

GRENFELL TOWER PUBLIC INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF WILLIAM THOMPSON

1. I am making this second witness statement for the purposes of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry in relation to the fire on 14 June 2017. I have given previous statements to the Metropolitan Police and for Phase One of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and I am content for them to be used in evidence in the Inquiry.
2. In this statement I intend to explain my experience living in Grenfell Tower before the fire and the role of the landlord Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) and council RBKC. I will also provide information about the aftermath of the fire.
3. I have attended almost every single day of the Inquiry so far. I feel it is my duty to do so on behalf of my former neighbours who passed away in the fire and so I am well informed and able to share what I know with survivors and local residents who are unable to attend.

Grenfell prior to the refurbishment

4. As I said in my first statement, my family and I moved into Grenfell Tower in June 1997. We had a young daughter and my partner Mary was heavily pregnant with our second child.
5. I feel bad saying it given all that's happened but my first impression on seeing the tower was that it was dirty, weatherworn and unsuitable for us. However, we desperately needed to be housed. We had been living in a rat infested hotel for a long time before that where other occupants were drug users or

alcoholics. It was no place for a married couple with two children. I really didn't want to live in the tower but it felt like we had no choice so we decided to try and make a home there. I had the impression the Council knew that because of our situation we would take the flat in Grenfell which was why they offered it to us.

6. I remember soon after moving in I was waiting for the lifts and met a Muslim woman who said she could see I was new and asked me what I thought of the place. I told her I wasn't happy, that it didn't look good. She told me the thing about Grenfell Tower was that the people were wonderful and willing to help anyone who needs it even though the building wasn't great. She said if I could divorce myself from my feelings towards the Council who had put us there and become part of the community we would be ok and she gave me her number and said if we needed anything we should just give her a call or knock on her door. I remember that conversation distinctly and the kindness she showed to me. I spoke to Mary that evening and said I thought the way forward was that if I could make friends and help neighbours out, just as this neighbour had offered to, we could feel part of a decent community.
7. Even from the early days of living in the tower the more residents I met the more I heard of recurring problems that many residents were experiencing. The main problems which stand out for me over the years included:
 - a. Poor quality windows;
 - b. Water leaks;
 - c. No running water (without any warning);
 - d. Problems being reported but nothing being done about it for a long time (unless it was an actual emergency it felt like the council hoped you would just go away);
 - e. The temperature in the building, when the basement boilers were working the flats were too hot;
 - f. The boilers would also frequently break down resulting in a loss of hot water. Residents were charged a flat rate for heating and hot water

whether the boilers were working or not in any given month.

8. One of the first problems I faced was in the first week after moving in I noticed the window in my sitting room was rattling. I saw the rubber seal between the glass and frame of the window had gone and am sure that caused the rattling. I reported it to the Estate Management Board but nothing was ever done about it. The only time the rattling stopped was when they changed our windows as part of the refurbishment works, about 18 years after moving in.
9. Despite there being many problems with the building and inside our flats, reporting them to the Council or TMO didn't work. It was managing all social housing across the whole of the Borough and wasn't capable of doing that; it was too big a job even if the people employed were right for the job which in many cases with the TMO they were not. It felt like whoever worked at the TMO, whoever I spoke to, their attitude was similar towards residents. They treated us with total indifference, as if they had been trained to do that. It felt like residents were an inconvenience to them, we were there to be tolerated not helped. As residents we felt powerless in the face of this.

Consultation with residents on KALC and the refurbishment

10. I was not involved in any discussions or consultations with the TMO or Council about the refurbishment or the Kensington Aldridge Academy and Leisure Centre project ('KALC'). I can't recall anyone telling me about meetings to do with the Grenfell refurbishment either in person or in writing. If I had been told there were meetings on the subject I would have wanted to attend.
11. I think I heard about the KALC project and refurbishment from Eddie Daffarn. A few people in the tower, including Eddie, were concerned about the reduction in green space around the tower if the KALC was built and emergency access. I had a lot of conversations with other residents about it while we were, for example, waiting for the lifts. The lifts were always

breaking down so gave us plenty of time for conversations. Lots of people were concerned about it but Eddie was the first to raise concerns about it.

12. I was concerned about the Council and TMO's plans to regenerate the local area which I felt would have changed the character of North Kensington. I don't drink alcohol but I was concerned, for example, that they would demolish the local pub, the Pig & Whistle, which was (and remains) a real community hub. I was also worried that the Silchester Estate would be demolished and local community members would be moved out with only a third or so of the rebuild being for social housing. These were elderly and vulnerable people who would be told they had to move away from homes they had always lived in, be scattered to the four winds. They were decent good people and it felt like the Council just wanted to move them all out. I was worried that after regenerating Silchester Estate, Lancaster West Estate would be next including Grenfell Tower.

13. I remember a meeting where the TMO invited certain residents to meet with Robert Black. I had received an invite and asked Eddie Daffarn if he wanted to go but Eddie said that he had not received an invite. The invites came in an addressed envelope but with no name on the invite so I gave Eddie my invite so he could go. I thought his attendance would be more useful than me attending. I think this was before the power surges so before May 2013 but I cannot be sure. I felt it was wrong that Eddie had not received an invite and that the TMO seemed to be cherry picking who they wanted to attend this meeting. As there was only one invite I couldn't go with Eddie.

14. In relation to any other consultation on the refurbishment, I remember seeing the new windows being unloaded from a lorry on pallets and stored in the garages underneath the walkways. Prior to that point I don't recall being asked what type of windows I wanted or being offered any choice. Obviously once they had been ordered and delivered I do not recall being asked my view either, they had already been delivered by that point. There was a meeting in the 'show flat' (Flat 145) when we were shown the new windows we were getting. I am pretty sure there were three meetings I attended in the show flat

and it was the first meeting when I was shown the windows. This meeting happened around January 2015. I refer to it later in this statement because of a comment made by Jason North of Rydon at the meeting. I vaguely remember seeing a picture of windows maybe on a newsletter but I don't ever remember being told by the TMO in person the type of windows they were planning to put on the building and being asked for my view. I was never asked what I thought of the TMO's plans, conversations about the works were always, in summary, along the lines of: *"This is what you're getting"* instead of *"These are the options, what do you think?"*

15. I had a conversation about the new windows with Simon, a guy who worked for Rydon, when he told me they would be slightly smaller than the current windows. He said they would put the new ones in and take the old ones out in one day so there wouldn't be long-term disruption. He said they would then seal-in the windows on the inside. That alarmed me because I couldn't work out how they would be able to do it all properly in just one day especially as I had so many windows in my flat.

16. I was never asked what type of cladding I wanted on the building but if I had been asked it would not have alarmed me, I would not have known there was anything wrong with it. I would have expected it to be safe. The thought that it might be dangerous would not have even entered my mind, I would have thought it was just for aesthetics. It is very painful for me to think that of all the things I complained about I did not focus on the cladding. On reflection, given the TMO's history I should have scrutinised every single thing they were doing.

Power surges and delayed refurbishment petition May 2013

17. I have been shown a petition I signed in relation to the power surges and delays in the refurbishment works to Grenfell Tower (WT/1: RBK00013826). I think Shah Ahmed asked me if I would sign it but can't be sure because I remember signing more than one petition in the tower.

18. In terms of why I signed the petition, the power surges didn't affect me. However I remember my friend Debbie Lamprell (deceased), who sadly died in the fire, telling me she had suffered the power surges. I had first met Debbie on the day she moved in and I got on well with her. She told me her TV had exploded and other electrical items had malfunctioned as a result of the power surges and she did not know how to deal with it. I was obviously really alarmed by this. I suggested she come to a residents meeting and explain to other residents what had happened. I attended a number of residents meetings where the issue of power surges was raised. I remember residents were very unhappy and frightened because of the loss of their goods and because it felt very dangerous. There were a number of people at the meetings describing how the power surge had affected them, explaining the cost of replacing items and the risk of fire that they all feared. We all knew that if electrical goods started exploding it could cause a fire. Although I hadn't suffered from it myself I wanted to ensure this issue was highlighted and dealt with and so I signed the petition on this subject to support those who had suffered from them.
19. The second issue on the petition was about delays in the Grenfell refurbishment project. This wasn't as important an issue to me as the power surges and wasn't the main reason I signed the petition. I wanted the refurbishment to go ahead to improve the heating, windows and general appearance of the building. I had no reason to believe anything in the refurbishment would be dangerous. I thought it was right that residents should be consulted on what happened to their homes, I wanted them to get the job done quickly and safely and then let us get on with our lives.

Resident involvement in the procurement of Leadbitter and Rydon

20. I am aware that before any building work starts hoarding goes up and that different companies have different colour hoarding. In the case of Grenfell Tower, when the hoarding first went up it was white, Leadbitter's colour. I was not involved in the decision to procure Leadbitter for the Grenfell Tower project.

21. After the hoarding went up it was a long time before any work on Grenfell Tower started but I did not know at the time what was causing the delays. One day after the hoarding went up when I was leaving the tower a guy was repainting the hoarding. He could not tell me why he was doing it. I eventually found out that Leadbitter, who had been originally contracted to do the work, were replaced by Rydon. I had not been asked to be involved in any consultation about the change in the contractor from Leadbitter to Rydon. I was not invited to any meetings with the TMO about this but I did not think twice about this because it was the same with everything else in the refurbishment; when the TMO had made their decisions they let us know what they had decided. We were never properly consulted about what would happen prior to decisions being made.

The refurbishment works begin

22. After the colour of the hoardings changed the work on the Tower started and residents began to come together to complain about the works. I remember the first meeting of residents in relation to the refurbishment works was absolutely jammed. It was in the EMB rooms and there were residents waiting outside who could not get in. There was a series of resident meetings throughout 2015 and 2016. In addition to the residents who attended these meetings there were other residents who didn't attend, who were either too busy, or didn't feel able to speak out, or got tired of complaining, even though they would have wanted to, but who still supported the aims of residents who did attend. After a residents meeting had taken place I was often approached by neighbours who did not attend and asked how it went and offered support.

23. My impression living in the tower was that there were some residents who became so used to being bullied by the TMO and RBKC that they just didn't want to rock the boat as they were afraid of the consequences. I am not saying people were physically threatened but people were afraid, especially the old and vulnerable of which there were quite a few. That is how it is in social housing especially when there is lots of homelessness out there, many people

do not want to speak up against a landlord because however bad things might be they feel at least they have a home. I used to picture some of these older and vulnerable residents sitting in their homes with no water but scared to complain, scared of the people who were supposed to be looking after them.

24. My former neighbour David Collins attended early residents meetings. He was articulate and I felt he could be a real asset in helping residents, it was good he was there and I am sure he has a lot of information about the refurbishment works so it is important he can give evidence to the Inquiry and comment on documents produced by those involved in the refurbishment project. He took the lead in raising complaints during the refurbishment as Chair of the Grenfell Compact when that was formed later down the line as I describe later in this statement.

25. Eddie Daffarn was also a lead advocate on behalf of residents and Compact members. He knew a lot of people in the tower and was a popular member of our community, he still is. I knew he co-wrote the Grenfell Action Group blog and I often read the blog at the time and even contributed to a couple of articles which I mention below. Eddie was passionate about our living conditions and protecting community resources across the Borough. He would get things across well in meetings with the TMO, RBKC, MPs, Rydon and others. Eddie could recall promises that the TMO and RBKC had made, things people had said, and he could remind them of this. If I could not go into a meeting and wanted someone to advocate for me that's the person I would want to do it. He would get points across much better than most of us. He was used to meetings and knew how to conduct himself so it was not surprising that people in the tower would go to him, and to other Compact members, with their problems and complaints. I could see that the TMO and Rydon realised they couldn't mess about with him. Throughout the period of time that is covered by this statement a number of residents would therefore speak to Eddie about their problems as they probably felt he could raise them effectively and properly hold the TMO and RBKC to account.

26. The main driver to residents coming together during the refurbishment works was the way we were all being treated in relation to the location of the

Heating Interface Units (HIUs) but over time residents also shared their experiences of the following, amongst other things:

- a. Poor workmanship, especially around pipework and windows;
- b. Rydon workers being rude and invading people's privacy;
- c. Rydon's working hours, that they were doing noisy work at times when they had agreed not to;
- d. Running water not working;
- e. Changing floor numbers.

27. I would raise issues on behalf of other residents and they would ask me to do so. This happened even before the Grenfell Compact was formed. For example, in relation to the noisy working hours Rydon had promised not to do any noisy work children were getting ready for school or when they had returned after school and needed to do their homework. I took it upon myself to call Rydon almost every time their workers breached that agreement, which happened frequently. I wanted to speak to someone senior but was always put through to the Resident Liaison Officers, I remember speaking to Lynda Prentice about this on numerous occasions. If I did not complain then the workers would not stop their noisy work.

January 2015 meeting with Rydon and the TMO in flat 145

28. In terms of the location of HIUs, at the start of the works we were told that they would be placed in the same place as our existing heating units. For me that meant placing it in my kitchen as my family and I were in a two-bedroom flat. At some point, without any consultation, this changed and we were told this would be in our hallways. My first reaction was it would be dangerous because it would be placed above our electrical fuse boxes. I was also annoyed that they felt they could just make changes, break promises and not consult with us.

29. The first time I was shown the location of the HIU was at a meeting in the show flat, flat 145, which I believe was in January 2015. I recall three

meetings in the show flat and this was the first of those. I know another such meeting was on 11 July 2015 because I have been shown photos of it which I refer to later in this statement. I recall another meeting in the show flat but cannot say when that took place. I believe that the meeting where we were shown the location of the HIU in the hallways was probably the January 2015 meeting because I can see from the Grenfell Action Group blog that the earliest blog referring to residents' opposition to the HIU location was published on 11 March 2015 entitled "*Grenfell residents resist TMO intransigence*" and I refer to it below.

30. That January meeting in the show flat was the first time the TMO and Rydon actually showed us what we could expect the inside of our flats to look like. The whole thing was dropped on us like a bombshell and we were just told this is what was going to happen, they were meeting us to show us, without asking us beforehand.

31. Peter Maddison and the Site Manager for Rydon, Simon Lawrence was there. Jason North from Rydon came in after the meeting had started, when we were leaving the flat. I don't know why Jason North came in but his attitude was disgraceful, he was overtly rude to us. Simon Lawrence and Peter Maddison's attitude wasn't good either but they weren't overtly rude. Peter Maddison seemed to know how to conduct himself, he would seem reasonable, like he was listening, but would ultimately make false promises and just give the impression he was listening to residents when he wasn't. As we were leaving the show flat I said to Jason politely, "*Would you like one of those in your hallway?*" referring to the HIU. He replied very aggressively something like: "*If I were getting it for fucking nothing I'd have it*". I can't recall his exact words but I distinctly remember him swearing. I am pretty sure Eddie Daffarn was there and heard him say this as well. It felt to me like he had pretty well put into words how Rydon felt about the whole job, we were getting the works done for nothing, we lived in social housing, so we should just shut up and accept whatever we were given. Simon Lawrence and Peter Maddison would not have heard this because they were still inside the living room of the show

flat. What Jason said was offensive but to make matters even worse, after that meeting he complained about one of my female neighbour's language towards him at the meeting and I helped her to draft a letter in response.

17 March 2015 residents meeting

32. I remember a number of residents, including Eddie Daffarn and my close friend Hanan Wahabi, decided to speak to our neighbours about the HIU issue and find out what they thought. I went around the building knocking on doors and letting people know that the HIU location had been changed from what we had been promised and asking them how they felt about its new proposed location. Those I spoke to were generally of the same opinion as me, that the TMO and Rydon should have kept their promise and stuck to the original location.

33. After our door knocking exercise we held a meeting in the community rooms on 17 March 2015. I have seen the minutes of that meeting on the Grenfell Action Group Blog dated 27 March 2015, the minutes look accurate from what I can remember although it was a long time ago. I exhibit that blog as WT/2 (). I think this meeting was the first time I met Pilgrim Tucker from Grenfell Community Unite. I supported residents of the tower creating a formal residents association group but I was not happy about Unite the Union asking for payment 'subs' so I did not pay any and did not officially join Grenfell Community Unite. I did not want there to be a division between those who could afford to pay who could join the group and those who couldn't. Grenfell Tower had a very diverse community with people from all walks of life. Included in that there were some people who had to rely on neighbours for their dinner and could not have afforded membership subs so I thought asking for payment was unfair and there should have been a Residents Association that did not require any payment from its members; the TMO and Council should have allowed us to set that up and use that as a way to communicate our concerns to them.

34. I felt residents of the tower needed to join together to have a voice because the

Lancaster West Residents Association (LWRA) was ineffective. I don't remember the LWRA ever doing anything positive for Grenfell Tower residents but I don't know why this was. Maybe they saw us as a separate 'sub-set' of the Lancaster West Estate that was undeserving of their attention. I got the feeling that parts of the Estate where members of the RA lived were looked after more by the LWRA. Overall, it felt like we were all fighting over crumbs, in terms of council support, and in Grenfell Tower we got the crumbs of the crumbs if we were lucky.

35. In addition to the ineffective Lancaster West Residents Association, individual complaints to the TMO were often just fobbed off. I felt it was important that residents knew they weren't on their own, that we were all in the same boat and could look after each other on common issues by sharing information and working together to try to make the TMO and RBKC take notice of us and stick to their promises.

36. At the meeting on 17 March 2015 residents discussed a number of issues including poor workmanship, cheap materials being used, lack of consultation, the attitude of Rydon workers and changing our floor numbers. These were among the common themes raised throughout the refurbishment works.

37. In terms of poor workmanship one issue was the way Rydon banged holes into our walls, it did not seem like they used a circular cutter when making these holes. Another workmanship issue related to the boxing-in of the pipework in the communal hallways. I was unhappy with it because of how it looked, how much space it took up and the lack of consultation around it. Rydon or their contractors just built these big cupboards which were much bigger than they needed to be and seemed to have been done cheaply. In terms of the quality of the materials the materials it looked like they were being re-used. The edging on them was chipped, they had to be filled when being painted. They just did not look new.

38. Poor workmanship also related to the windows as I will describe later in this

statement.

39. In terms of the floor numbering changing I recall raising this with Claire Williams in a conversation outside the front door to the tower before the works had been completed. I asked her how the TMO would deal with the new floors in the building and she said that "obviously" our door numbers would not change but the floor numbers would and there was nothing the TMO could do about that. The reason I raised it was because other residents raised it with me. They were worried that if our flat numbers changed it would lead to having to change our addresses with the bank, our doctors, post office and others.

40. Everyone in the meeting on 17 March 2015 agreed there should be posters put up denying Rydon access. Some residents agreed to put them on their own doors, others did not. It was just a matter of personal choice whether people did or did not. Some people were afraid to put them up in case there could be repercussions for them so they did not.

41. I put a 'no entry' poster up on my door and another one on the wall to the right of my door but the next morning they were both gone. I assume either Rydon or the TMO took them down, I can't imagine any of the residents would have taken them down.

42. I think Eddie and another neighbour called Ben went around the tower handing out posters denying Rydon access.

Residents being bullied and harassed

43. In terms of how the HIU issue was dealt with it was clear to me that the vulnerable were being bullied and I put this down to Rydon and the TMO wanting the works done as quickly possibly to avoid penalty clauses if there was any delay.

44. Rydon were knocking on residents doors and saying they should not listen to

those of us who were advocating for them to stick to the original promise about the location of the HIU. I heard of residents being told that the HIU could not be placed there because, for example: brick walls had to be knocked down, there would be major works, it would cause huge disruption. I did not believe it was correct that brick walls would have to be knocked down; our flats had stud walls internally in the locations where they claimed there were brick walls. Some were even told that if they did not go ahead with the location of the HIU in their hallways it would affect their access to water. Some were told this would affect access to water over a long period of time while the works were done. Others were even told that they would not have water at all after the works were completed unless they had the HIU installed where Rydon and TMO said it had to be.

45. Rydon and their contractors did not seem to take individual privacy into account and again I would put this down to them prioritising getting the job done as quickly as possible. I was told by a neighbour on the ninth floor, Natalie that she was breastfeeding in her lounge when there was a knock at the door. Her son opened it and the Rydon workers barged past him into their living room and were then reluctant to leave even though she was breastfeeding.

46. Residents were often made to feel they were getting in the way. There was a respite flat on Lancaster Road but I felt it was there so that when Rydon were working in flats the resident could be out of the way so residents couldn't see what work they were doing and by the time residents returned, even if residents were unhappy, the work would be done and Rydon and the TMO could say that they could not do anything about it. I did not use the respite flat myself, I used to stand beside Rydon doing the work to make sure they were doing a good job which is probably why I had fewer problems than other residents.

47. Another tactic the TMO would use is to issue solicitors letters to people threatening legal action in relation to access to their properties. This happened

even where the resident wanted the works to take place but before a date could be agreed.

48. There was a period of time during the refurbishment works when the TMO kept refusing to attend resident meetings. I complained about this, as did other residents. I have been shown a document that refers to me complaining about this which is dated 15 May 2015 and says: "52 and 205 [203??] not happy TMO didn't attend meeting with residents" (RYD00041939). The TMO never explicitly told us they had a policy of not meeting us, it would be dressed up as them saying they were too busy or had somewhere else to be, but they refused to meet us so frequently that it seemed like they had taken a decision not to meet us. There was also a pattern of the TMO frustrating us when we wanted to hold residents meetings. For example, we would book the community rooms on the ground floor in advance but then be told at late notice that the room was double booked.

Meetings attended by Constantine Gras

49. I have now listened to an audio recording of four meetings all of which were filmed by Constantine Gras and all of which I attended. I have not watched the video footage from these meetings. The meetings took place on 27 June 2015, 15 July 2015, 17 July 2015 and 14 December 2015. I have also seen photographs of a residents meeting which took place on 11 July 2015.

50. It has been helpful listening to the audio recording of the meetings as it has brought back memories I had forgotten. However, listening to the voices of friends who tragically died in the fire has been very difficult.

27 June 2015 meeting

51. I can recognize the voices of the following people at this meeting in addition to my own voice: Mariem Elgwahry (deceased), Steve Power (deceased), Turufat Yilma, Denis Murphy (deceased), David Collins, Cllr Blakeman, Cllr

Atkinson and Lorraine Beadle. The Inquiry could obtain the footage to confirm the identities of all those who attended.

52. The meeting on 27 June 2015 begins with Judith Blakeman and Robert Atkinson alleging that the TMO were refusing to meet residents because of Eddie Daffarn's presence at meetings. In my view there are two explanations for this comment made by the Councillors. It could either be that the TMO were clutching at straws and trying to use any excuse not to meet with us. Alternatively the Labour Councillors themselves perhaps did not want Eddie at the meetings with the TMO because of their own bad relationship with him. Eddie's view was that Councillor Blakeman, in particular, was good at dealing with "micro" issues affecting us but on the bigger issues she wasn't effective. I can imagine that she would not want Eddie at meetings because he could not only hold the TMO but also Judith Blakeman and her Labour colleagues to account, after all, Judith Blakeman was a TMO Board Member. I think the Labour Councillors had something against Eddie because he had put so many hours into looking into the TMO, much more than any of the rest of us, and also because of his opposition to the KALC project. I did not think anything Eddie had done was wrong.

53. I can also hear Judith Blakeman on the audio recording alleging that residents had preferred newsletters instead of meetings because of Eddie's conduct. I do not believe this is true. Not a single resident ever told me that and it is something I would have remembered. None of the residents I spoke to ever had a bad word to say about Eddie. I should add that in all the meetings I attended with representatives from the TMO, Rydon and RBKC, none of them ever asked Eddie not to attend. He was also never asked to leave a meeting, there was never any reason for him to do so. Eddie was a huge addition on residents' behalf at the meetings. He just told the truth and asked the right questions.

54. I can hear on the audio that Cllr Blakeman explains it would have cost more money for residents to be temporarily rehoused during the works and that is why the works were carried out with us still living there. I made the point that

in my view the primary motivation for them doing this was not for residents benefit but instead because it was cheaper for the Council to do so despite all the disruption.

55. David Collins complains about the “quality of the finish” at this meeting and I can be heard to agree with him. I cannot say exactly what he was referring to there but I have described earlier in this statement some of my concerns about poor quality workmanship so I was probably thinking of some of those issues. My general complaint was that the quality of the materials was sub-standard, as was the quality of the work, all of which reflected the general attitude of the Rydon’s workers towards us.

56. At the meeting I can hear Mariem Elgwahry and David Collins talk about the front door not working and how there had been a break-in. After this the TMO had blamed residents for letting in strangers when it was clearly not our fault, the door just wasn’t working. Mariem says *“The way we have been treated as residents regardless of whether we’re trying to go through the necessary procedures is almost like a slap in the face”*. I agreed with her assessment which in my opinion extended beyond just the TMO’s attitude to the front door and to other aspects of the works and also how they handled complaints.

57. At the end of the meeting I explain that in addition to the people at the meeting *“There are others who have asked us to represent them so they are here in spirit”*. As I have said earlier in this statement, many residents in addition to those who attended such meetings in the tower were very unhappy with the works being carried out.

11 July 2015 meeting

58. I have seen photographs taken by Constantine Gras of a residents meeting in the show flat on 11 July 2015 which was attended by Peter Maddison and Simon Lawrence from Rydon. Judith Blakeman and Robert Atkinson were also there. I recall being told that this is how our flats were going to look now. We were not specifically told we would have new kitchen units but the units

in the flat were new so I took that to mean our kitchen units would be replaced – even though that did not happen in the end.

59. I exhibit some of the photos from this meeting where I can be seen as WT/3

(). In the later photos we are in the kitchen and being shown the kitchen cupboard. This is where our old boilers used to be and where we wanted the new HIUs to be placed as initially promised. It would have meant the HIUs were out of the way and we could not see any good reason why they could not be there. I can't recall what else was discussed at this meeting.

60. I have read the 16 July 2015 letter sent by Judith Blakeman and Robert Atkinson following the 11 July meeting which I exhibit as WT/4

(). Having read that document I remember raising the issue of pipework being hot and therefore dangerous for children and that it should be boxed in.

61. There is reference in the letter to residents refusing access to Rydon and the TMO saying this is not helpful. However, from our perspective, the only card we could play to ensure the works were carried out to the right standard and in accordance with their own promises was to deny them entry until they did what they should have done from the start.

62. Under the heading of "complaints" the letter says: *"Although Rydon are available to receive complaints, the TMO is not and it is difficult to raise issues with them. The TMO out-of-hours service is a disaster"*. The out-of-hours phone often went unanswered or went through to an answerphone. To be frank, even if we could get through during the day – even in the case of a lack of water – the answer would simply be that they were aware of the problem and working on it. Despite this it would take a long time for this problem, like others, to be resolved. The letter says: *"There is a need for both the TMO and Rydon to treat residents with proper respect, engage with them properly and apologise when an apology is justified"*. I recall saying to Peter Maddison at one meeting (it may have been this one) that it was all well and good him coming to our meetings and apologising but apart from the

apologies nothing would get done. We would then have another meeting where the same issues would be raised, we would get another apology, but no action to resolve the problem.

63. Peter Maddison was reported as saying it was "*critical to get the works agreed and delivered as quickly as possible*". This may have been because of penalty clauses becoming payable if there was delay. As I have referred to earlier in this statement I believe this pressure of time, as well as pressure to keep costs down, had an impact on the quality of works. Contractors may have been told to get the job done too quickly. Also, the workers seemed to be substandard.

15 July 2015 meeting

64. I have listened to the audio recording of the 15 July 2015 meeting and can recognise my voice as well as those of Eddie Daffarn, Denis Murphy, David Collins, Antonio Roncolato and Constantine Gras amongst others.

65. The meeting begins with Eddie explaining that he invited our MP Victoria Borwick to meet with us. A number of us wanted our local MP to hear our concerns about the refurbishment works and ask her what she could do to help us. I think the idea of inviting Lady Victoria Borwick MP came out of a meeting between me, Eddie and David Collins in Eddie's flat. From my perspective I thought that going through Councillors and the TMO was not effective and we wanted our local MP to advocate on our behalf. We had reached an impasse with the TMO and local councilors so we needed to move to the next level above them.

66. Eddie asked at the 15 July 2015 meeting whether we should invite Councillor Judith Blakeman to the meeting. He suggested she should be invited. I agreed we should invite her. We all agreed that the TMO and Councillor Blakeman should be invited to the meeting. It was around this time I remember thinking Blakeman was standing up to the mark and Eddie gave her some kudos for that as did we all.

67. There was a discussion around Eddie's attempts to obtain information under the Freedom of Information Act. It was a concern of mine that the contractors who were working on the tower were meeting but we were not allowed to see what they were discussing and agreeing in relation to our own homes. I can be heard to talk about Leadbitter being taken off the job. As with everything else we were just told what was happening after a decision had been made, without being asked our views. The lack of transparency was really frustrating and I could not understand why they were not being more open with us.

17 July 2015 meeting

68. I remember we held two residents meetings with Lady Victoria Borwick MP, the first was on 17 July 2015, the second was on 14 December 2015. I have listened to the audio recording of these meetings which speak for themselves. Her assistant attended the meetings with her to take notes.

69. At the 17 July 2015 meeting I spoke about the TMO's repairs hotline. Lady Borwick asked whether it worked properly and I explained that it did not at the weekend, that we would just get an answering machine, even in an emergency. This was a common problem and I can hear on the audio recording another resident agreeing with me.

70. The TMO agreed at the 17 July 2015 meeting that residents who did not have their HIU's installed could have them where we had initially been promised they would be although the position for those who already had them installed was not resolved.

71. While on the subject of the HIU decision I should add that after the TMO agreed to locate the HIU in the airing cupboard between my kitchen and toilet an issue arose as to the location of the pipework. This was a common complaint amongst residents. In relation to my own flat I had a conversation about the location of the pipes with a heating engineer who came to my flat and who was either from or a sub-contractor. Instead of asking me or

discussing it with me, he came in and told me what they were going to do, where the pipes would be. He showed me the route the pipework would take and it was obvious to me this would be ugly and unnecessary, with pipes running all along my hallway at ceiling level. I suggested an alternative route for the pipework "return" which would mean it would not run along the hallway but instead the "run" and the "return" would go along the same route through the ceilings of our bathroom, toilet and airing cupboard stud walls. There would be one fewer hole in the internal wall. I initially asked him why he could not take the pipes through a panel above our airing cupboard door and he said it was because that was made of asbestos. That was the very first time I knew there was asbestos there and I never suspected it to be. We always just re-painted it over the years.

72. He said my suggestion was a good idea and that he had not thought about that.

Ultimately the suggestion was implemented in my flat and also in other two-bedroom flats. I told my friends and neighbours in the block about this including Hanan Wahabi. I later intervened to support Hanan to ensure she could have her pipework laid in the same way. She told me that Rydon told her *they* had a new idea as to how to improve the pipework layout but Hanan pointed out to them it was actually *my* idea, not theirs. Obviously I was pleased that Rydon adopted my suggestion but it did trouble me at the time that they did not appear to have given much thought to the issue. I thought if they couldn't get something simple like this right what else were they getting wrong?

73. At the meeting on 17 July 2015 David Collins said that until the previous Saturday the TMO had refused to meet with us. The issue of whether residents could form a 'Compact' was discussed. Lady Borwick suggested that even though we could not have another Residents Association - because of the LWRA - we could form a 'Compact', a kind of sub-group of a Residents Association. This would give us access to the RBKC Town Hall. It would be a stepping stone to residents having a voice and being able to explain the problems we were facing in the tower relating to the refurbishment works.

74. I thought that by forming the Compact we would now be able to form a recognised group to look after Grenfell Tower's residents and deal with common issues which affected us. I thought we would be treated like an RA by RBKC and the TMO, be invited to meetings in the Town Hall and our voices would now be heard. When residents individually complained to the TMO or Rydon we just weren't listened to. We were sometimes told they would look into an issue but nothing was done. Also problems were sometimes recurring and affected a number of residents so we thought that as an RA or Compact we could properly communicate not just the problem but also how many people it affected.

Formation of the compact

75. It was only after Victoria Borwick MP attended the 17 July residents meeting with Rydon and with Peter Maddison that the TMO allowed us to be recognised; David Collins applied for us to be recognised as a Compact and we were.

76. I gave my name as a lead compact member, so did Eddie Daffarn, Hanan Wahabi, Marcio Gomes, David Collins and Antonio Roncolato. I signed a Lead Compact Member agreement around October 2015. We were told by the TMO that if we wanted to add further names we could add those later. We regarded everyone in the tower as a member of the Compact but there were seven of us who were lead members, kind of like Grenfell United is now. If a resident could not attend a meeting they would ask one of us Lead Compact Members to raise an issue with the TMO or Rydon on their behalf.

77. As a Grenfell Compact Lead Representative I continued to hear similar complaints from residents to those which had been raised before the Compact had been formed.

78. Ultimately, I had thought that if the TMO and RBKC were going to the trouble of recognising the Compact then it might benefit us but in the end it did not. We were still not listened to. Nothing really changed. It felt like after

a long fight the TMO had conceded something small in the hope we would just accept it and go away.

79. As we continued to experience problems with the refurbishment Compact members went around the building leafletting so people would know when there were residents meetings.

80. We were given a noticeboard where we could put Compact leaflets to let people know what was going on around the place. We were told we would be given minimal financial assistance just for paper and ink for a printer. David took on responsibility for printing things like this and he was told he would be reimbursed but I don't know whether he was.

Call for an independent investigation into the refurbishment works

Residents petition

81. After some time, given what we were still experiencing with the works, Compact members decided to circulate a petition calling on other residents to demand an independent investigation. We needed someone from the outside to oversee what was happening while it was happening. I thought it could be like the role an independent surveyor would usually play. I have been shown a petition (WT/5: RBK00000110) and remember asking others to sign and signing it myself. It felt like there was nobody on the outside scrutinising what was going on in the tower. Everything was done 'in-house'. In the end our request for an independent investigation fell on deaf ears.

14th December 2015 meeting with Lady Victoria Borwick MP

82. I have listened to the Constantine Gras audio recording of the meeting with Lady Victoria Borwick MP on 14 December 2015. There are a number of issues discussed at that meeting that might be of relevance to the Inquiry including:

- a. the use of solicitors letters to threaten legal action even where that was unnecessary;
- b. poor quality windows;
- c. resident confusion around floor numbering;
- d. residents feeling threatened, lied to and harassed including residents fearing the loss of their tenancies,
- e. the TMO not identifying and investigating complaints;
- f. Rydon and the TMO passing the buck to each other in relation to complaints;
- g. two of Rydon sub-contractors going bust apparently resulting in delays in the external works;
- h. the process for signing off the works;
- i. access to Grenfell Tower for disabled people.

83. The request for an independent investigation was raised at this meeting. Sacha Jevans said the TMO would do a door knocking exercise but I had no confidence in the TMO being able to properly investigate themselves, marking their own homework. I did not trust them to do that at all. As an example, at the meeting Peter Maddison said that at that time there were no outstanding complaints when clearly there were, as pointed out to him by Judith Blakeman.

RBKC Scrutiny Committee meeting

84. The RBKC Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee did eventually invite us to attend in January 2016 to talk about the refurbishment works. All of us in the Compact wanted Eddie to speak and he accepted the responsibility with good grace. I think quite a few of us went, we watched from the public gallery, the 'cheap seats' or 'bleachers' as I'd call them. In addition to the Councillors, Peter Maddison and Claire Williams from the TMO were there and I think some people from Rydon were also at the meeting.

85. Eddie was just coming to the end of his speech when Councillor Quentin Marshall hurried him along. It felt like Marshall really pressured him for time

when I did not see any need for that. I think someone spoke on behalf of the TMO or Council but I don't recall who that was. Only Eddie was pressured into finishing, others were not. Eddie called for an independent investigation into the refurbishment works. All the Compact members were delighted with what Eddie had said. I wanted to shout out in support and clap but didn't, being respectful of where we were.

86. However, despite all this there still wasn't an independent investigation. It is only when writing this statement that I have been reminded by reviewing documents disclosed by the Inquiry that there was a TMO internal investigation. To be frank, I had forgotten that happened at all and I expect I dismissed their internal investigation as being irrelevant as soon as I found out that it was happening. I would never have expected the TMO to properly investigate themselves, they had no reason to do so, and every reason to cover up how bad the refurbishment works were. I feel the TMO would not have told the truth in their report because that is what we were used to.

87. I remember after that Scrutiny Committee meeting there was a series of concerns raised with Councillors Blakeman and Atkinson including shoddy workmanship and the attitude of Rydon. Councillor Blakeman put a 'matrix' together setting out a number of our concerns. I remember at the end of the works residents were still complaining about things like the windows, workmanship, boxing in being loose in some places, paintwork not being good. Peter Maddison promised there would be a residents survey however as far as I recall the TMO didn't circulate any survey, if they did I didn't see it.

Window complaints

88. I am aware from Phase One of the Inquiry of the importance of the windows to the spread of fire and smoke around Grenfell Tower.

89. A number of residents complained about the new windows both inside and outside Compact meetings. There is reference to this issue in the meetings that were recorded by Constantine Gras.

90. The complaints I can remember included windows rattling, handles not working adequately, gaps around the windows where people could feel a draft coming through because they weren't sealed properly. My own windows did not have the problem relating to draughts but I wonder whether that was because I was there, observing their work when they fitted my windows and I used to work in the building trade so had an idea about what they should be doing. After my windows were fitted I went around them with a cigarette lighter to see if there were any draughts coming through and there were not. I did this in each of the new windows in my flat.

91. Residents often told me that their windows would not be fixed despite them having complained to Rydon or the TMO about whatever problems they had.

92. One person who raised a problem with her windows was Mariem Elgwahry (deceased) Flat 196, who sadly died in the fire. We were very close. She was such a wonderful person, very strong and very kind. She often attended residents meetings with me. She and her mum raised complaints with me about how they were treated by Rydon and the TMO. Mariem's mum spoke very little English and they accepted the location of their HIU in the hallway but Mariem said it was because they just wanted the work done and Rydon out of their home. Her mum did not want strangers in her home for long, especially people from Rydon because of their attitude.

93. Mariem emailed me about some problems with the works in their flat. I exhibit the email and some others that followed dated 22 and 23 February 2016 (WT/6: _____). In her 22 February 2016 email Mariem complained about the noise from her new HIU and also the whistling sound from her new windows due to gaps around them. Also, that one window had fallen off its hinges and that Rydon had blamed her for pulling it too hard which must have been nonsense. I attended the meeting referred to in the emails which took place on 23 February 2016 and raised the windows issue on Mariem and her mother's behalf, asking how Rydon could accuse a young woman of pulling a window out of a wall and that if it had been installed

properly it could not have happened. I also forwarded her email on to Peter Maddison on 23 February 2016 (WT/7: RYD00068858). I do not recall any conversation with Mariem after this as to whether or not her windows were fixed.

94. I have seen documents disclosed by the Inquiry that have reminded me of the problems I had with my own window extractor fan. The documents suggest around 28 Jan 2016 Rydon visited my flat to check my window extractor fan because it was making a terrible noise. I remember a visit to do with the fan after complaining about it. I recall they came, took something out of the fan but it was still making a noise even after they had left (WT/8: RYD00065966). By the 2nd of February 2016 the report says it was “still clacking” after it was changed. Whatever they did to fix the problem did not work, the extractor fan continued to make a noise when it was on.

95. Other documents shown to me about the windows include (WT/9: HAR00016360) which reminds me that on 19 May 2016 I reported that my small kitchen window would not open. It still had not been fixed by 27 May 2016, 1 June 2016 (WT/10: RYD00079889) or 3 June 2016 (WT/11: HAR00003240). It was eventually booked in for 9 June 2016 (WT/12: RYD00080140). The document dated 10 June (WT/13: RYD00080482) says: “*Mr Thomas [sic] is talking about going to the councillor again*” if it was not fixed. A 13 June 2016 email to Peter Maddison and Claire Williams (WT/14: HAR00007642) says my window was still not fixed and the internal door also did not work when I pressed the intercom button so I had to go downstairs 3 times over the weekend.

TMO culture around health & safety

Pigeon droppings by the entrance to Grenfell Nursery

96. Although it is not relevant to the cause and spread of the fire on 14 June 2017 I feel it is important to explain something about the TMO through two examples that are related to health and safety more generally and the TMO’s

treatment of vulnerable residents.

97. Firstly, I complained about the build-up of pigeon droppings outside the entrance to our building. It was right next to the entrance to the Grenfell Tower Nursery and I felt it was a health and safety risk for the kids going there as well as their parents because I know pigeon droppings can be toxic. I was not the only person who was worried about this.

98. I went in to speak to Millicent Williams of the TMO one day and told her to look outside and see kids playing in the area. I said if, god forbid, any of the kids got sick from pigeon droppings then it was her responsibility. The TMO were not straight with us about this issue. Whereas I was told by Millicent Williams that the TMO were waiting for someone to put a light in the arch before they could put the netting up, Eddie had been told, later the same day, there was no money available to do the work. Pigeon netting and lights could not have cost a lot of money.

99. I am able to provide my emails about this if requested. The problem remained unresolved for months. I first reported it around the Summer of 2016.

Grenfell Tower front door

100. Another aspect of the TMOs culture which is not directly relevant to fire safety but is relevant to how they treated the welfare of residents, in particular vulnerable residents, involves the front door to Grenfell Tower. There were numerous problems with this, the ones I remember most were that the new front door fell off soon after it had been fitted, falling on to a visitor to the tower, and that it presented particular problems for anyone in a wheelchair, the elderly or those with young children.

101. In terms of the front door falling off I took photos of this and sent them to Peter Maddison to complain about it. I exhibit my email to Peter Maddison as WT/15 ().

102. I remember Eddie asking me whether I would mind if the Grenfell Action Group wrote a blog about the issue of the pigeon droppings and broken front door. I said of course, that was fine. I wanted him to publicise these issues and thought that publicity would kick the TMO into action. By publicly recording these issues it would not just be a private battle between residents and the TMO which the TMO could brush under the carpet and ultimately take no action to resolve. I took photos of the pigeon mess and the front door for the blog. The blog that was written is dated 1 November 2016 and I exhibit it as WT/16 ().
103. In terms of the impact on people with disabilities, I remember that after the front door was fitted I struggled to open it. I also saw elderly people struggling to open it. It was heavier than our old door and when the wind blew it was almost impossible to get it open. It felt to me that the door was changed for cosmetic reasons, in the TMOs eyes it looked good but they hadn't thought about it properly and I don't ever recall being consulted about it.
104. One day when I was standing at the front door one of my neighbours, Mariko Toyoshima-Lewis, a wheelchair user, complained to me about the weight of the door and also that because of the short time lag between using the fob from the outside and the inner door locking again, she struggled to get into the building. She was not the only resident to raise this problem. I believe Maher Khoudair can be heard on the audio recording of the meeting on 14 December 2015 raising a similar problem.
105. It was only after complaints were made that the TMO tried to fix the problem by installing a metal pole with a separate entry device located outside the front door. The idea was that those who needed it would put their fob against it and the outside door would open automatically. Beforehand it would not open automatically and was also located right next to the front door which made it difficult for anyone with mobility problems to open.

106. It was issues like this, as well as the constantly defective lifts, that led me to believe that anyone with mobility problems should not be placed in Grenfell Tower unless they were housed on the ground floor. The lifts were always breaking down and anyone in a wheelchair would be trapped in their home if that happened. That would be the case whether it was in an emergency or not, just day to day living, collecting kids from school, doing the shopping, would be much harder for anyone in a wheelchair not on the ground floor.

107. It seemed to me that the TMO had not even considered the impact on disabled residents of this new front door and locking system.

Gas works

108. I remember that on 30 September 2016 the gas was turned off to my flat as well as many others, including Antonio Roncolato. I spoke to Natasha Elcock about it, who told me that she had spoken to one of the engineers who attended and had told her that the gas would probably never be turned back on. The engineer had also told Natasha that it was Rydon who had burst the gas pipe and just taped it up. The engineer told her it could have caused a gas explosion. I was left without gas supply for many weeks which was very disruptive.

109. I asked Eddie Daffarn to help me find out what going on. He helped me to draft a Freedom of Information Act Request which I submitted. I exhibit the relevant emails as WT/17 () and the information I obtained from the Council as WT/18 (). The documents disclosed to me set out a contemporaneous account of what occurred during this episode. Having looked back at those documents I can see they also refer to asbestos and the new Automatic Opening Vent smoke control system with associated emails which may be useful to the Inquiry.

AFTERMATH

110. In my first witness statement I described events immediately after I escaped from the tower and until about 4.30am when I had arrived at the Rugby Club having been directed there. I do not know who told me to go to the Rugby Club but I learnt through word of mouth that it was open and they could help.
111. I think I was one of the first to enter the Rugby Club, we were just hoping to get off the street. I did not want to be stuck outside with all the press asking us questions. Until I entered the Rugby Club it felt like we were cannon fodder for the media approaching us.
112. Inside the Rugby Club I did not see anybody from the Council or TMO there. Rugby Club employees were trying to make us as comfortable as possible giving us teas and coffees, they were extremely helpful. Someone even got me a walking stick which I needed.
113. As the morning wore on there were lots of vans pulling up, people from the local community delivering food, water and nappies, just general supplies. I wasn't paying much attention to who they were, my head was all over the place and I was mainly focussing on my wife and daughter and where we were going to sleep that night. Rugby Club employees were there at the door bringing things in, gaining control over what and who came into the building. There were two men at the door making sure they could keep the press out as much as they could.
114. At some point a man called Mark came over to me and asked me if I was called Willie Thompson. I was suspicious as I did not know how he knew my name. He said he was the CEO of the Rugby Club and he handed me some cash. I do not know how much it was. I refused it at first as I did not know him but he told me I should just take it as I would probably need it and if I did not need it I could bring it back. I am very grateful to him for doing that. I saw him approaching other people with cash. I do not know where he got it from. I decided to take it and gave it to my wife to look after.

115. We were all taken in small groups to collect clothes, shoes and toiletries. There was a lot of stuff there. Someone asked me what size shoes and pants I needed and Rugby Club workers would locate them for us. It felt like organised chaos. They were doing their very best for us and doing it properly, trying to make sure anyone they helped was genuinely from the tower as opposed to anywhere else.
116. I cannot recall exactly when it happened but at some point in the afternoon of, I believe, 14th June, when we were in the basement of the Rugby Club someone, had the idea that we needed to register who had escaped and who had died. I think it might have been Eddie Daffarn. Someone brought out a really large roll of paper which was pinned to the wall. There was a massive queue of people lining up to write on the sheet of paper. I wrote down "*Flat 52, four, safe*". That was the first time I saw the gathering of names being organised. We needed to document who had died and who had escaped but apart from that list created by residents there was nobody in authority taking details of survivors and those who died. Apart from survivors and Rugby Club staff I saw Emma Dent Coad, Judith Blakeman and the singer Lily Allen but nobody else who wasn't either a survivor or from the Rugby Club.
117. At some point on the evening of 14 June RBKC representatives arrived with name tags on them with lanyards and photographs. They were calling people and allocating them hotel rooms. I think it was still light when they started but it was getting dark when I was leaving, I do not know what time it was, maybe 5pm-6pm. This was on the evening of 14 June. When it was my turn, I told the woman from RBKC that myself, my wife and two daughters needed a place to stay. She told me we could have two double rooms. I remember telling her I would not be able to stay on upper floors because I was not going to get in any lifts and was not fit to climb stairs. I was in pain from my escape and could not face being on an upper floor having just escaped the fire from an upper floor. She said that was ok, she would make that known to them at the hotel.
118. I spoke to another Grenfell Tower resident, Adriana. I asked her if she had been allocated a hotel. I told her I was in the Premier Inn Earl's Court. She said that was where they were. I asked her if everything was ok and she said it wasn't really because she, her husband and two teenage sons had been allocated just one room. I

said that can't be right and I asked her to come with me. I took her to the front of the queue and said to the RBKC person it cannot be right that Adriana had just been given one room, that my family had been given two bedrooms and Adriana should be given the same. The RBKC worker told me they could only give residents what they had. I said if RBKC didn't do what was needed I would tell the world's media who were all outside the Rugby Club. She probably thought we would all just accept whatever was given to us because of our desperate situation. She said she would check her list and then, as if by magic, two rooms became available. I said they should have done that from the beginning. Even on the day of the fire it felt like anything we got we had to fight for.

119. I was told to wait there and a taxi would take us to the hotel. We put all our donations from the Rugby Club in bin bags. Unfortunately the taxi driver dropped us off at the wrong hotel but the guy at reception arranged another taxi to take us to the right place.

120. We arrived at the Premier Inn and the receptionist confirmed he had rooms for us on the seventh floor. I said we had to be on the ground floor and he sorted that out. It should not have been the case that survivors were placed on higher floors of buildings, we had all just come out of a burning tower block and it should have been obvious that placing survivors on higher floors would be distressing.

15 June 2017

121. The next day, 15 June, I headed back to the Rugby Club to see if there was any assistance I could give. At that stage being rehoused was not foremost in my mind. I thought there was no way that we would be housed immediately, we would probably have to suffer the hotel for a little while. Instead I was focussed on helping at the Rugby Club and looking for people I had not seen the night before including Hanan's family members, Denis Murphy, Mariem Elgwahry and Debbie Lamprell. I now know they all perished in the fire. The only information I could get about those who had survived or had been killed was from word of mouth. The emergency

services and RBKC could not tell us. I remember seeing Denis's brother that day who could not find Denis and was worried about him.

122. I discovered the Westway Sports Centre was open and that some of my former neighbours might be there so I went down there. There were desks set up and people giving out advice and cash. There were people available to speak to if you needed to chat.

123. I remember joining a queue to speak to a woman at a desk, I think she was from the NHS or a social worker but I'm not sure. The person in front of me had escaped the tower with nothing at all except what he was wearing and the person at the desk was asking him for identification, like a passport or driving licence, and insisting one needed to be produced before any help would be given. I made clear I had known him for years and that he was a Grenfell Tower resident but it was pointless as I was also asked for identification documents and I did not have any to show I was from the tower. If lack of ID was really a problem then I think they should have prioritised arranging replacement ID documents for survivors. That way there would have been no problem identifying survivors and they could also have got to the bank to get their own money, things like that.

124. I remember being worried about Marcio Gomes and at that moment he called me. Despite everything Marcio was going through he still had the decency to call me to find out if I was ok which was amazing given what he was suffering. I remember saying to the woman at the desk that somebody needed to get to Marcio's hospital to support him because he could hardly speak from smoke inhalation and members of his family were in induced comas. Someone did look into it and within a few hours someone was there supporting Marcio. It seemed like nobody else in authority knew he was there or offering him support so it was lucky he had called me and lucky I had raised it with people at the Westway. If RBKC and the TMO did not know he was there that would be bad but if they did know and still did not go to him that would be worse and I would like the Inquiry to investigate what steps were taken by RBKC and the TMO to identify survivors who needed support, both those who had been hospitalised and those who had not.

125. I also think there were failings in terms of medical care. People at the Westway had some painkillers like aspirin but they could not prescribe anything. Some people told me they had called their doctors but were told they could only have an appointment a few days later. Thankfully my doctor was great, he actually contacted me and said he knew about the fire and I could come and get my repeat prescription or he could arrange for someone to come to any nearby chemist and drop my medication off. There should have been some way of identifying survivors calling us all and making sure we got whatever medication we needed.

126. I emailed Judith Blakeman on 15 June as I had not heard about where my family and I would be staying, whether still in the hotel or somewhere else. I exhibit the emails I exchanged with her as WT/19 (). The emails speak for themselves.

Key workers

127. There was a delay of about a week until a key worker was appointed for my family. She was from Tower Hamlets.

128. A month or so later she told me she was being taken off the case and someone else was appointed. I received a call from the new key worker who asked to meet at our hotel and we did. I asked her where there was accommodation but she wasn't up to date on what was available, I was the one telling her what was available instead of the other way around. I had discovered from other survivors what was available so I could share that information amongst survivor. I called the Town hall and asked for her to be replaced and she was.

129. I was at one stage appointed Ian Travers at RBKC as a key worker. Ian was good, he would often stop by to have a coffee and check up on me. Unfortunately after a while RBKC replaced Ian and those that followed him did not show the same level of humanity as he had. A dedicated service was set up but there was a repeated changeover of staff. It felt like they should have assessed our needs prior to meetings and offered solutions at meetings but that is not how it worked. I would get a call to

say I had a new Key Worker and this was even before being told the old Key Worker had gone.

Evidence given to me by Seamus Dunlea

130. After the fire the former caretaker of Grenfell Tower, Seamus Dunlea, who was a friend of mine gave some documents to Mary saying he wasn't sure if they were useful. They were taken from the Tower. One is entitled "Grenfell Tower Fire Alarm Zone Chart" WT/20 (), the other is entitled "Grenfell Tower Smoke Extract System" WT/21 ().

131. In his police statement Seamus Dunlea said he had given these to Eddie Daffarn but they were actually given to my wife who gave them to me (MET00019959_10). I showed them to Eddie Daffarn when we were in the hotel together but I did not give them to Eddie.

132. Seamus has sadly passed away since the fire. He was treated terribly by the TMO.

Conclusion

133. In conclusion, I hope the Inquiry can achieve justice for the 72 who were killed and that there is a thorough investigation to properly hold those responsible to account. I also hope that the government moves quickly to ensure that all those other people across the country still living in dangerous buildings can have dangerous cladding and insulation stripped from their buildings so they can feel safe when putting their kids to bed at night. Since the fire I have met a family with two young children who live in such a dangerous building. The parents told me they take it in turns to sleep at night, the mum goes to sleep at about 10pm and wakes up about 3am. The dad then goes to sleep from 3am before he wakes up to go to work at 7am. They do that to watch over their children and make sure that if there is a fire one of them will be awake to evacuate the family. The government needs to move fast to make sure families do not have to live like this anymore through no fault of their own.

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

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

Signed: William Dwyer

Dated: 10-07-20

