

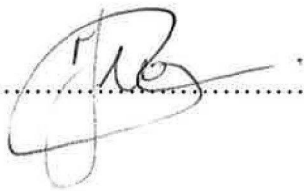
Witness Statement of: Jacqueline Haynes
No. of statement: 2
Exhibits: 0
Date of statement: 06.03.2020

GRENFELL TOWER PUBLIC INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE HAYNES

This statement is a factual statement prepared for the Grenfell Tower Inquiry dealing with Modules 3 and 4 in Phase 2 only. It does not, and is not intended to set out my experiences on the night of the fire, or the impact that these events and the aftermath have had on me (and my family).

Signed



I, **JACQUELINE HAYNES**, will say as follows:

1. I make this statement for the purposes of Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry. This statement is an account of my personal experience of living in Lancaster West Estate and of dealing with the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation ('TMO') and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council ('RBKC').
2. This statement will also provide a brief account of my experience in the aftermath of the fire ('the fire') at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.
3. I provided a Witness Statement to the Inquiry dated 16 May 2018 (Unique ID: **IWS00000127**) for the purpose of Phase 1.

Background

4. I live in Flat [REDACTED] of Hurstway Walk, on the Lancaster West Estate. My family moved into the flat in the 1970s when I was 8 years old. My mother and father were the leaseholders. I lived in the flat with my parents until about 1996 when I moved to Westbourne Park, however, it was like I never really left as my parents still lived in the flat on Hurstway Walk. I was incredibly close to them and visited very often. When my mother died in 2001, I took over her role in the family and would be at the flat at least 3-4 days a week. In 2015, I moved back to the flat permanently.
5. Throughout my career I have worked in social housing, project development, youth work, social work and hospital discharge. In the late 1990s I was employed as a Team Leader for residential social services and later with the Social Work team based at Thorpe Close. I also worked for Paddington Churches Housing Association as an Assessment and Support Coordinator, for Notting Hill Housing Trust developing links between housing and social services in line with the implementation of the Community Care Act. Following this, I worked with Hospital Discharge, Camden Hospitals, to combat readmissions and enforce discharge fees when necessary.
6. I have not been able to go back to paid employment since the fire owing to the unplanned responsibilities on the Estate that ensued as a result of the fire. I had been running self-funding projects in North Paddington for that local community. I am now stretched to capacity as I refused to give up supporting people in need and I was utterly determined that the fire and its repercussions would not filter through to another community by the loss of my existing projects as enough damage had been done to the individuals in need by the incident of the fire and its root causes.
7. I was not involved with the Lancaster West Residents Association before the fire. When my family moved to the Estate the TMO had not yet been created. When it was established in the late- 1990s, and it took over managing council properties standards got a lot worse, and even though they promoted the TMO as a membership organisation and a way for people to get involved with improving their estates, there was no scope for residents to do anything. I believe my parents were members of the TMO. Being

a member was not beneficial. It was not run for the members so we did not want to be a part of it. The TMO was presented as separate from RBKC but we always saw them as the same thing.

8. After my father died in 2012, my brothers, Mark and Chris, and I inherited the leasehold of the flat in Hurstway Walk. In 2015 I moved back to Hurstway Walk with my daughter to live with my brother, Mark. Nothing had changed for the residents in the time I lived off the Estate, in fact, things were slowly deteriorating. It was becoming normal to not get any services from the TMO, it was only worth contacting them if you were prepared for a lot of hassle. They were becoming more confident in their neglect. If I needed to make a complaint I would go straight to Roger Black (Executive of Housing at RBKC and on the TMO Programme Board) because the complaints system was designed to keep residents at arm's length. They were actively keeping people away with the complaints procedure that was enacted.

Health and Safety Complaints

9. In 2017, we had a month of torrential rain which would leak straight through into our property. The water was flooding into the fuse cupboard, which my brother was very worried about, so he covered the fuse box with plastic sheets to protect it from the water. I do not know if any other residents complained about this but as soon as it started leaking I reported it to the TMO, who gave me a reference number. My brother, Chris, had a flat in [REDACTED] so we were able to use his flat to eat.
10. As well as reporting to the TMO I also wrote to Roger Black and sent him videos of the water leaking into our property. He responded and agreed that something needed to be done. The TMO put scaffolding up and, in the end, managed to stop the leak. I knew they would once he replied. I knew from my previous experience that they would only act if I went directly to him.
11. In 2019, RBKC offered a free flat refurbishment to everyone in the Walkways, although it was not well advertised so not many knew about it. When the workers came to carry out the refurbishment they noticed that two of the asbestos panels in my house, in the

ceilings of the bathroom and living room, were damaged or 'dimpled'. They removed these panels before continuing with the rest of the work. Any undamaged panels were not removed.

12. After the fire a lot of asbestos was removed from Grenfell Tower. At first it was stored in the garage area under the Walkways. This was completely unacceptable and dangerous for those of us that live in the Walkways, as the garage area is open and immediately below the Walkway flats. It was only moved when we complained to RBKC and it took several weeks to move it all.

Fire Safety Systems

13. The communal doors in the Walkways were not installed until the 1980s, before that the Walkways were free to walk through, from end to end, for residents and non-residents alike. The idea was that installing the doors would stop criminals escaping from the police by running through the Walkways. There were two types of doors – the external doors that allowed access into the Walkways and internal doors between the different sections of the Walkways. I do not think the external doors were fire doors but the internal doors may well have been.
14. I did not see many fire safety signs before the fire. I only remember 'no ball games' signs and 'fire exit' signs, but very few giving advice on what to do in a fire. There was no emergency lighting, when the lights broke it would be pitch black. We had a smoke alarm in the flat because we installed it but I think there were some installed when we moved in. I did not question these things because I thought the law made sure that the authorities were monitoring the situation and doing the right thing. It is such a massive issue that it was never left to us to monitor or police. We did not know what was supposed to be there and what was not. We thought that people in positions of power would be the ones ensuring that we were safe. Now, around Lancaster West Estate there are a lot of fire safety signs that seem to be a reaction to the fire. We know the processes behind them are still terrible.

Fire Safety Inspections

15. While I have been living on the Lancaster West Estate I have never seen any fire safety checks or inspections take place.

Fire Safety Advice

16. I had no knowledge of any fire safety advice from the TMO. Before the Grenfell Tower fire, if there had been a fire I would have first called the fire brigade. I would probably have stayed in my flat unless the fire was in the flat or next door, I would not want to leave. We have seen fires in the tower before, they would just burn out one flat and then go out.

Fire Safety Complaints

17. We did not make complaints about fire safety because I was not informed enough about the subject to feel I could make a complaint. I also knew it would be a headache to do so because I was familiar with the complaints procedure. If you complained to the TMO you were given a reference number and, if you did not constantly chase-up your complaint, you would not hear about it again. This fostered an attitude on the estate of 'there is no point telling them' so we fixed our own problems and doing things for ourselves. This was especially the case among the leaseholders.
18. In February 2020 RBKC created a show flat in the Walkways with new windows that they were planning to install throughout the Estate. Residents were very concerned that the windows were robust, not because of the annoyance of broken windows, but because we knew that they would never be fixed unless we did it ourselves.

Module 4

The Night of the Fire

19. On the night of the 13 June 2017, at about midnight my brother, Mark, told me that there was a fire at the Tower so we went out to see what was happening. I asked my

daughter, who was 14 at the time, if she wanted to come outside with me as I was going to see the fire. She said she was too tired and was going to sleep. I am so glad that she did not come out with me as it turned out to be incredibly distressing and I would not have wanted her to experience that.

20. After the fire started there were a lot of people outside the tower and many were very upset. People were asking me 'what are we going to do?' Someone on Hurstway Walk opened their doors for old people to shelter inside. Only the bottoms of the Walkways, furthest away from the tower, were closed at this point - although later that day, at about midday, the Walkways would be closed off and evacuated.
21. A large group of residents had gathered on the ramp on the open green space by Whitchurch road and Hurstway Walk. This is where people gathered to watch the Tower. There was no safeguarding, people were just running around not knowing what to do. This was at about 1am and people were just about managing to hold it together at this point. I remember my friend, Sammy, being on the phone to his friend, Steve Power, who was in the Tower. Sammy was pleading with Steve to leave the tower, I remember him screaming "why take the chance?" down the phone.
22. The next day I went to St Clements Church to make sure people were getting what they needed. Outside there were volunteers coming from all over the country. Inside the church was crazy – if you were in a state you did not want to be there. People wanted to feel together. Some people could go to friends and some to family but not all had those options. I was not based at a relief centre and I did not feel like a volunteer – this was about us as a community and our survival. There were probably more people gathered outside than inside the church. The Tower loomed over us and we felt we could not leave the Tower. This is where we watched from and stayed there for three days.
23. At one point during the night of the fire I saw Joe Delaney out in the street. He was desperately trying to get someone from the TMO and RBKC to come down and do something. I do not know if he managed to get anyone from the TMO to come down but I do not remember seeing anyone from the TMO that night. My focus was the

people on the Estate. It was not coordinated at all, the community's response was spontaneous from the beginning, and everyone just kicked into action. After those three days it became a lot more organised but in the first three days following the fire I was just dealing with problems as they arose. Volunteers were arriving from all over London, and eventually the country, to help us. The volunteers helped us in the way that we would have wanted to be treated, rather than judging us, like it sometimes felt was happening in the relief centres. We felt we had the support of the nation.

Basic Provisions

24. By the 17 June 2017 the community centres had been set up. This was a total example of mismanagement. The TMO threw money at organising and did not manage to monitor what was happening. People were coming in from other parts of London for money and food – there was no coordination. There were liars who were given money because there was no way to check their story. I do not think a lot of the money that was donated to community organisations found its way to those genuinely and immediately affected by the fire – the Lancaster West Residents. At the Rugby Club a resident was told that the £500 for her and her son had already been collected and they had no more to give her. She was adamant that neither she nor her son had already collected the money from RBKC.
25. I would take residents to the relief centres and help them get what they needed. I found the Red Cross Centre at the Westway Sports Centre was more welcoming than the Rugby Portobello Club and more organised than any of the other centres. It generally had what I needed to help people so I would generally go there if I needed something. The other centres often seemed 'smash and grab' with people scrambling for what they needed.
26. I went to the Westway on the first day it was open. It was really just a big hall, people were sleeping on the floor. There were clothes and food to take and people were giving out money. They had huge boxes of money with security and police. It was like they were saying to us: 'we are going to give you this money but we do not trust you'. They gave everyone £500 when the Westway first opened, and then another £250 about a

week later. There were opportunities to get more but you had to know which centre to be at and when. People were going round the centres and getting multiple £250 payments. This was because the process was not organised at all – and they did not know who was in the Tower anyway. Approximately 2 weeks after the fire RBKC announced that they were giving £5,000 to each household regardless of how many people are living in the house.

27. I would usually meet my daughter after school and go with her to at the Westway so that she could have a sandwich there, that's all my family used it for. I would take a lot of other people to the Westway though, and I would help them get what they needed because they often would not know what to do. We would sometimes get involved in vulnerable people being dumped in undesirable places. Substance abusers had fallen out of their routines and were struggling with the change in circumstances. Others were moved out of London and away from their support networks. I saw myself as one of a group of soldiers who were all working on the ground to protect and help these vulnerable people. As the night went on, I would hear of other people who were doing similar things that I was to help people. We came together as that community force when we needed to. With our different skills and specialisms – for example Joe Delaney had an encyclopaedic knowledge of RBKC processes and history.

28. We soon realised that the TMO and RBKC did not have control of the situation so we needed to step in. When the famous singer, Adele Adkins, donated to the cause she gave money to a group of local people who volunteered at the Curve – they organised for clothes, shoes and other items that people needed for people in need. I knew I could take people to them at the storage building and they would be treated properly. This was the community working for itself without the TMO or RBKC.

Food and Drink

29. People were giving out whatever food they had. The food in the relief centres was generally sandwiches, crisps and other snacks to eat there but they also had food to take, such as cans and cereals. Once the Curve was set up as a relief centre it provided a place for people to eat more substantial food.

Needs of Specific Groups

30. Access to the RBKC Grenfell support did not mean access to psychological support. Initially, Key Workers lacked the authority or position to make decisions or authorise any real actions. They were basically support workers, just there to be there. If they wanted to do anything that costed money they would have needed approval - it was a support placebo and not very useful. They had volunteer [REDACTED] workers which worried me as we did not know who they were – there was no safeguarding. After concerns were expressed the plan was changed and properly trained [REDACTED] workers were used instead, however, no one I knew got anything helpful from them at this time.

Coordination and Leadership

31. I was invited, along with Joe Delaney, to join the Gold Command Committee about a month after the fire. Joe may have been on the Committee before and after I was. I sat on the Committee for about four weeks. We would tell them when we thought things they were doing were wrong – once we got on the committee we were determined to make changes. A lot of the suggestions and complaints we made came from those first four weeks of Gold Command. We talked a lot about what was happening in the area, for example the upcoming Notting Hill Carnival, which had not been properly considered by anyone else on the Committee. We told them how it should happen and they listened.
32. I think RBKC allowed us to be involved and to influence their decisions because they knew they were in the wrong and they wanted to minimise their shame, and also their potential criminal responsibility. We wanted the recovery effort and they wanted their effort to work - it was win-win: we got the recovery we wanted and they got to tick their boxes.
33. There were also engagement meetings where anyone from the community could attend. There was so much anger at these meetings. The press were on our side which also helped us to have our voices heard.

Voluntary and Community Groups

34. RBKC would produce a Grenfell newsletter for the first couple of months after the fire. It primarily contained updates on the site, information on the relief centres and the services on offer. They did not include any information about where and when to go for the money RBKC was handing out for survivors. Every few days they would add some new information and reissue it.
35. I was the Chair of the Lancaster West Residents Association from July 2017 for approximately 18 months. All the departments of RBKC would have to come through the Residents Association. There were 9 of us on the committee. At first it was a radical Residents Association – I wanted it to be more of a movement. The residents chose people with capacity and a righteous anger, like Joe Delaney and Virginia Sang, to represent them and how they felt, on the Committee. After the fire there was a lot of righteous anger but as the years went by this faded and our power to affect change was diminished.
36. Lancaster West Residents Association held a public meeting with Sir Martin Moore-Bick. We managed to have him agree to give us a month to write the proposed Terms of Reference for the Inquiry, rather than the week that he had originally proposed. We also had a later success with getting RBKC to build the estate neighbourhood services office on the estate so we would not have to endure the abominable experience of going through central services ever again. This has meant a slight improvement in the provision of services as we are able to follow up requests and complaints in person very easily. We have also had the local lettings policy for Lancaster West changed so that now people who live on the estate have priority over any properties that become available.
37. On the Resident's Association committee I would sometime be involved in working with Elizabeth Campbell and I felt she was devoid of leadership. I do not know why she bothered meeting me and she had no agenda or discussion points. I met with her at baseline studios on the estate but realised she had assumed to meet me at my home as I

saw her walking towards the flats. After our experience of her management of the fire and recovery for RBKC I most certainly did not want this council leader in my home. The meeting and its planned fruitlessness made me feel that she probably just came so she could say she had been in a council flat. During my time as chair she would tell us what RBKC were doing next, usually through her deputy Kim Taylor-Smith or Barry Quirke, but it was always about what RBKC wanted and their own agenda so we would have to challenge them for what residents needed and - after much campaigning, refusing to be disrespected and offering proper solutions which we refused to back down on - they would change or alter their plans.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

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

I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and to be published on the Inquiry's website.

SIGNED:



DATE:

6/3/20