

AUGUST 2017 • SPECIAL EDITION

Welcome

WE ARE DELIGHTED to present to you the first edition of the Finsbury Park Mosque newsletter. The newsletter captures some of the momentous events of the past few weeks, especially following the terrorist attack in Finsbury Park.

The terrorist attack on 19 June 2017 was a shock to the community and affected people in many ways. We are still in mourning of our dear worshipper Makram Ali, whose life was so brutally taken that fateful night. Our prayers and thoughts are with his family, and all the other victims of the attack - some are still recovering in hospital. We wish all of them a speedy recovery so that they can try to lead normal lives, once again.

Our mosque together with the Muslim Welfare House is providing regular support to the victims and their families, including financial, advocacy, and moral.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone that have shown incredible solidarity and help following the attack, from the Prime Minister Theresa May; the Mayor of London Sadik Khan; HRH Prince Charles; our MP Jeremy Corbyn; The Archbishop of Canterbury Justine Welby; Met Police Commissioner Cressida Dick; Islington Council leader Richard Watts; Borough Commander Catherine Roper; the Emergency Services, to the countless organisations and members of the public.

If there is anything positive that has come out of this tragedy, it is the community's collective resolve to live in peace and harmony. We will not allow the peddlers of hate disunite and fracture our communities.

Thank you.

Mohammed Kozbar,

Chairman, Finsbury Park Mosque



Community response to Finsbury terrorist attack



ON 19 JUNE 2017, there was a terrorist attack in Finsbury Park, near the Finsbury Park Mosque and Muslim Welfare House, which resulted in the death of an elderly man and injuring many more. Just after midnight, a van with a man inside it deliberately mowed down Muslims leaving late night prayers from the two mosques. The attack coincided with the first anniversary of the murder of Jo Cox MP.
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DONATION PAGE

A donation page was immediately set-up by the two mosques, to raise funds from the community to help and support the victims of the attack. Around £40,000 has been raised so far.

ONE MINUTE SILENCE

A minute of silence was observed on 26 June in front of the Islington Town Hall, to remember the victims. Leaders from the council alongside others from the community participated.



FINSBURY PARK MOSQUE AND MUSLIM WELFARE HOUSE held a memorial service today to remember the victims of the terrorist attack which took place two weeks ago, especially Makram Ali who was tragically killed on 19 June in the Finsbury Park area after worshippers were leaving the two mosques after late night prayers. - Titled, A Service of Hope, the memorial event was attended by a cross-section of the community including interfaith leaders, politicians, the emergency services, and family members representing the victims.

Ragad Altikriti, the host of the memorial service, said *“at difficult times like these, it is immensely important for our government to act swiftly to strengthen community relations and ensure that every life matters and that the actions taken are equal, with no differentiation between one victim and another.”* Mohammed Kozbar, Chairman and Director of Finsbury Park Mosque read out a statement from both mosques. To the victims, he said *“we can’t imagine the pain and loss you feel; but our thoughts and prayers are with you – and we are here for you.”* He thanked the Emergency Services for their help and support over the past few days as well as national leaders including visits by PM Theresa May; Sadiq Khan Mayor of London; members of the Royal Family; Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn.

Kozbar lamented the fact that despite strenuous efforts by the Muslim community to confront extremism including the ouster from this mosque of Abu Hamza and his extremist followers 13 years ago, as well as advancing dialogue and understanding between communities, *“the image of Islam continues to be tarnished and distorted, through a sustained effort to brand and conflate Islam with terrorism. This effort has been largely successful, to the extent that the media and some politicians speak about what they term as ‘Islamic terrorism’”*. He added, *“it is imperative that we openly discuss the factors that drive young Muslims to terrorism, without fear of being charged with sympathising or justifying those acts of barbaric criminality. Unless we do so, we will forever be fighting fires, rather than extinguishing the original flame”*. Harun Rashid Khan, Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain, expressing shock at the

Service of Hope Ceremony



tragic event during the holy month of Ramadan said *“we come together when these kinds of things happen as those who seek to sow hatred and division are clearly failing”*.

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Sophie Lindon said

“terrorism is terrorism no matter what motivation or who the perpetrators are”. She commended the efforts of the Finsbury Park Mosque and the Muslim Welfare House in their handling of this incident, and in particular, described Imam Mohammed from

the latter as *“a true inspiration for us all”* as he and others risked their lives apprehending the attacker. In her second visit to the Finsbury Park Mosque, Sarah Newton, MP and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Counter

“it has never been more important for the nation to stand together against those who seek to divide”.

— Sarah Newton MP and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding & Counter Extremism

Extremism, said she was “*struck by the strength of this community and how it works together in unity*” and that “*it has never been more important for the nation to stand together against those who seek to divide*”. She further added, “*our prayers are for Makram Ali and family and the heroes at the mosque who intervened and acted so bravely to make sure that calm and unity prevailed*”.

In his speech, the Acting Bishop of London Bishop Pete Broadbent was critical of some sections of the media and politicians: “*we need to resist and counter some of what politicians and media say – that our problems arise from a result of immigration and religion, etc. There needs to be a counter-narrative where we rejoice in the richness and diversity of our society. The problem is not in the ‘other’ (migrants, faith) but prejudicial bile that comes out of some media outlets*”.

Islington Council leader, Cllr Richard Watts, reiterated that the attack in Finsbury was “*clearly an act of terrorism*” and he thanked the Muslim community for the strength and forbearance on the night — and the bravery and strength of character in stopping further terrorism”.

Fiona Taylor, Temporary Assistant Commissioner condemned the attack and sent her condolences to Makram Ali and everyone injured. She reassured all that “*we will seek justice for Mr Ali and efforts are underway*” because “*an attack on one is an attack on us all*”. She said she recognises the damaging effects this has on victims and community at large.

Shah Islam, representing the families of Makram Ali and other victims, said “*We have lost a husband, father and grandfather*” and that the attack was “*a clear manifestation of hate crime and Islamophobia*”. But despite this, “*as victims, we hold no grudges against others as our religion teaches love and peace; for indeed we are best as humans when we build bridges, not walls*”.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of Her Majesty’s Official Opposition and local MP, said “*the legacy of Makram Ali is that we all stand together united*” and that the “*attack which sought to divide us will never succeed*”. Saying he is proud to represent this area and the work of Finsbury Park Mosque, he called on all to “*challenge racism in all its forms; if we don’t then we start the process of an unfair and unjust society*”.

Hate Crime Against Muslim Women

A Listening Exercise

Monday 16 October 2017 • 6:15pm-8pm
Finsbury Park Mosque

Finsbury Park Mosque invites you to a special listening exercise session where a panel representing the police, the local council, politicians, and legal experts will listen to concerns and experiences of Muslim women who face physical and verbal Islamophobia. Victims of the recent attack in Finsbury Park will also be in attendance.

Panel members include:

Jeremy Corbyn

MP FOR ISLINGTON NORTH;
LEADER OF HER MAJESTY’S OPPOSITION

INFO / REGISTRATION:

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Finsbury Park Victims Voice Forum

FINSBURY PARK MOSQUE and Muslim Welfare House have been providing regular support to the victims of the terrorist attack in Finsbury Park. Coordinated through the Finsbury Park Victims Voice Forum (FPVVF), the two mosques have been organising, amongst other things, home visits, translation services, referrals, legal help and advice, connection with relevant agencies and services, representation, help with benefits, re-housing, jobs, and befriending.

Victims and family members have met to share information, discuss issues and update on recovery of victims and service provisions available to them. Through a separate project, Seven Sisters Recovery, victims are given specific advocacy help, dealing with long-term mental issues. Officials from the local authority, police and other services have also been invited to discuss issues directly with the victims.

Siddiq Yusuf, victim support coordinator from the Muslim Welfare House said “Many

of the victims are in a fragile state suffering from physical injuries and the trauma of the attack.

They require constant support, help and advice. We are trying our best to offer what we can to help ease their difficulties.”

Khaled Oumar, trustee of the Finsbury Park Mosque and a lead person helping the victims said “*Had it not been for the role of the local community and our mosques, the victims would remain helpless – not knowing their rights and help available to them. We have specifically focused on advocacy help which is key to finding long term settlement of the victims.*”



Solidarity with Finsbury Park

EAST LONDON MOSQUE SOLIDARITY VIGIL

EAST LONDON MOSQUE & LONDON MUSLIM CENTRE held a vigil on 19 June in solidarity with victims of Finsbury Park attack. Organised by the mosque, United East End, Stand up to Racism, Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum and others, the vigil was a spontaneous response to the terrorist attack where community leaders condemned the attack as hate crime and called on the preparator to be brought to justice. Speakers including John Biggs, elected mayor of Tower Hamlets Council; Rushanara Ali, MP for Bethnal Green and Bow; Neil Jameson, London Citizens; Sue Williams, Borough Commander; Sheila Macgregor, Stand up to Racism; and Muhamamd Habibur-Rahman, chairman, East London Mosque.



Lord Bates starts charity walk from FPM

On 20 July, Finsbury Park Mosque received a visit from Lord Michael Bates, the Minister of State for International Development and his wife, Lady Xuelin Li Bates as they set off on the first leg of their charity walk to support victims of the recent terror attacks in London and Manchester. He embarked on a 625-mile (1000km) 45-day walk around the UK via Cardiff, Manchester, Belfast, ending in Edinburgh to try and raise money for the UK Solidarity Fund. Lord Bates symbolically chose Finsbury Park Mosque as the location to start his walk as a show of solidarity with the Mosque and the Muslim community.



Nagashi Mosque solidarity iftar

Al-Nagashi Centre & Mosque in Vauxhall held a solidarity iftar on 21 June. The iftar event was attended by many from people from different backgrounds.



Grieg City Academy awareness session

Grieg City Academy in Hornsey, London held an awareness session for pupils to discuss the terrorist attack and impact on communities. Pupils expressed shock and concern at the attack; teachers were there to comfort pupils affected by the attack.



Weldfield Methodist & Anglican Church School solidarity

Weldfield Methodist and Anglican Church School in Lancashire held a discussion session facilitated by a Muslim parent with Year 6 pupils. They discussed the terrorist attack and how young and old should work to build a better society. Pupils and staff at the school collected money for the victims too.

Leading communities through crisis

Chairman addressed councillors in LGA conference titled "Leading communities through crisis" The chairman of the Mosque Mohammed Kozbar today addressed Councillors and leaders of councils and other representatives of different organizations from all over the country in the annual Local Government Association (LGA) conference in Birmingham, the session titled "Leading communities through crisis" with: Cllr David Simmonds, Conservative Group Leader, Local Government Association and Deputy Leader, London Borough of Hillingdon, Cllr Richard Watts, Leader, London Borough of Islington, Cllr Sue Murphy, Deputy Leader, Manchester City Council, Cllr Peter John, Leader, London Borough of Southwark. They talked about how communities responded to the terrorist attacks in Manchester, London Bridge and Finsbury Park area, and how community organizations worked in partnership with the local authorities and showed leadership through out this very difficult time, it was received very well by the audience.



... (From page 1) Community response to Finsbury terrorist attack

The attacker was apprehended by local youth and handed over to the police, preventing further carnage. Immediately after the attack, the mosque and along with others called for vigilance and calm. The response from the community has been overwhelming, all coming together in a show of solidarity and unity. Some of the major events and activities are illustrated below.



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 find us on: [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) [twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com)

Finsbury Park Mosque Trust is a registered UK charity (no.1136945, company no. 7229018), which works to serve the community of Islington and surrounding boroughs of North London. Aside from serving as a primary place of worship and religious services to Muslims, we work to promote understanding, dialogue, and community cohesion.