

Community Advisory Group:
Community Members Statement on the publication of
The Tutu Foundation Review into Institutional Racism
at the Westway Trust

Embargoed until 11th Dec 00:01

We are living in an unprecedented historical time of global change and revelation.

The African and Caribbean communities of North Kensington have been systemically discriminated against, excluded and disenfranchised from the 23 acres of land and resources left to the local community in 1971 by the creation of the North Kensington Amenities Trust (now Westway Trust) with little or no recognition of this history or acknowledgement of the achievements and contributions made.

This Review came about only because members of the community fought for it to happen. For many years the community has raised concerns about racism at the Trust and in their dealings with community and their staff members.

In undertaking this review the Leadership of the Trust has joined with members of the community to Co-Lead the Community Advisory Group. The community members have remained autonomous in this process in order to be able to robustly represent the 'conscience of the community' throughout this difficult process.

I am glad to say that we have now reached an historical turning point with the release of this report. It has been more than a challenging process with many more challenges on the horizon and respect is due to all members of our community that have participated and contributed to this landmark document both past and present.

The Review clearly finds The Westway Trust are guilty of Institutional Racism. That historical Institutional Racism that existed was proved beyond a doubt. In the report we heard how this has damaged many individual lives and removed opportunities from generations of young people in the community.

Despite their willingness to undertake this review there was also clear evidence in the process of the review of continuing institutional racism in the trust, in particular in the inability and unwillingness to engage with the community as equal partners.

For members of the community and past staff of the Westway Trust this review may not be everything they had hoped for but is clear and unequivocal in its final conclusions, and reparation is now necessary

There is a clear case for and need for reparations to develop neglected areas of the Trusts responsibility, and this is a large-scale undertaking that will take many years to fulfil. But must be undertaken to regain faith in the community and faith in itself and its mission. Let this work be used as a road map to lead us forward into a new era of real community leadership and regeneration in its truest and realest context.

The work must not be delayed; we must start the work now. People, families, and communities have been damaged and delay further damages them and the relationships with the Trust we must start bridging the gap now. It will not be an easy task and there will be many more challenges ahead. However uncertain the future may be, we the Community Advisory Group to the Review remain resolute and committed to the realization and fruition of the reparation and restoration of our local community by all means necessary and look forward to developing a new model and paradigm that truly works for the beneficiaries the land was originally intended for.

It is difficult though possible for this work to be done together. We have come a long way and if we continue to have the courage to have the many difficult and direct conversations, we will continue to make the changes the community needs.

2021 will mark 50 years since the creation of the Trust and we look forward to creating a legacy that will live on long after we have all gone and be passed on to our children and our children's, children. We take this stand in order for them to be able to live free, healthy, meaningful and prosperous lives without being forever haunted by the crimes committed against our Ancestors and having to continually live under the unacceptable imposition of institutional racism and discrimination.

We would like to thank all who have contributed to bringing this to fruition, and look forward to working together to recalibrate, reset and rebuild our incredibly resilient, uniquely talented and gifted community.

There is a new Trust Leadership as during the process of review and as the truth began to emerge there has been an exodus of the old guard and addition of more members of community to the board. The new community membership is not responsible for what the old guard did before them; they are however responsible for correcting systemic problems they have inherited.

The elephant in the room is blowing its trumpet and can no longer be ignored.

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