

IN THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF MR JOSEPH KYLE JOHN

I, Mr Joseph Kyle John, date of birth [REDACTED] formerly of Flat 6 Grenfell Tower, where I lived with my ex-partner, Leanne Jackson Le-Blanc, and our son, [REDACTED] will say as follows:

1. I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and for this statement to be published on the Inquiry's web site.
2. I make this statement in relation to Phase II of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The statements I make are from my own knowledge or belief, unless otherwise stated. If not from my own knowledge, I will identify the source.
3. There is now produced and shown to me and marked 'Exhibit JKJ2', which encloses evidence in support of this statement.
4. I refer you also to my first witness statement filed in Phase I of this Inquiry dated 13 April 2018 (IWS0000062), which sets out my experience of the night of the fire on 14 June 2017.

BACKGROUND

5. I moved from Trinidad to the UK in March 2016, for the birth of my son, [REDACTED]. Initially, I stayed in Hospital with my ex-partner, Leanne, who was physically disabled and confined to a wheelchair, as she had fallen down the stairs and badly

injured her back whilst pregnant. Our son, [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED] We stayed in the Hospital for a further two weeks after his birth, as Leanne was too unwell to return home immediately.

6. When we left the Hospital, we were informed by RBKC that we had to move with [REDACTED] back into Leanne's bedsit at [REDACTED] Winchester House, even though it was completely unsuitable for her needs as a disabled person, as it was on the sixth floor with no lift. I was Leanne's full time Carer and had to carry her up and down the stairs. We complained to RBKC that [REDACTED] Winchester House was unsuitable for our needs.
7. In May 2016, RBKC moved us to [REDACTED] Lonsdale House, a two bedroom flat on the fifth floor. It was still completely unsuitable for our needs, as Leanne's wheelchair could not fit into the lift, or through the bedroom or bathroom doors inside the flat. We complained to RBKC that the property was unsuitable, but RBKC did not care and we were left there for almost a year. Upon moving into the flat, our Housing Officer only checked that the wheelchair could get into the lift and through the main entrance door to the building. Leanne's wheelchair would only just fit through the main door to the building, and into the lifts, but it was a tight fit and the wheelchair would scrape the sides of the lift. Leanne could not access or leave [REDACTED] Lonsdale House without assistance. The wheelchair could not get through the bedroom, toilet, bathroom or kitchen doors inside the flat, which meant that Leanne often had to use a commode. I would have to help Leanne to get out of the wheelchair and carry her through the doors inside the flat, so that she could use the bathroom, or access the bedroom or kitchen.

FLAT 6 GRENFELL TOWER

8. In April 2017, RBKC forced us to accept Flat 6 Grenfell Tower, a two bedroom flat on the second floor. Flat 6 was the only flat on the second floor, next to the boxing gym. We were told by RBKC that if we did not accept Flat 6 Grenfell Tower, they would discharge their housing duty towards us and we would face homelessness, so we felt that we had no choice but to accept the accommodation. Leanne previously

had a 'lifetime' secure tenancy of [REDACTED] Winchester House with RBKC, but when we were moved to Flat 6, Grenfell Tower, it was changed to a 5 year tenancy with RBKC, which we thought was unfair.

9. Leanne's brother, Mr Karim El-Ansari, occasionally stayed with us in Flat 6, but he did not live with us.

10. I was not a member of any of the residents' groups at Grenfell Tower.

DISABLED ACCESS

11. RBKC were fully aware of Leanne's disability before we moved into Flat 6, as Leanne had been their tenant for several years. RBKC knew she was in a wheelchair and basically bedridden and that we had a young baby. RBKC knew that I was Leanne and [REDACTED]'s primary carer. Despite knowing the extent of Leanne's disability, we were forced by RBKC to accept Flat 6, Grenfell Tower, when it was not suitable for our needs. RBKC said Flat 6 was suitable for disabled people, but it was not. The Housing Officer checked the inside of Flat 6, before we moved in, and the Housing Officer noticed that the wheelchair could not get through the bedroom, toilet, bathroom or kitchen doors inside the flat. We were told we had to accept the flat anyway, or RBKC would discharge their housing duty towards us, and we would be at risk of homelessness. Leanne therefore often had to use a commode, as she could not access the bathroom in her wheelchair. I would have to help Leanne to get out of the wheelchair and carry her through the doors inside the flat, so that she could use the bathroom, or access the bedroom or kitchen.

COMPLAINTS TO RBKC

12. We complained to RBKC and our Housing Officer on a weekly basis, by email and by phone, about the unsuitability of Flat 6 Grenfell Tower for a disabled person, but they did not care and we were not offered any support, or any alternative accommodation. We also complained about the issues with the electrics in Grenfell Tower and draughty windows in Flat 6. We would also regularly go into the office next to Grenfell Tower to see our Housing Officer and make complaints in person. RBKC

never did anything about our consistent complaints. There were always delays and let downs. RBKC did not care about us. I feel that nothing has changed with RBKC, that they are still the same now and do not care about us.

13. We made further complaints about the unsuitability of Flat 6 to the community mental health team, our social worker and physiotherapist. I understand that they also complained to RBKC on our behalf.

FIRE SAFETY / PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN ('PEEP')

14. Upon moving into Grenfell Tower, no one ever mentioned a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. We were not given any fire safety advice the entire time that we lived in Grenfell Tower. I was not aware of what I should do in the event of a fire at Grenfell Tower. Given how difficult it was for Leanne to get around Flat 6 and to get into and out of Grenfell Tower independently in her wheelchair, I was surprised that no plan was made by RBKC specifically for Leanne and how she would escape the building, in the event of an emergency.
15. I never heard any fire alarms go off when I lived in Grenfell Tower. I used to cook in Flat 6 a lot and the smoke detector never went off. In the flat I am living in at the moment, the smoke alarm goes off all the time when I am cooking.
16. We received a letter from RBKC, stating that they were going to do a fire safety assessment, in or around May 2017. There was a fire engine downstairs just after we received the letter, which I assume had something to do with the assessment. We did not hear anything further about the assessment.

GAS PIPES

17. We received a further letter from RBKC in or around May 2017, about the gas pipes in the building. RBKC wanted to run the gas pipes through our flat and the building. We were not happy about this, as we were worried that it would not be safe to have gas pipes running through our flat. Many other residents of Grenfell Tower were also not happy about RBKC's proposal concerning the gas pipes.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

18. There were problems with the electrics in Grenfell Tower. The outside of the building was nice, but on the inside, I do not think that they did a proper job. Newly installed electrics were mixed with old electrics. There were plenty of power shortages in Grenfell Tower; the lights and electrics would dim, or go out completely for a short period of time. The electrical sockets in our flat did not work properly, so we tried not to use the plugs, particularly with our young son [REDACTED] being there. We thought that the electrics were a fire and health and safety risk. We complained to RBKC by email about the electrics and they agreed that they needed to be fixed, but as usual, nothing was ever done.

LIFTS

19. We only lived in Grenfell Tower for around two months before the fire, but in that time, the lifts in the tower broke down twice.

WINDOWS

20. There were strong draughts that would come through some of the windows in Flat 6. We thought the windows were not sealed properly. I would put tape around the inside of the windows and towels at the bottom of the windows and the doors, to stop the draughts, particularly in my little boy [REDACTED]'s bedroom. Leanne complained to our housing officer at RBKC about the draughty windows, but as usual, nothing was done.

FIRE AT GRENFELL TOWER ON 14 JUNE 2017

21. I will not in this statement go into detail about my experience of the night of the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, as I described this in detail in my first witness statement filed in Phase I of this Inquiry, dated 13 April 2018 (IWS0000062).

22. I called 999 when I smelt smoke, and we were told to stay put in our flat. We stayed in our flat for 30 minutes, but then I could see in the reflection of a car outside our flat that the fire had got out of control. I knew we had to escape and that I had to get my family out. We escaped through the window of the flat. I handed [REDACTED] out first, to

a complete stranger. I then went back to get Leanne and carry her out, because she is disabled. I had to carry Leanne over a high gate, which was difficult. Leanne's brother was not staying with us on the night of the fire

23. I have a lot of injuries from the night of the fire. I have soft tissue damage to my lower back. I have problems with my right knee and I now find it difficult to deal with lots of stairs. I have also developed depression, anxiety and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ('PTSD'), due to my experience of the fire. I exhibit the relevant medical evidence at Exhibit JKJ2.

24. I was shocked and traumatised after escaping the fire. I attempted to go back into the building to help others. I helped fire fighters to put up a ladder on the building to try and rescue some people that were still stuck up there. The ladder was too short. It was horrible.

TOXICITY

25. After we had escaped, we sat outside Grenfell Tower, as there was nowhere else to go. I was worried as there was toxic smoke and burnt plastic bits flying all over the place and I thought that the building was going to fall down. Police officers pushed us back away from the building. The smoke smelt like burning tyres, and there was an awful rotten smell in the air as well. All different types of black plastic things were coming off from the building and flying all over the place. It was hot. There was panicking, the building was moving and the Police pushed me back towards Latimer Road Tube Station.

26. We had all inhaled smoke from the fire. [REDACTED] was a small baby and had inhaled smoke from the fire and was coughing. [REDACTED] has since developed breathing problems and asthma, which are still being tested. I think he developed these issues as a result of inhaling toxic smoke from the fire.

MEDICAL TREATMENT AT THE SCENE

27. Medical help was available at the scene on the night of the fire. From memory, I think that Leanne and [REDACTED] had a medical check-up at the scene, and they were then taken to Hospital, at around 6:00am to 7:00am.

28. I was in shock and pain. I did not receive a medical check-up at the scene. Leanne told me that I was not entitled to medical help, because I was not from the UK and did not have the right paperwork. I did not go to Hospital straight after escaping the fire, but I went a couple of weeks later, as I needed medical treatment for the injuries I had sustained on the night of the fire.

FOOD, SHELTER AND CLOTHING

29. After escaping the fire, we went to Latimer Church and stayed there. The Church was packed with lots of people. It was mainly the Church and local community that were helping survivors immediately after the fire; filling up the Church with clothes and food and some people even donated money. Church volunteers and the local community helped us. They gave us clothes, food and water. One lady gave me a blanket to keep [REDACTED] warm, as well as nappies and wipes. She said that her house was open to us, if we wanted to come and stay warm. There was also a charity organisation that was helping survivors, but I cannot remember their name.

30. Leanne's sister came to Grenfell Tower at around 7:00am on 15 June 2017, and later that morning Leanne and [REDACTED] went back to stay at Leanne's sister's house. I did not go with them, because it would be too cramped; Leanne's sister has a husband and two children and she only has a small place.

31. RBKC were doing nothing to help after the fire. RBKC did not know who the survivors were; they just used all the community volunteers to do their work. RBKC had no idea what was going on and did not help anyone. I relied completely on the Church volunteers and local community for help and support.

IDENTIFYING SURVIVORS

32. There was no way to find people after the fire; there were people everywhere and I could not tell who was who. RBKC did not have a proper list to identify people; they had a plan of the flats in Grenfell Tower, but it was the wrong plan; it was an old plan of Grenfell Tower from prior to the refurbishment, so RBKC did not know which flat was which. There was a lot of confusion in trying to identifying people. I think RBKC failed to do their job, as they should have made sure that an accurate plan of Grenfell Tower was available and to help make a list of those people that had survived the fire and those that were missing. RBKC did not even know who was missing after the fire; it was only through the work of community volunteers that a list of missing people was put together.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AFTER THE FIRE

Latimer Church (immediately after the fire)

33. I stayed at Latimer Church for a few days after the fire. If I was not at the Church, I was walking the streets. I slept at night on the floor of the Church; although I was up most of the time, as I was still in pain and emotional.

Leanne's Sister's House, Hayes (June 2017 to July 2017)

34. From the best of my memory, I think I joined Leanne at her sister's house in Hayes, on or around 18 June 2017. Leanne's sister has two children and a husband, so it was not really suitable for us to stay; the house was very cramped. However we had nowhere else to go. We all stayed with Leanne's sister for around a week. I would travel from Hayes every day to take [REDACTED] to and pick him up from the Portobello Day Care Nursery.

Copthorne Tara Hotel, Kensington (July 2017 to September 2017)

35. Leanne was then given a one bed room by RBKC in the Copthorne Tara Hotel in Kensington. My relationship with Leanne had sadly begun to break down after the fire, and Leanne wanted some space, so [REDACTED] and I stayed living at her sister's house, whilst Leanne moved into the Hotel.

36. I moved into Leanne's Hotel room with [REDACTED] around the end of July 2017. Leanne's brother would also sometimes come and stay with us in the Hotel room. We complained to RBKC that we only had a one bed room in the Hotel and that it was too cramped for all of us. This was very stressful.
37. Our relationship was continuing to break down in the small Hotel room, and I really needed my own room. I asked RBKC for a separate Hotel room, but they did not help or advise me in relation to obtaining my own room.
38. Leanne's brother was given a separate room in the Hotel, even though he had not been living at Grenfell Tower and was not there on the night of the fire. I did not think that it was fair that he had been given his own room before [REDACTED] and me.
39. It took a while for me to get my own room in a Hotel. Leanne had told me I was not entitled to accommodation, because I did not have any paperwork. RBKC did not advise or help me in relation to obtaining my own room. It was only through the community volunteers that I found out I was entitled to my own room in a Hotel. Community and charity volunteers helped to push RBKC for [REDACTED] and I to get our own room in a Hotel; people like Nadia, Yousef, Serena, Remi and Faris, who have been a fantastic source of support for me. They also helped make sure the room was near Portobello Day Care Nursery, because I was [REDACTED]'s main carer and took him to nursery. I did finally get my own room provided by RBKC, but I only got my own Hotel room because of the assistance of volunteers, I was not supported in the process by RBKC.

Holiday Inn, Kensington (September 2017 to May 2018)

40. In or around September 2017, I was finally given by RBKC my own one bed room in the Holiday Inn, Kensington, where I stayed with [REDACTED]. My relationship with Leanne had sadly broken down by this point.

41. In November 2017, Leanne's mother, who was born in the UK but living in Trinidad, came to the UK to help and support us. Leanne's mother was given her own Hotel room and a £300 per week financial allowance straight away by RBKC.
42. In January 2018, my mother came to the UK from Trinidad with my eldest son, [REDACTED] (date of birth [REDACTED]), to help support us, as we were really struggling. My mother is [REDACTED]'s primary carer, which is why she brought him with her. My mother was not given her own Hotel room or a financial allowance by RBKC. I spent weeks and weeks complaining to RBKC that they were treating my mother unfavourably, and that she should also have her own Hotel room and financial allowance, as she had come to support us. RBKC refused. Leanne's mother was treated differently than my mother by RBKC, possibly because Leanne's mother was born in the UK, whereas my mother was born in Trinidad.
43. My mother helped me to look after [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and to assist with chores. My mother also helped Leanne, when she was looking after [REDACTED]. I needed space to try and relax, as I was still very unwell and needed time to recover from the trauma of my experience of the fire.
44. I therefore had to share my one bed Hotel room with my mother, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Leanne and I shared [REDACTED]'s care, but I was his primary carer. I complained to my care worker and housing officer at RBKC that the room was too cramped. I told RBKC it was unfair that Leanne's mother was given her own Hotel room and financial assistance, but that my mother received nothing, and I had her and the two children living with me in a one bed Hotel room.
45. In March 2018, after Leanne complained on my behalf to RBKC, my mother was finally given her own Hotel room by RBKC, but no financial assistance. I remained living in my Hotel room with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. RBKC would not pay for [REDACTED] to attend [REDACTED]'s nursery, which I thought was unfair as they are both my children, so I had to pay [REDACTED]'s nursery fees personally. I had to financially support my mother and [REDACTED], even though they had moved to the Hotel to support me.

46. I was under enormous strain at this time, both financially and emotionally. I was suffering from severe anxiety, depression and PTSD, and had been sharing a cramped one bed Hotel room for nearly a year. I complained repeatedly to RBKC that they could not leave me and my family in a Hotel and that we needed more suitable accommodation.

17 Faraday Road, W10 (May 2018 to November 2018)

47. In May 2018, I accepted temporary accommodation at 17 Faraday Road, W10, a two bedroom flat. I was told by RBKC that I could accept this as permanent accommodation. I think RBKC made this promise towards me, as it was a nice flat, and they wanted me to leave Hotel accommodation. I told RBKC upon accepting the flat that I wanted it to be permanent accommodation. I moved into the flat with my mother and [REDACTED] lived primarily with Leanne at this point.

48. 17 Faraday Road was on the first floor, with a lift, and it had two bedrooms, so it was more spacious and I liked it. I was happy there.

49. In July 2018, I had to make the sad and hard decision for my mother and [REDACTED] to go back to Trinidad, because I could not cope financially supporting them, [REDACTED] and me, and I was not receiving enough help from RBKC. I relied heavily on my mother for emotional support, as I still struggle from severe depression, anxiety and PTSD, and my health has worsened since she left.

50. I wanted to take 17 Faraday Road permanently and I told RBKC. However, RBKC said that it was privately rented accommodation and the owner wanted the property back, so I was forced out of it on short notice. RBKC broke their original promise to me, that they had made when I initially moved into the accommodation, that I could live there permanently. I was only given one week's notice that I had to leave the property, so I did not have much time to think about where I could move next.

[REDACTED] W10 (November 2018 to Present)

51. In or around November 2018, RBKC offered me alternative, temporary accommodation at [REDACTED] W10, a two bedroom flat. This accommodation is completely unsuitable for me and I did not want to accept it, but I was forced to do so by RBKC at short notice. I wanted to remain living at 17 Faraday Road, but instead RBKC forced me to accept [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was completely unfurnished and was not habitable; there were no blinds, no beds and no curtains. I was forced out of a comfortable property and made to accept somewhere without any basic needs. I no longer had the keys to 17 Faraday Road, only the keys to [REDACTED] which was not habitable. I sofa surfed for a while, waiting for this to happen. I think it took around three to four weeks before the property was made habitable and I could move into the property. It took weeks for me to get a sofa and blinds from RBKC.

52. I met my new girlfriend and our son, [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED]

53. The property is completely unsuitable for our needs. I have complained repeatedly to RBKC that the property is unsuitable, but they have left me in the property. The property is on a main road, which is dangerous for the children. The property has a terrace, but it is subject to disrepair and covered in pigeon excrement, so it cannot be used. The property is in a terrible condition. It is damp, mainly in the first bedroom. There is a leak in the second bedroom. There is also a leak in the bathroom near the toilet. The property absolutely stinks; I think it is something to do with an issue with the plumbing. The lights do not work properly either; they are temperamental and only half of them work. The lights in the sitting room do not work at all. The lights that do work only sometimes turn on, or they come on but are really dim.

54. [REDACTED] is accessed via a long and steep flight of stairs. I had told RBKC before they offered me the property that I did not want to live in accommodation which is not on the ground floor, as my experience of the Grenfell Tower fire means that my PTSD is triggered from living up high. I also hurt my knee escaping the fire, which means I find walking up long and steep flights of stairs painful. I want to feel safe, and to have the time and space to be able to escape my flat in case of a fire. I do

not want to go through Grenfell ever again in my life. I want to be housed on the ground floor, so that we can get out if there is a fire.

55. RBKC have not made any post fire assessment of my housing needs based upon my disability. The adult disability team are not involved with my case at all.

56. I feel lost right now. I am depressed, anxious and concerned for my family's future. The stress of living for so long in unsettled, temporary accommodation means that I cannot focus on recovering from my anxiety, depression or PTSD. I continue to complain to RBKC that [REDACTED] is not suitable for me and that I require permanent, ground floor accommodation with three bedrooms, so that I can live with my three sons, [REDACTED] but RBKC ignore me. RBKC are aware that [REDACTED] will be coming to live with me in the UK. RBKC have completely failed me. I feel they discriminate against me because I was not born in the UK and because I am black. RBKC have mistreated me constantly. I just want to be treated fairly and given the same respect and support offered to other survivors of the fire, not left in unsuitable, temporary accommodation, which is in a poor condition.

MEDICAL TREATMENT AFTER THE FIRE

57. I was diagnosed as suffering from severe depression, panic attacks, anxiety and PTSD as a result of my experiences on the night of the fire. I have insomnia and have flashbacks and nightmares about the fire. My conditions have worsened because of the stress I have been under since the fire.

58. I have been receiving therapy, to help manage my severe depression, panic attacks, anxiety and PTSD. I have exhibited relevant medical evidence at Exhibit JKJ2. I initially received therapy from the NHS, which started in or around September 2017. However, in January 2018, my former Solicitor helped to sign me up to a private therapist at Corpore, so I stopped having therapy from the NHS. The therapy I received from Corpore was paid for by RBKC. I was not that happy about this, because I do not trust anything associated with RBKC. My therapist at Corpore, Sue Balnaves, was fantastic when I saw her, but I was not getting the support from

Corpore when I needed it. It could be weeks or months between my therapy sessions and without any contact from Corpore, so in December 2019, I decided to go back to receive therapy from the NHS. I am much happier now I am receiving therapy from the NHS, because it is not linked to RBKC.

59. I have also received physiotherapy from Corpore to assist with my injured knee and lower back. My physiotherapy regarding my back and knee started at the end of 2017. It initially lasted through to August 2018, when it stopped for a brief period, as I was unable to attend all of the appointments, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. My physiotherapy sessions started again in early 2019 and are ongoing. I am still in pain, so I find it difficult to do the exercises. I am due to have a scan soon, to find out the source of the pain.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AFTER THE FIRE

60. I lost everything I owned in the Grenfell Tower fire, and only escaped with the clothes on my back. After the fire, I was not provided with any immediate financial support by RBKC. I was provided with some limited financial support from charities; the Christian Tabernacle Church, Rugby Portobello Trust, the Evening Standard and the Red Cross.
61. After the fire, I did not receive any financial assistance from RBKC. I had to rely on the financial assistance that RBKC gave to Leanne. Leanne's brother was classed by RBKC as 'living' at Grenfell Tower, even though he had only stayed with us occasionally; so he was provided with financial assistance from RBKC. I thought it was very unfair that I was not provided with any financial assistance by RBKC, when Leanne's brother was provided with assistance. I was completely financially dependent on Leanne, and any money I received from charities.
62. I complained many times to RBKC, with the help of charity and community volunteers, that I was not receiving any financial assistance. In around January / February 2018, I finally started receiving my own food allowance payments from RBKC.

63. RBKC paid for [REDACTED] to attend Portobello Day Care Nursery, and would arrange taxis to use to take [REDACTED] to nursery. However, RBKC would not pay for nursery for my other son, [REDACTED]. I think this is because [REDACTED] was born in the UK, but [REDACTED] was born in Trinidad. I think that is very unfair and discriminatory, as they are both my children.

64. I paid for [REDACTED] to attend Portobello Day Care Nursery three times a week. This cost me £1,000 a month. I also had to financially support my mother, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It was a real struggle. I had no savings. I used all of the financial assistance I received from charities and my food allowance from RBKC on supporting my family, including putting [REDACTED] into nursery.

EMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE BENEFIT SITUATION

65. Prior to the Grenfell Tower fire, I used to work as a Chef. Shortly after the fire, I did a food hygiene course, to try and set up my own food business as a Chef and get back on my feet to support my family. I had no help or support from RBKC, and I relied upon the financial assistance I received from charities to help purchase the equipment for my business and pay for a spot on the Portobello Market, and at the Notting Hill Carnival.

66. However, in November 2017, [REDACTED] whilst working at the food stall, as the stress was too much for me, given my depression, anxiety and PTSD. I was pushing myself too hard. Unfortunately, at the end of December 2018, I realised it was too much for me and that I had to give up my business.

67. I later applied to the Princes' Trust, for a self-employment enterprise scheme and I started a 12 month course with them. After you complete the course, they help you to get a shop and support the business, to keep it going. However, I was unable to complete the course, as I was suffering from stress, anxiety, depression and PTSD, from my experience of the Grenfell Tower fire, and the heat in the kitchens triggered flashbacks of the fire.

68. I later did a short hospitality course with the Green King Company and they offered me a role as a Chef Team Leader. I started working there in April 2019, but after my experience of the Grenfell Tower fire, I would have [REDACTED] at work and I could not focus on tasks. I kept burning myself on the oil and the hot plates. Dealing with the fire and heat in kitchens at work brought back memories of the Grenfell Tower fire and the aftermath. I suffer from nightmares and flashbacks about the fire, heat and being burnt.

69. [REDACTED] I am unable to work, due to the trauma and injuries I sustained on the night of the Grenfell Tower fire. Being reliant on welfare benefits has made me more depressed.

70. RBKC have given me no support or assistance at all in relation to my employment situation, or how to claim welfare benefits. Any support I have received has come from charities and community volunteers.

THE GRENFELL FUND

71. I was told that after the Grenfell Tower fire, the government had promised that a fund would be set up for survivors' use to pay for things they may need after the fire, such as for legal advice. This fund has never been set up. Due to the stress of experiencing the Grenfell Tower fire, my relationship with Leanne broke down and there are ongoing [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] In addition, I have had to pay for a solicitor to advise and assist me concerning my immigration situation after Grenfell. I have had to pay for this advice from the food allowance I have received from RBKC and the financial assistance I received from charities. If the government fund had been set up as promised, I may have been able to access the fund to obtain the legal advice I required after Grenfell, rather than depleting my already limited finances.

ASSISTANCE FROM RBKC

72. The way I have been treated by RBKC since the fire is disgusting. I think RBKC are a disgrace. I have not been provided with any proper support or assistance from RBKC. I feel like I am discriminated against by RBKC because I was not born in the UK, and I am not treated in the same way as other survivors. My family and I have suffered directly under their hands.
73. I raised an official complaint with RBKC regarding their treatment of me at the end of December 2018. At the first meeting I had with RBKC as a result of my complaint, I felt targeted. I did not have anyone present at the meeting to support me. RBKC's behaviour towards me at the meeting was rude and unprofessional. I burst into tears at the meeting.
74. At a second meeting I had with RBKC to deal with my complaint, I made sure that I had a volunteer support worker attend the meeting with me. RBKC's behaviour towards me was more respectful, as there was a support worker present. At the meeting, RBKC accepted that other survivors had been treated differently and housed quicker than me, but they said that they could not offer me any more support.
75. RBKC do not want to support me; they do not want to help me get myself better, or for my family be settled in good quality, permanent accommodation. The support that survivors of the fire can access is not properly signposted, so many survivors, myself included, miss out on the support they are entitled to, and we are reliant on community volunteers and charities for assistance. RBKC continue to put pressure onto me to accept poor quality permanent accommodation, which is completely unsuitable for my needs, just so that it looks like they have done their job and permanently rehoused another survivor of the fire.

HOUSING FILE

76. I have received my housing file from RBKC, but it is clearly incomplete, as there are no records of any of the numerous complaints that I have made to RBKC over the years.

CONCLUSION

77. I want justice from the Inquiry, for those that died in the fire and for those, like me, that are still suffering. The corporate core participants in the Inquiry have money, which they use to hide their true faces. I want to look them in the eye in the Inquiry, so that they realise the heartbreak they have caused. I want those that are responsible for the Grenfell Tower fire to go to prison.

78. The government's promise was to permanently rehouse the survivors of the fire within a year of the fire, in suitable housing. This promise has been broken. I am still living in poor quality, unsuitable temporary accommodation, nearly 3 years after the fire. I have been fighting for so long since the fire for everything; my children, my home, my financial stability. I just want to be settled with my family in good quality, permanent accommodation, so that I can focus on getting my life and health back together.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Name: JOSEPH JOHN

Signed: Joseph John

Date: 27/02/2020