

IN THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

CORDELIA DISSON

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

1. This is a statement of truth by Cordelia Kim Disson, my date of birth is the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I am female. I am currently living at [REDACTED] I have made a statement to the Metropolitan Police and I consent to the same being disclosed to the Inquiry for use in evidence.
2. Background
3. My husband was Anthony (Tony) Keith Disson. I have known Tony for 33 years, it would have been our 30th wedding anniversary in December 2017.
4. Tony was the one who was living in Grenfell Tower. Tony had been living there for about 6 or 7 years, I believe he moved into the flat around 2012. I cannot remember the date exactly.
5. Tony was living in Flat 194, he was originally on the 19th floor, hence the number 194. This then became the 22nd floor. The reason for the change was that the bottom 3 floors did not used to be flats, and more flats were built on top. These floors were added around 2-3 years ago.
6. My family consists of my 3 boys, Alfie, Charlie and Harriboy. These are Tony's children.
7. My son Charlie used to live with my husband Tony and had been there for around two years before the fire.
8. Tony was not constantly living in the Tower. He would sometimes stay elsewhere with me. This could be at my chalet [REDACTED] and also at my old address in Ladbroke Grove.
9. Tony was a council tenant and he used to pay his rent through his housing benefit. There were no pets in the home.
10. Tony's Health

11. Tony did have mobility issues. He was a registered with mobility issues. Tony was diagnosed with a bone disorder, I cannot remember the name of this disorder, but the basis of it was the bones would grow more bones. [REDACTED] rare disease and it is hereditary. [REDACTED]
12. Tony always had trouble with his legs.
13. He was registered disabled and received disability allowance.
14. It would have been possible to recognise Tony as on his right leg on the inside from the middle of the calf to the bottom part of his leg he had a scar.
15. His doctor was Mr David Hunt and he was under St Mary's Hospital.
16. [REDACTED] the doctor did some investigation into this and found out about this condition. They then diagnosed Tony with this. I would say he was diagnosed around 2000-2001. I cannot be completely sure but his doctor's records would confirm this.
17. With regards to his mobility issues, I will admit that whilst he would have problems getting down the stairs, he would have made it eventually. He would have used his stick if he was doing a long walk. I would say that he would use the stick if he was walking more than 10 minutes.
18. Tony did not have any breathing difficulties, he was a smoker. He used to smoke roll ups. I believe he had been smoking since 17 years of age. He did tell me 4 days before the incident that he had given up smoking.
19. Tony did not have any mental health problems. Tony was a very calm man.
20. Background of Grenfell
21. I know all about the area, as I grew up around this area. I knew it before the regeneration and afterwards. I remember when the first Tower was put up in the 1970's.
22. Between 2016-2017 there was a regeneration of Grenfell Tower and this is when the problems started. I cannot remember when they started in 2016 but I do remember that by Christmas they had already started.
23. Other members
24. Tony knew everyone there, it was like a community. Tony's main friends in the Tower, were Steve and Dennis. Dennis Murphy was on the 11th floor and Steve Wickman was

- on the 4th floor. Dennis and Steve both died in the fire. His son [REDACTED] knew the layout of the flat and would be willing to assist.
25. [REDACTED] got an anti-social behaviour order because he was the one who used to squirt the kids with the fire hoses and this is why they were taken away. I believe he got this about 9 years ago.
26. Tony would sometimes go to either of their flats for dinner or they would come up to his.
27. Caretaker
28. I knew the caretaker and so did Tony. He was lovely man called Jon Palmer. Tony would speak to him often when he was around the flats. I don't know what job he used to do, he used to have these Spanish girls go around who would tidy up etc.
29. The caretaker offices used to be at the bottom of Grenfell Tower. I am not sure were he lived.
30. Before the Regeneration
31. Before the regeneration the building was very different.
32. Exterior
33. Before this the layout of the exterior was very different. The cladding was not there. There was concrete. The block seemed a lot steadier because of all the stuff that was inside.
34. On the outside the school was not there and there was a road that fire engines could go down to get close to Grenfell Tower. This was in the 2000's.
35. The area also did not have the ground floor walkways it does now. It used to be different, than after the flats were regenerated. The ground used to be open and wide and this is where fire engines could have gone if it wasn't for the school and the pool that was built there afterwards.
36. In Grenfell Tower on the bottom floor, there was the concierge and the lifts. There were lifts on the outside of the building as well, for people to access the Doctors and the Social Services as these were located on the bottom floors. They used to be on the Latimer Street Level. These were all made out of glass.
37. There used to be a small boxing club in the boiler room.
38. Interior

39. When Tony moved into Grenfell Tower it had fire hoses pipes and sprinklers. The fire hoses and sprinklers were on the landings on each floor. The fire hoses were on walls opposite the lift doors, the sprinklers were on each landing. There used to be signs all over the place stating about how to get out if there was a fire. I also remember that there was a sign by the lift stating not to go into the lift if there was a fire. I remember laughing about it with Tony because I thought it was funny that they would need a sign there which was so obvious.
40. Doors
41. The flat itself was also different before the regeneration, I remember the doors were fire doors and the lining of the doors had a red line around the edge which would insulate any fire. The doors were much heavier then as well. They would also spring back. They were made out of wood I believe. They used to be all different colours. I believe that Tony had a blue door.
42. The door before hand, had two hinges one at the top and one at the bottom. There was a hinge in the middle which had a chain within it. The doors were self closing.
43. There were no drafts from the doors before they were changed in the regeneration.
44. Windows
45. The windows were old metal frames.
46. They were old but it was a good old proper council flat and was much safer than they made it after the regeneration work.
47. Electricity
48. All of the items would use electricity, they never had gas at this stage, prior to the regeneration.
49. Landing
50. The landing are also had more smoke alarms, they had around about three if I remember correctly. They had the fire hoses as well on each of the floors and I remember it being on the wall next to Tony's flat.
51. After the Regeneration
52. After the regeneration, this is when all the problems came in.
53. Exterior

54. Cladding
55. They bought the cladding in, it was not there before. I will admit it did make the flats warmer.
56. Lifts
57. The lifts were moved as well, they were moved forward. There was also plastic casing around the lifts. The ones on the outside were now gone. I don't remember any real problems with the lifts to be honest. I know Tony got stuck in them before the regeneration but he was out within 5 minutes because of the concierge.
58. If not he would probably go into one of his mates house. This was either Dennis or Steve.
59. Stairs
60. I would not say was no obstructions around them, but items were around due to the regeneration. They never changed them structurally. I remember they were made out of concrete and had yellow poles. There was enough room to get out from the stairs, they weren't massive. They were always cold and drafty.
61. Flats
62. They changed the bottom flats and added a couple of floors on the lower floors. Tony's flat. Tony was on the 19th floor and was the fourth flat, hence his flat was number 194.
63. Noise and Smells
64. You would smell food on the landing when other people were cooking, but no one really made a complaint. Grenfell was like its own community, they used to look after each other.
65. There was never rubbish on the floor, you might get the odd bit now and then, but nothing extra-ordinary. People used to leave items that they did not want outside and it would have a sign please take me. There would be bags around by the dust bin chute.
66. I remember the landing used to echo. You could hear someone shutting the door, it would echo through the building.
67. I do remember in Tony's flat that you could always hear the lift after the regeneration, I suppose you could hear it more as he was more near the lifts. He knew when someone was coming to visit as he could hear the lift go. It was like you could hear the wind on the evaluator shaft.

68. Interior
69. Gas boiler
70. The first thing they changed was that they made each apartment have gas boilers and I remember that the gas boiler were next to the hallway as you would enter into the flat. On the bottom of the cupboard would be the electrical box and above was the boiler. I remember saying to Tony that this was a fire hazard and this is when he made a complaint to the TMO. I do not remember when he made these complaints but they will all be in his records.
71. They also put gas pipes into the house, and I remember the gas pipes ran from the outside of the apartment through to his apartment. I did not like these pipes being there and I also said to Tony that he should complain about these. They carried them in a plastic conduit. I remember speaking to one of Tony's neighbours about all this gas work and that it was a fire waiting to happen.
72. The gas pipes ran up the stairwell and the pipes were boxed in with plastic conduit. The pipework then went onto the ceiling of the floor landing and went into each flat on the ceiling. A hole was cut above the door and the pipework went into Tony's flat in conduit. Once the pipework was in Tony's flat there was no conduit on it but it was right by the front door into the boiler. Tony complained to the TMO about gas piping on the stairs. Tony was in the TMO a week before the fire.
73. Doors
74. The doors were changed also, the new ones were made out of plastic. They were like a caravan door. They were not fit for purpose. I believe that they were hollow through the door. They were nothing like the old ones. I knew this was a problem. Tony did complain to me about the drafts and I knew that he made a complaint to the TMO about this. I knew there were drafts as on the night in question black smoke went through the gaps and Tony could see this. The doors did not self close in the same way as the old doors did.
75. I remember of all the doors were white. I remember that they were all changed on his floor.
76. There was no spring back on the door, when the door was opened it stayed opened. The wind would blow the door shut, that is how thing they were. I do not remember whether Tony made a complaint about the door.
77. I do not remember there being damage on the door. I believe they had 3 hinges. I really did not like these doors they were flimsy.

78. Regarding other doors around the property, I know that Tony took one door off in the sitting room, but the other doors would always be open. I know the kitchen door was always open, as he used to put his rubbish bag on the handle to keep it open.
79. I cannot remember if they changed the internal doors afterwards.
80. Windows
81. I will admit that the new windows were nice and clean but the problem was they were also made out of plastic. I know when I was on the phone with Tony during the fire that the windows were melting and the lights had gone off. I heard a window smash whilst talking on the night of the fire to Tony on the phone. I believe this was in his flat. He said he could not touch them as they were too hot. He told me the windows were melting.
82. Bathroom
83. There were many problems with Tony's bathroom. The bath was hanging off the wall and the sink was broken, what I mean is that the sink could move around, there was no under part bit, there were just pipes on the bottom.
84. I know Tony made a lot of complaints about this, and it never got repaired.
85. The extractor fan never worked.
86. Kitchen
87. The kitchen had problems as well. There was damp on the wall by where the sink was, there was mould up the wall in the sitting room where it had leaked from the kitchen to the sitting room. They did come to repair this, but they did not do a good job, they scrapped the mould off and re-plastered but it was always damp, so they could never sign it off as completed.
88. Sitting room
89. Through the damp in the kitchen this also caused damage to Tony's wooden floor, it made it all bubbly. There was an electrical problem with the plug in the front room and Tony just put black tape over it. He reported this to the TMO but they never did anything to fix it.
90. Lights

91. I remember there being around 3-4 lights around the flat, I don't know if they were changed after the regeneration. I know on the night of the fire that all the lights went off. I estimate that they went off around 2.00am, I told him to try to keep his phone screen on.
92. Fire alarms
93. I do not remember there being any fire alarms inside the flat. I believe there were some outside of the flats. I remember when I was on the phone and he went out to the landing I could hear the fire alarms going off because of the fire. When he went into the flat I did not hear anything. I am unsure of the time of this.
94. Compensation
95. They did give Tony around £250 as compensation because of the damage to the floor etc. but they never completed the job.
96. Complaints
97. I know for a fact that 8 months before the fire he had made two complaints and went nearly every 2 weeks to the TMO and then one on Latimer Road where they used to have a surgery there.
98. The TMO was the Tenants Managements Organisation and it was on Kensal Road. I know at least twice I went with him to complain about all of the above.
99. Fire safety
100. After the regeneration, there was no fire safety, there were no more signs that used to be there. They never had any fire training. I remember them having the signs around saying Fire Escape above the stairs, but after the regeneration they were gone.
101. The one thing I feel strongly about is the stay put policy. The reason is I know for a fact that Tony listened to the fire brigade because he believed that they were going to save him. He did as they instructed him to do.
102. I know for a fact that he would have left the flat and would have made it down the stairs if he went when I told him to. He would probably not have knocked on the neighbours doors, but I know he would have got himself out. This is what you got taught at school, I mean the first thing is that you should leave.
103. Staying in the property

104. I knew all about the Grenfell Tower as before the regeneration I used to visit there about 4 times a week.
105. Hours leading up to the fire
106. Myself, my Mum and Romany (Who is my niece) was in our old flat, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Basically, the week before my car had broken down which was at the Chalet. Me and my mum had to get a cab home on that occasion.
107. Tony was with Alfie in Stanwell and was by the horses field.
108. It was roughly around 4pm on that day that I rang Tony and asked him whether he could run me down to Leysdown so that I could get my car done. He said that he could not do it before 5pm and I said yeah that is fine.
109. The Chalet address is [REDACTED]
110. Around about 5pm, he came to pick us to take us down there. We went down there via the M25 and we were hungry on the way down and we stopped off at a service station at Cobham and had MacDonald's. All the way that afternoon Tony was really weird, he was speaking about all the things that he was regretting. He mentioned all the things that he regretted with his life. He said that the two main things that he regretted was arguing with Amelia who is Charlie's girlfriend and he regretted losing his family. What he meant by this, was losing our family unit.
111. At the time me and Tony were not together, but we still had a very good relationship, he would only stay at his flat around 2 to 3 times per week. We would see each other every day. I think what Tony was meaning by losing his family unit, was us all together under one roof and being a family. He also explained to me that he had stopped smoking, at this point he had stopped smoking for 4 days.
112. How can I explain it to anyone, that day was like any other normal day.
113. At around 10:35pm, Tony had said that he should be going home and I said to him that he should stay the night. He said that he would go back up and that he would collect Charlie and then he would come back down the next morning and I said alright.
114. He said that he would be going straight home, he was not picking anyone else up, it was just him going home. He then left and he went to the gate and shut it. He turned around and said that he would see me when he gets back.

115. He then started to drive out and as he was driving out he has to go past my brother's Chalet and even my brother said to him not to return and that he could stay with him. Out of the family my brother Lee Anderson was the last to see him.
116. That was the last face to face contact I had with him.
117. I did not think anything of it, like I said it was a normal day.
118. Tony did not text me or ring me to say that he had gone home, I do not know what time he has arrived home. The police have shown me a picture of Tony entering the Tower at 12:47am and was going into the lift, but otherwise than that I do not know.
119. I would say from the Chalet to Grenfell Tower, it must have taken him around 1 hour and 10 minutes to get home.
120. The fire
121. I went to bed in the Chalet and then at around 1:22am I got a phone call from Tony. I automatically thought that it had to be something to do with Charlie, I had no idea it was about the fire at the time. I knew something had gone wrong because Tony would never call late unless it was an emergency.
122. I remember the call was definitely at 1:22am as I have a clock which is next to my bed in the Chalet. The first words that Tony spoke were "Cordy, Cordy," I said to him "What? What's the matter?" I thought he said "The flat is on fire." I said "what?" He said "The flats are on fire." I said to him "Tony get out of there you are on the 22nd floor." He said "No it is ok, they are coming to get me." I said to him "Who is coming to get you?" He said "The Fire Brigade." I said to him "Alright then" and then he said "You better let me go in case they want to get in contact with me." I said alright then.
123. Tony had said that he had rang the Fire Services beforehand.
124. Tony only had his mobile phone, he does not have a house phone.
125. I estimate I spoke to Tony about 5 or 6 times that night. We were calling each other. I estimate that I called 999 at least 4 times. The first time I spoke to Tony was at 1.22am and the last time I spoke to him was at around 2.42am. I was using numbers [REDACTED]
126. I then rang him back and said to him "Have they come to get you yet?" He said that the black smoke was too much and that he could not breathe. I said to him to go to the bathroom and to fill the bath and to put some towels in there and to put it around his face and to make his way downstairs. He said to me "You don't understand Cord, the black

smoke is too much and I can't get to the front door." I said to him "Try Tony Try. Try and get to the front door." He said "For fuck's sake, I can't breathe, I can't breathe. Is this the way I am going to go, is this how I am going to end my life." I said to him "Shut up and listen to me," I said to him to get his phone and his charger and his car keys and put them in a bag and put them down his trousers. I said this because when he gets out he could call us to say that he is out. He then said to me "There is someone on the other line."

127. I then rang the fire services and I spoke to the Kent department and I explained to them that there was a fire in Grenfell Tower and that my husband was on the 22nd floor. They passed me over to the London Fire Brigade department and they said to me that they were going to get him out. I said to them please do not leave him there to die. They said to me that they knew he was there and they were fully aware that he was there and they were going to get him out.
128. I believe during this time before I spoke to Tony again that either Tony rang Alfie or Alfie rang Tony and he was speaking to him.
129. I had put the TV on around this time and I could see how fast the fire had spread, but Tony did not see this at the time.
130. I then spoke to Tony again around about 15 minutes later.
131. In the meantime I know that Tony was talking to Alfie.
132. Alfie at the time was at Sinead's place [REDACTED] and Charlie was with his girlfriend [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
133. I then spoke to Tony on and off at the same time, Alfie was calling him and I was calling the fire services. I could not tell you what time this was.
134. He then said "I am going to jump out of the window." I said to him "You are not doing that to my boys" I said to him "Just get out Tony." At the time of these phone calls, I could hear the smoke alarms but they did not sound like that they were in the flat, to me they sounded like they were coming from outside of the flat. He then said to me that the lights had gone out. I said to him "Just keep touching your phone and there was a light." He then heard his door go, someone was knocking on the door.
135. I believe at this time he was in his sitting room, I don't think he was sitting down I think he was panicking a lot.

136. He then said "They are here, they are here." He was about to switch me off and I said to him to keep me on the phone. He went to the front door.
137. I could then hear a man's voice and the man was screaming help me Tony, please help me. I could hear a baby crying and screaming. These are the voices that haunt me, I could hear the panic in the man's voice. I do not know who they were.
138. Tony said to him "I can't help myself." I did not hear the man's voice after this, I presume this is when Tony must have gone back into the flat. From then on, I could sense a change in Tony and he was more panicking and he was crying. I said to him to throw himself down the chute and he kept saying to me that he could not breathe. He then went back into the living room and I know he went back there as he said to me, that he could hear helicopters. I said to him that he should smash the windows as they were melting so that they would know that he was there. He said he could not and said "For fuck sake the flames are at the window." This was the only time that he mentioned the flames.
139. He also said to me screaming at one point that he was going to die and I said to him that he was not. He also said to me on the phone that his feet were burning.
140. I then came off the phone and I spoke to the Fire Brigade again.
141. He always spoke about the black smoke. He said that it was coming through the windows and the doors. He said that the black smoke was getting worse throughout our phone calls.
142. In the meantime, I was calling the fire services and so was Alfie and they kept saying that not to call him back and that they are going to get him down.
143. One of the last phone calls I had with Tony, all of a sudden it was really weird he was saying that the Fire Brigade must be outside to get him because he said that the black smoke had turned white. I did not know what he was thinking but at the time I presumed it was because he was dying.
144. He then started to beg me saying "Please don't let me die" and I kept screaming at him saying "You are not going to die, get out of the flat." He then said to me that he loved me and that he has always loved me and said for me to tell the boys that I love them as well. He then said "Cord this is it, this is it for me." This is when I started to panic and I kept saying to him over and over "You are not going to fucking die, you are not going to die."
145. I then rang the fire brigade again and said to them about the fire and they said not to call him back and that they are going to talk him down. I did not call Tony.

146. I rang her back around 15 minutes later and spoke to the fire brigade and she said that they have lost contact with him at 3:00am. This is when I spoke really angry and screaming at the fire brigade because they left my husband to die.
147. I spoke to the fire brigade at least 3 times. This was between 1:00am- 3:00am.
148. I tried to call him again to see whether I could have contact with him, but the phone was just constantly ringing out and was ringing until 8am in the morning. This is the reason we thought he must have got out.
149. Throughout the time I spoke to the fire brigade they always told Tony to stay and that they would get him out and this is the reason he stayed. I always said to him that he should have tried to get out. It was only on the last phone call I had with them that they said that they suggested that he should try and get himself out.
150. The morning after the fire
151. I was still at the Chalet, I did not sleep at all that night. I got a cab at 6am in the morning and went to Alfie's house and we picked up Alfie. I would say he is roughly 1 hour away and then we went to the old flat [REDACTED] this is about 5 minutes away from Grenfell Tower.
152. We then went to register Tony missing with the Westway Centre at the Rugby Club as we saw on TV that they were asking family members to report them missing, so this is what we did. I would say this was around 9:00am.
153. That day everything around us was sombre.
154. Timmy Murphy for Dennis Murphy also came with us.
155. Alfie and his mate decided to go around all the local hospitals to check whether he was there, but the hospitals would not help.
156. The following night (15th) someone rang me and told me that they were going to send Family Liaison Officers around. They came around the next day. They came around and I asked them whether they have found Tony and they said no. They originally wanted DNA from the boys in order to help identify him, but they did not need this in the end. They asked me to give a description of Tony and what he was wearing.
157. Description I gave to the police
158. The description I gave to the police was what Tony was wearing on the night as now I have had his clothes bought to me.

159. The description was
- Scars on his nose.
 - No false teeth in.
 - Glasses (Short sighted).
 - Sky blue shorts and white checked lines.
 - Pinky t-shirt (Tie-dye).
 - Black reebok trainers.
 - White socks.
 - Right leg had his boys names on there (Alfie, Charlie and Harriboy).
 - Old tattoos on his arms (Swallows).
 - [REDACTED].
 - Left leg from the top of the calf to the shin had a terrible scar.
 - Scars on his stomach.
 - [REDACTED].
160. I know the description as this is what he was wearing the night before when I saw him at our Chalet.
161. Death
162. I was told about Tony's death the next day after the police had come around (17th).
163. Tony's 999 calls
164. Tony made many 999 calls with regards to the fire, he told me this.
165. Fire Fighters
166. I did not see any fire fighters, I only spoke to the fire brigade on the 999 calls.
167. Statements/ Liaison Officers
168. I have only spoken to my solicitors and the police officers about the Grenfell Tower. I have not given a statement to anyone else.

169. I have good contact with my Liaison officers Sarah and Bromewin, I cannot fault them.
170. I am happy for my statement to be read and made public.
171. I have been on one TV show with Reggie Yates, but this was to speak about Tony's life nothing else.
172. I am willing to give evidence at the Inquiry.
173. I do not want to see any pictures of the Tower. I do not want to return to the Tower.
174. Counselling/Psychologist
175. I have counselling and a psychologist. I have medication because of this. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

STATEMENT OF TRUTH AND CONSENT

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I further confirm that I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed:



Date:

17.5.18