



## **Review into Institutional Racism at the Westway Trust**

### **Overview**

Working with and serving the local community of North Kensington is at the very heart of the 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 within the community and recognises that criticisms have been laid at its door, in particular claims of institutional racism, by the local community. The Trust recognises that these claims have inhibited it from being the best community partner it can be.

Better understanding these criticisms, and learning from them, provides the Trust with an opportunity to transform and become the best community partner it can be. A community partner; which provides services, funding and access to opportunities to gain benefit from the land under the Westway, which meets the needs of its local diverse communities.

Central to the Trust's transformation is rebuilding trust and confidence with the community. This requires listening to, understanding, working with and learning from the community. Specifically, it means the following,

- That the relationship with the community is underpinned by principles of mutual respect, transparency, accountability and openness.
- The recognition that a positive relationship with the community is integral to the success and transformation of the Trust and crucial to enabling communities to thrive and prosper.

In realising its ambition of being a leading community partner, the Trust, recognises that its policies, procedures and practices must be inclusive and non discriminatory. Its decision-making must be fair, transparent and accountable. Fundamentally, it must be accessible to all.

The Trust recognises that it is not enough for it to just introduce and implement policies procedures and practices. It must ensure that through its, actions and behaviours it embeds the principles of fairness, transparency and accessibility to all. It is only in doing this, that the Trust can demonstrate that it is inclusive and fair as an employer, provider of services, funding and access to opportunities to gain benefit from the land under the Westway.

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 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.

Ensuring integrity, trust and confidence in a review process is critical when a review takes place within an environment where an organisation's legitimacy is being challenged. This is the current situation, which the Westway Trust finds itself in. Some in the local community have little confidence and have negative perceptions about the Trust, its work and decisions it has made.

The success of the review is dependent on the Westway Trust creating the conditions to engender greater trust and confidence by ensuring the review process is independent, transparent, and able to stand up to public scrutiny. To do otherwise could potentially result in community criticism of the project and further mistrust. A failure to adopt and follow best practice could result in the Trust inadvertently sabotaging its own very important project, which aims to restore public trust and confidence.

Creating the conditions for a transparent and independent review will put the Westway Trust in a strong leadership position. In going forward, this will ensure that there is a reduction in public challenges on its legitimacy and decision-making, so enabling the Westway Trust to,

- 1.) Re-establish its agenda in an inclusive manner;
- 2.) Fully discharge its legal obligations, and
- 3.) Restore the trust and confidence of the diverse community it serves.

To ensure trust, confidence and integrity in the review process, it is essential that there is transparency and openness in the way in which members of the community are enabled to participate.

As part of its inclusive approach the Trust and the Community Advisory Group to the Review have adopted the spirit and principles of the following Human Rights Charters and proclamations;

- United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Man;
- Proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent; resolution of the United Nations General Assembly 23 December 2013;
- United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD);
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goals, 1,2, 3,4,5,8,10,11 and 16.

In recognizing that 2018 marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Trust, Community Advisory Group to the Review and the Tutu Foundation UK support the United Nations campaign pledge,

1. I will respect your rights regardless of who you are. I will uphold your rights even when I disagree with you
2. When anyone's human rights are denied, everyone's rights are undermined, so I will **stand up**
3. I will raise my voice. I will take action. I will use my rights to stand up for your rights.

**#Standup4humanrights.**

The Trust, Community Advisory Group to the Review and the Tutu Foundation UK will celebrate the United Nations Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 21 March. On that day in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid Pass Laws.