



Tutu Foundation UK

Review into Institutional Racism at Westway Trust (the “Trust”)

Press Notice

Working with and serving the local community of North Kensington is at the very heart of Westway Trust. Being able to provide services, funding and opportunities to gain benefit from the land under the Westway, which meet the needs of local diverse communities is essential. One of the strengths of North Kensington is its strong diversity, but this can also present its own challenges, especially when attempting to enable all people living locally to thrive.

The Trust has an aspiration to become a leading partner with the community and recognises that criticisms have been laid at its door, in particular claims of institutional racism, by the local community. Better understanding these criticisms, and learning from them, provides the Trust with an opportunity to achieve its aspiration.

Trust Chairman, Alan Brown and Joint Chief Executives, Alex Russell and Mark Lockhart, have instigated a review into these claims. The Board and senior staff take the claims very seriously and have engaged The Tutu Foundation UK to conduct a comprehensive and fully-independent review into the practices and policies of the Trust, both past and present. The Tutu Foundation UK is an organisation which was set up to disseminate the legacy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and to use and promote the concept of *Ubuntu* in the UK. *Ubuntu* encourages us to recognise our common humanity, our connectedness and inter-dependence as fellow human beings, in order to seek reconciliation.

The review is part of The Trust’s new approach to working with local people in a constructive, inclusive and participatory way, echoing the *Ubuntu* philosophy, which emphasises what we have in common rather than our differences. The Trust has established a Community Advisory Group, co-chaired by Niles Hailstone, the Chair of Westway 23 and One Voice Community Collective and Alan Brown, to provide a forum for local people to be directly involved in the review.

From **23 October 2018** there will be series of informal community awareness meetings and discussions about the Review.

On **Wednesday 7th November 2018 at 19.00**, Tutu Foundation UK and the Community Advisory Group will launch the Review at Bay 56, Acklam Village, North Kensington.

The launch event will bring together the Community, the Trust and The Tutu Foundation UK, to explain the purpose of the review, work to date and the important role the community has played in shaping the review so far.

In commissioning The Tutu Foundation UK to undertake the review, the Trust believes that it will be an important step to enabling it to re-establish its agenda in an inclusive manner; fully discharge its legal obligations and restore the trust and confidence of the diverse community it serves.

The Review led by Dr. Habashi FRSA of the Tutu Foundation UK seeks to examine concerns of institutional racism¹; the scope of which centres on whether institutional racism has existed, (exists) within Westway Trust, if so, how it has manifested, and its impact on the communities served by the Trust.

The Terms of Reference of the Review are as follows:

- Develop a review framework, which ensures community trust and confidence.
- Undertake a review of evidence relating to perceptions and allegations of institutional racism within Westway Trust.
- Engage with community stakeholders to understand historical and current concerns in relation to institutional racism and the use and allocation of land with regard to Westway Trust.
- Present findings to Westway Trust CEOs, Chairman and community stakeholders.

The first stage of the Review- gathering of documentary evidence commenced on **31st July 2018**.

On **Wednesday 7th November 2018 – Wednesday 19th December 2018**, the second stage of the review - public call for evidence - will commence.

The third stage of review - Interviews with members of the public - will commence on **Monday 21st January – Monday 25th February 2019**.

The Chairman of Westway Trust, Alan Brown said the following:

“The more I have come to understand institutional racism, the more I realise that it isn’t about blatant violence or language, it is about subtle and subconscious behaviours. These subtleties run through society but, for organisations like us, they

¹ This review adopts the definition of institutional racism as outlined in the Macpherson Inquiry 1999.

are at play in recruitment, in the way in which we listen to and engage with people, in how programmes are designed and how decisions are made.

Through the inclusive programme we have started at Westway, I realise we all have subconscious biases because of our experiences and it is beholden on every one of us to unearth these prejudices to be able to tackle them more effectively and quickly.

For Westway Trust, this review is important not only to rebuild trust and a new relationship with those who feel betrayed and let down by us, but to achieve much more lasting impact with the community in our work.

By involving Tutu Foundation UK to run this independently, we hope we have created a safe space for people to be able to speak their mind on the subject, without fear of stereotype or prejudice. I hope it will be a cathartic and healing process. We commit to taking action following the conclusion of the review”.

The Joint Chair of the Community Advisory Group to the Review, Niles Hailstones said,

“I am glad to see the day come when the 'elephant in the room' is now visible and blowing its trumpet. This review is long overdue and converges with the wider issues of institutional racism locally, nationally and globally.

North Kensington has always been on the frontline of the battle against racial prejudice and bigotry since the 1950's. The murder of Kelsoe Cochrane in 1959 triggered a collective community response to the issue of racism in the UK. This has had far reaching implications and impacts toward the promotion and development of community cohesion and social change in British society. The Black community as a whole, has contributed far more to the cultural and social development of British society than we have been credited with, gained or benefited from in return.

The current Windrush scandal reveals just how much has not changed and how far British society is from getting to grips with the issue of racism and repairing the damage caused by its colonial past. Although overt racism is not as prevalent as in the 50's and 60's it is once again on the rise and the covert structural and institutional racism that still oppresses and keeps us in a state of disenfranchisement and arrested development, continues unabated.

It is time to put an end to this madness before history repeats itself.

The review provides an opportunity to begin a process of healing and reparatory justice that can *“finally and permanently discredit and abandon”* (Selassie 1963) any institutionally racist notions and practice that exist at Westway Trust and put in place structures and mechanisms that will ensure that the issues that have caused so much destruction up until now on the 23 acres will no longer be able to proliferate and keep repeating themselves.

This will also mean that there will need to be a process of re-education that the Trust must willingly and wholeheartedly engage in to be successful in this endeavour. People will be challenged and affected by the growing pains of having to come out of their comfort zones and face the truth about the unequal society we live in and its implications in relation to their own conscious and subconscious biases.

I have no desire to produce a band-aid for a gaping wound, rather a mission to reset and recalibrate the Trust to the point where it returns to its original mandate of providing access to land, resources and amenities for the benefit of the local community. This is all the more important as we are entering an era of global change where we must learn from the lessons of the past and begin to instigate, develop and establish new paradigms, structures, initiatives and safeguards in respect to this issue for the betterment of past, present and future generations”.

Professor Gary Craig, on behalf of the TFUK Trustees said,

“The heart of The Tutu Foundation UK’s mission is helping people to address prejudice, conflict and discrimination in any form, using a spirit of cooperation and conciliation to reach agreement on a practical way forward. We are pleased to have been asked to help conduct this review and hope its work will address issues of concern to Westway Trust, local residents and other interested parties in a way which helps the Trust move forward positively with its work”

For further information about the Review contact Mrs Christine Okiya, Secretary to the Review secretarytothereview@tutufoundationuk.org.

For further information about Westway Trust, contact Mat Bradley, Head of Communications and Marketing 020 896225720 mat.bradley@westway.org

For further information about Westway 23 and One Voice Community Collective, contact Niles Hailstones, nhailstones@yahoo.co.uk 07949 890 245

Note to Editors

1. The Review has adopted the definition of institutional racism as outlined in the Macpherson Inquiry.

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people” Macpherson 1999:6.34.

“There must be an unequivocal acceptance of the problem of institutional racism and its nature before it can be addressed, as it needs to be, in full partnership with members of minority ethnic communities. There is no doubt that recognition, acknowledgement and acceptance of the problem by [...] and their officers is an important first step for minority ethnic communities in moving forward positively to solve the problem which exists. There is an onus upon the [...] to respond to this. Any Chief Officer who feels unable so to respond will find it difficult to work in harmony and cooperation with the community”. MacPherson Inquiry 6.48.

2. “On the question of racial discrimination, the Addis Ababa Conference taught, to those who will learn this further lesson: that until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is **finally and permanently discredited and abandoned**; that until there are no longer first class and second class citizens of any nation; that until the colour of a man’s skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes; that until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race; that until that day, the dream of lasting peace and world citizenship and the rule of international morality will remain but a fleeting illusion, to be pursued but never attained”. **Haile Selassie I Emperor of Ethiopia, Address to the United Nations, 1963**