

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

(Criminal Procedure Rules, r.27.2;

Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9, Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.58)

Statement of: Lynda Prentice

Age of witness: over 18

Occupation: Resident Liaison Officer

This statement, consisting of 2 pages signed by me, is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. I am making this statement in response to a request for written evidence in relation to Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.
2. I am currently a Resident Liaison Officer ("RLO") and based in West London. I was previously an RLO for Rydon Group Limited ("Rydon") between February 2015 and December 2019. Prior to my employment with Rydon I was a community organiser as part of a government scheme.
3. When I joined Rydon I was assigned the RLO role at Grenfell Tower. The refurbishment project ("the Project") at Grenfell Tower had already started before I joined Rydon, however, work with the residents was just beginning and I was involved in this. I worked at Grenfell Tower until the end of the Project in around June/July 2016, following which I was moved to a different location and project; I did not have any involvement with the aftercare team at Grenfell Tower.
4. I was based at Grenfell Tower on a full time basis from Monday to Friday. The RLO office was at the bottom of Grenfell Tower meaning the residents were able to come in and speak to us throughout the day.
5. I reported to Christina Stephanou as lead RLO but my overall managers were Nikki Donnelly and Kim Davies. Nikki and Kim were not on site on a day to day basis but they would visit from time to time. Any issues I had I would raise to Christina and she would raise them to Nikki or Kim if required. I recall one issue I was involved in and it related to compensation for a leak that happened in one of the flats; the lady was not happy with the amount offered and so Nikki liaised with the resident until a sum was agreed by both parties.
6. In my role as RLO, I would speak with residents and Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation ("the Client") in respect of issues and problems raised by residents, I would make appointments and confirm with contractors regarding access to the flats and would build rapport with the residents to allow the works and inspections to take place.
7. When I started on the Project I had a spreadsheet available to me which had details of the residents including, amongst others, names and phone numbers, details of vulnerable residents and whether lone visits should not be made. I do not know where the information came from, Christina or Maxine Igbinedion may have collated it, but it was of use to me to get up to speed.

Signed



Dated

17/1/20

8. Many of the residents' issues or complaints related to the installation of the Heat Interface Unit ("HIU") and where it would be placed within their flat. I was told, I do not recall who by, that initially the HIU was going to be installed in the kitchen but this was changed to the hallway. I do not know why or who made this decision. The concern expressed by residents was that the hallway installation would place the HIU above an electrical point and there was a worry water may leak into the electrics. I was informed at the time that as there was no water passing through the HIU this would not have occurred. I do not recall who told me this. A further concern for residents was that the HIU in the hallway would block the escape route out of the flat, however, I was told that there was a shelf in the same location that was the same width so the HIU would not have blocked the exit. I do not know recall who told me this.
9. Most residents were happy that they would be able to control their own heating after the HIU was installed as they had no control previously. Grenfell Tower had a centralised system which I think meant the heating for the whole tower was switched on for six months of the year and switched off for the other six automatically irrespective of what the weather conditions were.
10. Issues or complaints raised by residents would be dealt with in various ways. If there was an issue raised by a resident such as the window would not close properly, I would visit the resident along with a site manager or a contractor and try to sort the issue out there and then; the majority of issues would be sorted out this way. If there was a formal complaint, this would be entered onto a log which was provided to the Client. I would provide details of the complaint to the Client either by phone or email; the contact at the Client was Claire Williams. There were also monthly meetings with the Client where complaints were discussed and Claire would also come to our office from time to time.
11. The majority of the complaints related to the Client, some were longstanding issues that did not relate to the Project. Occasionally, complaints would be escalated internally to Christina or Nikki or to a site manager for contact to be made with a contractor.
12. I do not recall any complaints regarding cladding, AOVs or fire doors. Other than complaints regarding the HIU, I only recall complaints in respect of the windows and the fans installed in the kitchens. Residents were concerned that the window size was smaller and so the amount of daylight would be reduced and existing blinds would not fit following the change to the new windows. I passed these concerns on to the Client. Other window issues related to opening and closing them properly; I believe a manual was prepared by the Client which was provided to residents.
13. The new fans in the kitchen were noisy. I recall that it was a manufacturing issue which was eventually resolved. I kept the residents up to date with the progress of repairs.
14. There were occasions where residents made a compensation claim for damage caused to their belongings as a result of the works. The decision on whether to pay compensation was Rydon's but I would liaise with the resident and the contractor, if one was involved, to obtain the details and keep the resident up to date with the matter. The Client would be involved if the resident or leaseholder was not happy with the outcome. Claims by residents for replacement blinds or curtains following the installation of new windows would be a decision for the Client.
15. The Clerk of Works was involved towards the end of the Project to inspect the works. I do not know whether any complaints were reported to the Clerk of Works but I arranged appointments for them to inspect the flats. I also attended some of the inspections in order to introduce the Clerk of Works to the residents and to provide reassurance to the residents of who they were. I had no involvement in the actual inspection carried out by the Clerk of Works.

Signed.....

C. Renda

Dated.....

17/1/20