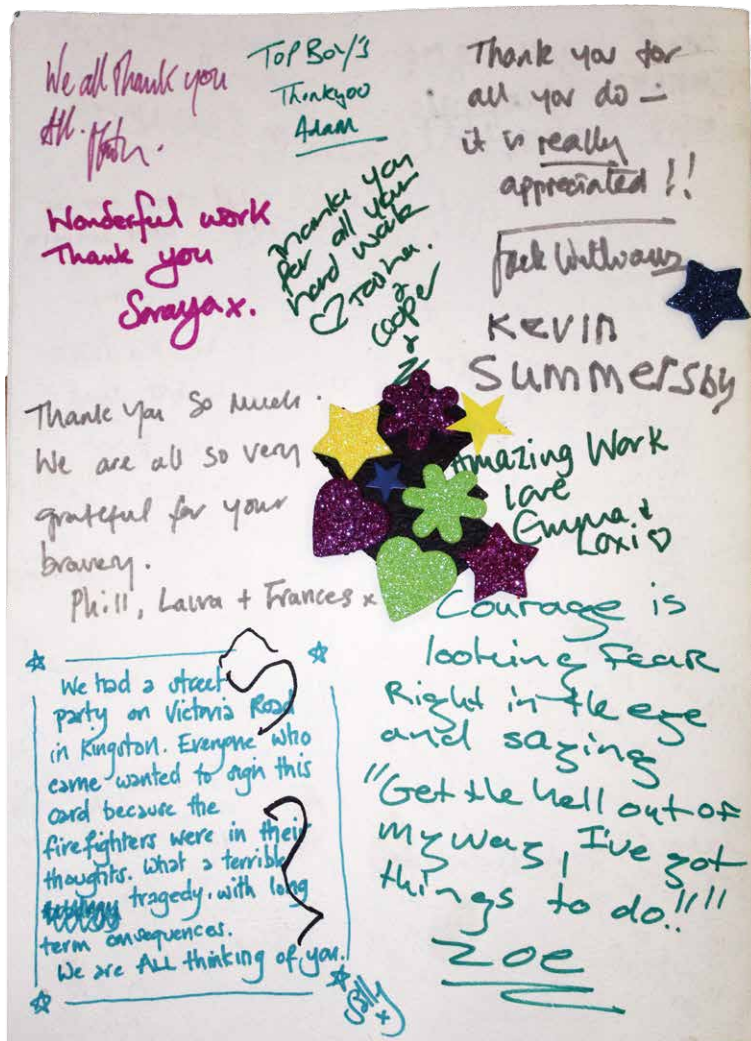
The card went round and **everybody** wanted to sign. Some just couldn't find the words, most knew that what they said was inadequate to how they actually felt, but all of us wanted all of you to know that we acknowledge your bravery and valour.

It's not a lot, but I hope it means something to you.

Sally Kettle



IT BROUGHT HOME
HOW MUCH WE OWE
TO PEOPLE WHO DO
THE MOST DANGEROUS
AND DAUNTING JOB IN
SOCIETY AND READING
HOW THEIR JOBS
HAVE BEEN CUT AND
SALARIES DIMINISHED
LEAVES A NASTY
FEELING IN THE PIT OF
MY STOMACH





FBU 2017 PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

First prize goes to Jazz Hayer of Nottinghamshire FRS for his photo of a trainer. Jazz's note with his image says:

I feel that the image is a perfect representation of the physical strain this trainer had endured. It shows him taking his first breaths after having had three hot wears in our fire-house, and returning to some welcome fresh air. The sweat running down his head, his veins standing on end due to dehydration, the dirt covering parts of his face along with his mouth open wide enjoying the cool air as he breathes, tell a very familiar story.

I would like to submit this photo in recognition of all of the trainers who put themselves through these gruelling sessions, time and again, so that we can all be as safe as possible when duty calls.

JOINT RUNNERS UP

Paul Lippiatt

I took this photo whilst walking my dog in Bristol. It shows the turntable ladder at work fighting a fire in a block of student accommodation.

Rodney Dorrington – E40 Sidcup's pump E402 leaving the appliance bay attending a fire call.

A firefighter's pair of kicked off shoes is all that is left behind in the bay as the owner of them bravely attends another emergency.

A reminder of the potential dangers and hazards that thousands of firefighters face across the UK on a daily basis.

JUDGES

Thank you to Garech Butler from College Hill Press, who to helped to judge the competition, along with professional photojournalist Jess Hurd, editor/designer Alan Slingsby and Anna Zych from the FBU's communications department. The entries were of a high standard and judging proved to be quite difficult. Thank you to all those members who sent in their photos – and there were many. Keep up the good work.



STATION CAT WILL HE NEVER STOP ACTING UP?

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Your Cat has been mew-sing about where she would go if she needed to change station.

Naturally, Catford sprang to mind, but it doesn't have a station. Barking's obviously out. She considered becoming an ex-pat cat in Kathmandu and mulled over the village of Pussy in South East France.

She's made no final decision – but it won't be West Sussex.

The way the county council (WSCC) there is going, this currently pleasant location is likely to be reduced to arid rubble in the near future.

The football fan chant of "You don't know what you're doing" has never seemed more relevant.

The case of former fire chief Sean Ruth is a good example of the bizarre antics of WSCC.

In brief, over the past four years Mr Ruth has been chief fire officer, executive director for communities and public protection and chief fire officer, acting chief operating officer, acting chief executive, back to executive director for communities and public protection and chief fire officer and, finally, executive director for communities and public protection but without being the chief fire officer.

Retired firefighter Tony Morris asked to see the business case for the changes, through freedom of information law.

For pretty obvious reasons, the council has found this difficult



to provide. Tony is still awaiting a reply.

Your Cat freely accepts that any manager who wreaks devastation, as Mr Ruth did so well with budget cuts to the fire service, is a natural choice for promotion. But it still looks like a bleak future for the area.

In a management style reminiscent of the Hokey Cokey, Louise Goldsmith, leader of WSCC who last year claimed over £45K in expenses, has combined the executive director and chief fire officer posts, then separated them.

After insisting there was no need for a chief executive post, she's now decided not only that the council needs one, but that a deputy is needed as well. And whose name's cropped up in the "deputy" frame? Why it's everybody's favourite, Sean Ruth again!

Paw old West Sussex!

CASE OF THE DISAPPEARING FIREFIGHTERS

Your Cat examines firefighters going about their work with great interest. Like most cats and managers, she enjoys watching people work. But she's rather concerned that firefighters are becoming invisible as far as the media is concerned.

A trend seems to be developing that whenever there is an emergency, praise is rightfully heaped upon police and nurses – and other people known as "rescue workers".

That's us. Firefighters. And we should be rightly identified in this role.

The public

recognise our huge contribution – indeed a Facebook page was set up by Angie Mays so that the public could donate holiday breaks after the heroics of our grades at the Grenfell tragedy, and the response has been phenomenal.

So why don't reporters identify us correctly? Yes, we rescue people. But we do it as firefighters.



MP Matthew Offord out campaigning ... and is that our old adversary Boris Johnson trying to hide behind him?

WHEN IGNORANCE IS BLISS ...

Your Cat came across a letter to the union from our old chum Matthew Offord, the Tory MP for Hendon in North London.

He's asked us to stop sending him information about the service. It seems that facts confuse him when he makes decisions, so, prudently, he's decided to do

without them.

We had been sending him, along with other MPs, a regular bulletin with fire service statistics, including service and job cuts.

He has no need for them. Quite rightly he feels he can do very well without accurate information when making judgements.

Matthew's majority at the last election slumped by 2,500. He interpreted this as a triumph, boasting that it was a reward for "seven years of hard work for the people of Hendon". Losing votes obviously seems like a resounding success to a man who has no time for facts.

Still, he will find more friends in parliament now that the Tories and the DUP are bonded.

The right-wing Northern Irish cabal will doubtless be delighted with his pronouncement that same-sex marriage is an "attack on religion".

Thanks to the DUP, Northern Ireland is the only part of the British isles where same-sex marriage remains outlawed.

WHY I WON'T MOVE TO HENDON

Readers may recall my other stories about Mr Offord. Like last year's report of a run-in with former FBU official Steve James, when Mr Offord shouted and "gestured offensively" at Labour London Assembly Member Andrew Dismore while he was campaigning on the FBU's fire engine. When the police turned up, Mr Offord opted to run off and hide.

Needless to say, Hendon's another place Your Cat won't be moving to!

It may be a long way away, but it's more appealing than West Sussex ... or Hendon



WIKIMEDIA/POUDOU99

25-YEAR BADGES



Michael Elton (l), white watch, Ebbw Vale, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jason Lewis with colleagues looking on



Jagjit Dhaliwal (l), Whitehill, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from D divisional chair Pete Gilbertson



CM Robberts (r), Whitehill, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from D divisional chair Pete Gilbertson



Rob Whalley (r), Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade learning rep Paul Smith



Andy Hinde (l), delta watch, Birchwood, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Steve Haste with colleagues looking on



Geoff Owen (l), red watch, Hanley, Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands regional secretary Pete Goulden with colleagues looking on



Lee Bragg (r), white watch, Sunbury, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jez Spencer with colleagues (l-r) Jay Tough, Tim Jones, Kerrie Gilling and Dan Pearson looking on



Ian Atkinson (l), blue watch, Farnham, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jo Crow with colleagues (l-r) Chrissie Cooper, Al Naysmith and Louise Williams looking on



Andy Lond (r), green watch, Gosport, Hampshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rob Dellow, with colleagues (l-r) Mark Edwards and Paul Ponsford looking on



Rob Gonzalez-Green (r), Ormskirk, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Kev Wilkie with crew members looking on



Michael Goode (r), white watch, Aldridge, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from brigade health and safety rep Richard Greensill



James Laing (r), community firefighter, Liberton, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Claudio Ferreira



Alan Henderson (r), green watch, Liberton, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Claudio Ferreira



Darren Lovelock (r), Baldock & Letchworth, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Rob Fortune



Laurence Smith (l), Baldock & Letchworth, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Rob Fortune



Joe Andrews (r), Stirling and Clackmannanshire, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Alloa branch secretary Davie Dawson



Neil Carter (r), fire safety officer, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Ian McGill



Gary Fry (r), Felixstowe, Suffolk FRS, receives his 25-year badge from Tim Colson



Steve Low (l), Skelmersdale, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Kev Wilkie with crew members looking on



Jeremy Harris (r), Baldock and Letchworth, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Rob Fortune



Bob Young (l), Baldock and Letchworth, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Rob Fortune



John McGrinder (r), Baldock and Letchworth, Hertfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Rob Fortune



Peter McMullen (r), Colne, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from Richard Taylor



Chris Honour (r), blue watch, Darlington, Durham & Darlington, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Paul Dawson with blue watch colleagues (l-r) Ian Coates, Ben Dalton, Phil Miller, Kevin Errington and Nick Hall looking on



Warren Sayers (r), blue watch, Enfield, London, receives his 25-year badge from former London regional secretary Joe MacVeigh, with blue watch colleagues (l-r) FF Collins, FF Clarke, CM Archer, FF Reed, WM Canavan and FF Djelal looking on



Ken Clarke (r), blue watch, Enfield, London, receives his 25-year badge from former London regional secretary Joe MacVeigh with watch colleagues (l-r) FF Sayers, FF Collins, CM Archer, FF Reed, WM Canavan and FF Djelal



Chris Waring (l), Burnley, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Kev Wilkie with new recruits looking on



George Todd (l), community firefighter and youth services, Dalkeith, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Dalkeith branch secretary Gus Sproul with colleagues looking on



Steve Cross (r), green watch, Weymouth, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Karen Adams, with Weymouth members looking on



Simon Priest (r), former brigade chair, green watch, Weymouth, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Karen Adams with Weymouth members looking on



Alan Birtwistle (l), receives his 25-year badge from East Sussex brigade organiser Graham Geer with friends and blue watch colleagues at stations 75 and 76 in Hastings



Darren Lowe (r), green watch, Springbourne, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from Dorset brigade organiser Scott Blandford with (l-r) Gary Bown, Martin Beevers and Stuart Randall



Paul Milburn (l), blue watch, Bridgwater, Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary James Leslie with colleagues looking on



Ade Grieves (r), white watch, Salisbury, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Thompson with colleagues (l-r) Lucy May, Andy Reading, Alex Wells and Rich Plaskett

25-YEAR BADGES



Dave McLeod (l), Fulwell, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from divisional official Gordon Chalk



Ian Laffey (l), green watch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Steve Morris



Craig Kennedy (r), white watch, Bathgate, Scotland, and health and safety branch rep, receives his 25-year badge from East area organiser John McKenzie



Ian Barlow (r), combined fire control, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, receives his 25-year badge from control section rep Joanne Reynolds



Celfyn Evans (l), North Wales, receives his 25-year badge from regional treasurer Arwel Roberts with Caernarfon red and blue watch looking on



Lee Glover (r), BHQ, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Steve Collins



Andy Hinde (l), delta watch, Birchwood, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Steve Haste with colleagues looking on



Graeme Cuthill (r), red watch, Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 3 secretary Brian Cameron



Rob Barker (l), Haverfordwest, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from Graeme Callan



David Campbell (l), Renfrew Branch, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 6 chair Alan Johnston



Colin Deery (r), Solihull, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Lee Moran



Nick Ashcroft (r), Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Steve Gould



Andrew Lasky (r), Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Steve Gould



Gary McKay (r), Kilmarnock, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 7 secretary Ian Bryden



Stuart Beddoe (l), West Group, West Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Foff Bishop



Richard Davy (r), West Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade membership organiser Pawel Kosla (l) with David Shaw looking on



David Shaw (r), West Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade membership organiser Pawel Kosla (l) with Richard Davy looking on



Paul Storrie (r), Kilmarnock, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 7 secretary Ian Bryden



Michael Telford (r), Hawick, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 3 secretary Brian Cameron



Paul Jump (r), Chorley, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Craig Gregson



Kevin Lilley (r), blue watch, Carlton, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Richard Jones with Carlton branch members looking on



Steve Putnam (l) USAR, Avon, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Chris Taylor



Michael Fitches (r) green watch, Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 3 secretary Brian Cameron



Kevin Laing (r) Ardrossan, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 7 secretary Ian Bryden with colleagues looking on



Ian Galloway (r) Ardrossan, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from District 7 secretary Ian Bryden with colleagues looking on



Brendan Duignan (r), Machynlleth, Mid & West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from EC member Grant Mayos



Kev Lloyd (r), Machynlleth, Mid & West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from EC member Grant Mayos



Simon McCarthy (l), Tuxford, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from Nick Hardy



Lee McCumiskey (r), red watch, Westbourne, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from membership organiser Scott Blandford with colleagues (l-r) Faris Mani, Matt Carr, Scott Hanger, Marc Barrett and Janine McCumiskey

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. Please include full details for every picture – 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

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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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