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# News & Opinion

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# Apology welcomed: Now's time for truth

Andersonstown News Thursday

by Roisin McManus

The grandson of a man killed in the McGurk's Bar bombing has welcomed an apology by the British government, but says they must now open their files so that the truth can be told about the 1971 bombing.

On Monday, NIO Security Minister Paul Goggins apologised in the House of Commons to the relatives of those killed in McGurk's Bar for false claims made about the bombing. McGurk's Bar in North Belfast was bombed by the UVF in December 1971, killing 15 people.

At the time the British army claimed the bomb was an IRA "own goal".

Speaking in the House of Commons earlier this week, Paul Goggins said: "We are deeply sorry not just for the appalling suffering and loss of life that occurred at McGurk's Bar, but also for the extraordinary additional pain caused to both the immediate families and the wider communities by the erroneous suggestions made in the immediate aftermath of the explosion as to who was responsible."

Commenting on Paul Goggins' apology, An Fhirinne spokesperson Robert McClenaghan – whose grandfather Philip Garry was killed in the bombing – said: "After almost 37 years of waiting, Paul Goggins' apology is a welcome step and a progressive move forward by the British government.

"Now that they have openly admitted the innocence of our relatives, the logical next step for the British government is to open their files so the truth about McGurk's can finally be told."

Robert said the bombing, on December 4, 1971, is now well past the British government's 30-year rule for the withholding of documents.

"In order to allay the concerns of families and the nationalist community in general, the British government should publish the files of the old Stormont Joint Security Committee as well as the British army's and British government's own files."

Robert added that if the British government refuse to hand over the documents, then that only strengthens the case for an independent, international truth commission to compel the British government and other state agencies to open up their files.

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BelfastPix.com reaches 100,000 milestone



**WEBSITE MILESTONE:** The 100,000th picture has just been uploaded onto Belfastpix.com. Belfast Media Group's online photosales website, which is one year old this week, has images from present day right back until 1979. Since going live last year the site has went from strength to strength. Each month the photographic archive has more than 500,000 page impressions. Log on to [www.belfastpix.com](http://www.belfastpix.com) to for more.



## Property News

### What housing slump?

Thousands of local buyers defied reports of a property market slump last week as they queued for a dream home in Northern Ireland's first eco-village. Lisburn's Brokerstown Village, a development of more than 1,000 energy efficient homes, was buzzing with interest from buyers at its two open days earlier this month. In fact, selling agent Ulster Property Sales estimated that more than 2,000 visitors have already flocked to the eco-friendly and ever so chic 'future-proof' properties, which offer 60 per

