

# OPUS2

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Day 264

April 12, 2022

Opus 2 - Official Court Reporters

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1 Tuesday, 12 April 2022  
 2 (10.00 am)  
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to  
 4 today's hearing. Today we're going to begin hearing  
 5 evidence from those who were directly affected by the  
 6 fire. But before we do that, I'm going to invite  
 7 Mr Keating to make one or two observations.  
 8 Yes, Mr Keating.  
 9 MR KEATING: Good morning, Mr Chairman. Good morning,  
 10 members of the panel.  
 11 Before turning to hear evidence today, we thought it  
 12 would assist you and the members of the public if we  
 13 have a short visual presentation of the locality.  
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes.  
 15 MR KEATING: To that end we have a presentation which has  
 16 been prepared by the Metropolitan Police Service. It's  
 17 labelled a cordons presentation, it focuses on the  
 18 cordons which were in place at the time, but it will  
 19 also assist us in looking at the locality and looking at  
 20 those areas which were evacuated, the evacuated  
 21 premises, and also rest centres, so I use the umbrella  
 22 term as well.  
 23 So, without further ado, if I could invite our  
 24 document presenter to bring up {MET00080826}.  
 25 What I'm going to do, Mr Chairman, with your leave,

1

1 is we'll play it, and from time to time I will pause and  
 2 perhaps draw out and amplify some points which we hope  
 3 will assist.  
 4 So if we could press play, please.  
 5 We will see in a moment that there will be a written  
 6 text setting out the sources of information which the  
 7 Metropolitan Police have used for these cordons, doing  
 8 their best.  
 9 The reference to Inspector Thatcher, who you will  
 10 have heard evidence from in Phase 1, and reference to 13  
 11 centres, which we've asked to be included in this  
 12 presentation.  
 13 If we could press pause there for a moment, just to  
 14 familiarise ourselves with the legend. The red circles  
 15 are the cordon points, which obviously there is a cordon  
 16 which is connected there, and you will see in green text  
 17 a number of the umbrella terms we use for rest centres.  
 18 We will see a better view in a moment of both the  
 19 locality and the rest centres, but I'm going to ask if  
 20 we could press play from now on, please. Thank you.  
 21 This is the same cordon points, but with an overlay  
 22 on an aerial image, and this is the initial cordon we're  
 23 about to see.  
 24 Pausing there for a moment, just in relation to  
 25 that, it's evacuated premises we're about to see.

2

1 A huge amount of people were displaced following the  
 2 fire on 14 June, and what we're going to see in a moment  
 3 doesn't include Bramley House, and the reasons are set  
 4 out there. It includes those which there was a full  
 5 evacuation for.  
 6 So we can press play, please.  
 7 (Pause)  
 8 We'll pause there, thank you.  
 9 So, to assist, I'm sure that the panel is very  
 10 familiar now with the locality, but it perhaps would  
 11 assist everybody, we're going to hear a number of  
 12 addresses. We see Grenfell Tower obviously there in the  
 13 centre, where there is the square, and underneath that  
 14 we see Grenfell Walk, and there's three blocks which  
 15 flow from Grenfell Walk, termed the walkways, or  
 16 sometimes the finger blocks, and we can see from the  
 17 left Hurstway Walk, and we see then in the middle  
 18 Testerton Walk, and then on the right Barandon Walk, and  
 19 then to the right of Grenfell Road there is  
 20 Treadgold House, which was also evacuated.  
 21 Just whilst we're there, we can see some of the rest  
 22 centres which were used, especially the Clement James  
 23 Centre, and I'll return to the Garden Bar in a moment.  
 24 So if we could press play, please.  
 25 (Pause)

3

1 And we can press pause again, please.  
 2 So in relation to this map, it's labelled a rest  
 3 centre map, but it's probably fair to say that that's  
 4 a generic umbrella term. There are a number of specific  
 5 types of rest centre which perhaps we don't need to  
 6 trouble the panel with just now. Also, it is right to  
 7 mention that this does not refer to every locality which  
 8 opened its doors. It's evidenced that a number of  
 9 premises opened their doors on the morning of 14 June,  
 10 giving aid and helping people. What we have is we have  
 11 focused on a number of addresses which we think will  
 12 assist you and members of the public and witnesses going  
 13 forward.  
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Right.  
 15 MR KEATING: Perhaps if I could just talk through those  
 16 addresses to assist.  
 17 If we look at the bottom left, we see Belushi's, and  
 18 Belushi's is in Shepherd's Bush. It's the furthest of  
 19 all the addresses we're really looking at. In relation  
 20 to Belushi's, this was the first location of an official  
 21 rest centre, where David Kerry from RBKC dispatched  
 22 British Red Cross staff to on the morning of 14 June,  
 23 and British Red Cross did attend there to set up a rest  
 24 centre.  
 25 The next address I'd like to turn to is Harrow Club,

4

1 which is the centre of the page on the left. This was  
 2 one of a number of addresses in the community which  
 3 opened its doors spontaneously to assist. In due  
 4 course, British Red Cross staff were sent to that  
 5 address to assist, and people from the Harrow Club were  
 6 then moved very early in the morning of 14 June, perhaps  
 7 between 6 and 7 am, to Portobello Rugby Trust.  
 8 Portobello Rugby Trust can be seen in the centre of  
 9 the page, and that was a premises which again opened its  
 10 doors spontaneously early on the morning of 14 June and  
 11 was significantly involved in providing support on  
 12 14 June and the following days. We'll hear evidence  
 13 from Mark Simms during Module 4, from Portobello Rugby  
 14 Trust.  
 15 We have in the top left the Westway Sports Centre.  
 16 The Westway Sports Centre is an address which we perhaps  
 17 are very familiar with and we've heard a lot about. It,  
 18 too, opened its doors spontaneously on the morning of  
 19 14 June. It later became the site of the consolidated  
 20 rest centre and the official rest centre by the  
 21 evening/night of 14 June, and thereafter it was the  
 22 single official rest centre.  
 23 If we then look at the Clement James Centre and the  
 24 St Clement's Church, they are on the same site, again  
 25 addresses which perhaps we are familiar with, and they

5

1 were active in providing support, again opening their  
 2 doors spontaneously on the morning of 14 June and  
 3 thereafter providing support. Again, we will hear  
 4 evidence from Clare Richards during Module 4.  
 5 St Clement's, together with a number of other faith  
 6 centres — we see the Latimer Christian Centre at the  
 7 top left of the page, beside that we have the  
 8 Notting Hill Methodist Church, we have  
 9 St Francis of Assisi Church down towards the bottom of  
 10 the page, the Al Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre  
 11 at the top of the page, towards Ladbroke Grove — all  
 12 provided support and were the focus for donations on  
 13 14 June and coming days, and the Inquiry's grateful,  
 14 we've received evidence from the vast majority of those  
 15 locations and they've assisted us in our work so far.  
 16 I mentioned the Garden Bar. I was going to refer  
 17 back to that. The Garden Bar is not a rest centre, as  
 18 such. This is an address which is mentioned, and it  
 19 appears on the evidence that this was a location which  
 20 was initially where casualties may have been taken to,  
 21 a clearing station, so to speak, but it is an address  
 22 which you will hear from witnesses in passing and in  
 23 giving evidence about.  
 24 Two other addresses remaining.  
 25 St Mark's Close Children's Resource Centre. Not

6

1 a principal address, but it's referred to in an early  
 2 strategy co-ordination meeting as a principal rest  
 3 centre where other rest centres were going to be  
 4 consolidated into, and that's an area of evidence which  
 5 we will have to examine, why that was mentioned at  
 6 an early meeting as the principal area where there was  
 7 going to be consolidated rest centres. So that's  
 8 St Mark's Close.  
 9 Finally, just to the right is the Salvation Army.  
 10 The Salvation Army again were involved, and they were  
 11 the location of the initial friends and family reception  
 12 centre, before it appears on the evidence that was  
 13 transferred over to the Westway Sports Centre by  
 14 15 June, which then became — those activities were  
 15 contained within the Westway Sports Centre.  
 16 So if I could press play, please.  
 17 (Pause)  
 18 We're now going to see the traffic cordon, which is  
 19 wider than the cordon we've looked at, so this is not to  
 20 be confused with the cordon we were looking at  
 21 initially. The red is references for police serial  
 22 numbers and perhaps doesn't need to trouble us, and this  
 23 is a close-up of those traffic cordons.  
 24 (Pause)  
 25 We're about to see a visual aid of perhaps the same

7

1 point, but just really those dots are joined, and that  
 2 shows the established cordon points as of 10 o'clock on  
 3 14 June, and perhaps an indication of the amount of  
 4 displaced people there would have been at that time in  
 5 the area, including all the walkways and Grenfell Tower.  
 6 There's perhaps about a minute left of the  
 7 presentation, perhaps not too much of material which is  
 8 pertinent to our initial enquiries, but what I'm going  
 9 to do is just let it play and perhaps leave no more  
 10 commentary.  
 11 (Pause)  
 12 Perhaps the final point to make is that obviously  
 13 the cordon changed from 14 June and, in due course, it  
 14 reduced in size. The Metropolitan Police have tried to  
 15 assist us with the iterations in relation to that, but  
 16 in terms of the first seven days, the evidence is  
 17 limited as to the reduction of the cordon.  
 18 (Pause)  
 19 We can stop that there. Thank you.  
 20 Mr Chairman, just to thank the Metropolitan Police  
 21 and their officers for their assistance in relation to  
 22 that, and Ms Winfield, who has been very helpful in  
 23 accommodating our requests in relation to that.  
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you very much.  
 25 MR KEATING: I think the next stage now is Mr Millett is

8

1 going to call our first witness.  
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Right. Thank you very much indeed.  
 3 (Pause)  
 4 Yes, Mr Millett.  
 5 MR MILLETT: Good morning, Mr Chairman.  
 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Take your time to get set up.  
 7 MR MILLETT: Good morning, members of the panel.  
 8 We thought it was better not to take up your time  
 9 rising, and we can just get straight on.  
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes, of course.  
 11 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, our first oral witness for this  
 12 module in Phase 2 is Mr Karim Mussilhy, who I would now  
 13 like, please, to call.  
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes, thank you very much.  
 15 MR KARIM MUSSILHY (sworn)  
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you very much. Now, do sit  
 17 down and make yourself comfortable.  
 18 THE WITNESS: Thank you.  
 19 (Pause)  
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right?  
 21 Yes, Mr Millett.  
 22 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY  
 23 MR MILLETT: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairman.  
 24 Mr Mussilhy, thank you very much for coming today  
 25 and assisting us with our investigations in this part of

1 the Inquiry. We're extremely grateful to you.  
 2 By way of introduction, just a few comments, if  
 3 I can.  
 4 Can I ask you, please, first, to keep your voice up  
 5 so that the person who sits to your right, behind the  
 6 screen there, can get down everything you say clearly  
 7 and accurately. Also — and you have heard this  
 8 mentioned to other witnesses previously — but don't  
 9 shake your head or nod your head; you have to say "no"  
 10 or "yes" as the case may be.  
 11 A. Okay. Okay.  
 12 Q. If any of my questions are unclear or you would like me  
 13 to repeat them, I can do that. That's not a problem at  
 14 all.  
 15 A. Sure.  
 16 Q. We will take a break at some point during your evidence,  
 17 probably around about an hour's time, but if you need  
 18 a break at any earlier time or any other time, just let  
 19 us know and we can take a break.  
 20 A. Thank you.  
 21 Q. Now, you have made one statement to the Inquiry, and  
 22 that is at {IWS00001783}. It will come up on the screen  
 23 in front of you. You can see from the top right-hand  
 24 corner that it's dated 27 February 2020.  
 25 Can I just ask you to confirm that that is the first

1 page of your witness statement to the Inquiry in this  
 2 module?  
 3 A. Yes, that's the first page of my statement.  
 4 Q. Yes.  
 5 Now, if we go to page 18, you can see that there's  
 6 a signature there.  
 7 (Pause)  
 8 A. It still hasn't come up.  
 9 MR MILLETT: No, it hasn't.  
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Sometimes it's a little slow, but it  
 11 will come in due course.  
 12 (Pause)  
 13 MR MILLETT: Yes, there it is. You will see there is  
 14 a statement of truth and a signature, and a date below  
 15 it of 27 February 2020.  
 16 Is that your signature?  
 17 A. Yes, that is my signature.  
 18 Q. Have you had the opportunity to read this statement  
 19 recently?  
 20 A. Yes, I have.  
 21 Q. And can you confirm that the contents are true?  
 22 A. Yes, I can.  
 23 Q. Thank you.  
 24 Now, I'm going to turn to some background matters  
 25 first of all.

1 Is it right that you had a very close connection to  
 2 Grenfell Tower because a number of the members of your  
 3 family had lived there?  
 4 A. Yes, I did have a very close connection to  
 5 Grenfell Tower. My uncle — my great uncle,  
 6 Uncle Mohamed, along with my grandmother and her husband  
 7 at the time and my mum and my auntie, Noha, all lived  
 8 together in Grenfell Tower for a period of time,  
 9 I believe the flat number was 171. And then when I was  
 10 born, I lived in Egypt for a small period of time, and  
 11 then I returned and was brought up by my grandmother and  
 12 granddad, because unfortunately my parents weren't  
 13 around, and I spent a lot of time playing around  
 14 Grenfell Tower, around the walkways. Just underneath  
 15 the tower as well, there were — before they built the  
 16 academy, they had football pitches there and we spent  
 17 a lot of time there as well. So a lot of my childhood  
 18 was spent in and around Grenfell Tower.  
 19 Q. Now, your uncle, Hesham — and forgive me if I've  
 20 mispronounced it, is it Hesham?  
 21 A. Yeah, it's Hesham.  
 22 Q. Your uncle, Hesham Rahman, moved into flat 204, I think,  
 23 in 2012; is that right?  
 24 A. That's correct, yes.  
 25 Q. You say, I think, in your statement at paragraph 6

1 {IWS00001783/2} that he was a big part of your life.  
 2 Could you just expand on that a little?  
 3 A. Yeah. Sorry. So like I mentioned, I grew up without my  
 4 parents, unfortunately, my dad wasn't around and my mum  
 5 not so much, so my grandparents became my parents, and  
 6 we all lived together on the Lancaster West Estate, and  
 7 when my grandfather died, when I was around 12 or  
 8 13 years old, Uncle Hesham very quickly took that  
 9 father-figure role. He saw how upset I was, and I knew  
 10 it had made him upset as well, but he could see how much  
 11 it had affected me, and he quickly sort of put his arm  
 12 around me and took care of me. And as I grew up and  
 13 sort of went through my teenage years, he was a massive  
 14 part of that in terms of, you know, football and telling  
 15 me -- teaching me how to read and write Arabic, teaching  
 16 me about my religion, and was just the only sort of  
 17 predominant male figure in my life growing up.  
 18 Q. Even after you had your own family, is it right he had  
 19 an important role to play?  
 20 A. Yeah. I mean, I didn't see him as much as I would have  
 21 liked to. I met my wife and we moved in together and we  
 22 started a family. But we stayed in contact. He always  
 23 made an effort to send presents for my kids' birthdays  
 24 and speak to us on birthdays and stuff like that. And  
 25 when he moved into his flat in 2012, and my daughter had

1 just been born, you know, he saw her quite a bit, and he  
 2 would always, like I mentioned, send her presents, and  
 3 I was around him quite a bit during that time because  
 4 he'd just moved into his flat.  
 5 But, yes, up until he passed away, he was a massive  
 6 part of my life.  
 7 Q. Now, I would like to ask you next about the night of the  
 8 fire, and I'm going to use your witness statement to try  
 9 to keep as near as possible to the chronological order  
 10 of events as the night progressed.  
 11 So, first, I think it's right, is it, that you  
 12 became aware first of the fire from your wife?  
 13 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 14 Q. At about 6 am.  
 15 A. Yes. I was living in Feltham at the time, and I was  
 16 working in the city, in Mayfair, so I was waking up  
 17 really early to get ready for work, and I woke up at  
 18 around 6 am. My routine was, you know, I'd wake up and  
 19 get in the shower and get ready and have a coffee, and  
 20 my wife would wake up with me to help me, and I remember  
 21 being in the bathroom and hearing this scream. I'd  
 22 never heard my wife scream like this before, and it  
 23 scared me. It felt like somebody had, you know, broke  
 24 into the house. And she quickly rushed into the  
 25 bathroom and showed me -- I don't remember whether it

1 was a picture or a video, but of Grenfell completely  
 2 engulfed in flames, and I was just shocked and quickly  
 3 got out. I tried to call Uncle Hesham. The phone just  
 4 kept ringing, so at that time I didn't really think  
 5 that -- or believe, at least, that he was in any sort of  
 6 serious condition or in trouble or anything like that,  
 7 because I heard the phone ringing.  
 8 I called my grandmother, and she had said to me that  
 9 she'd spoken to him earlier in the night, but hadn't  
 10 been able to speak to him for the past few hours.  
 11 I think I left a message for my boss to say that  
 12 something had happened, but I was going to be in work  
 13 a little bit late -- so, again, not realising the  
 14 severity of the situation even then -- and I made my way  
 15 down, and during my journey, all I kept doing was kept  
 16 calling him and it just kept ringing, and then I was  
 17 calling everyone else in my family -- my great uncle, my  
 18 grandmother again, my brother, my sister -- and just  
 19 trying to see if anyone had any sort of more information  
 20 about speaking to him or anything like that. And that's  
 21 how I found out, basically.  
 22 Sorry if I've gone a bit too far.  
 23 Q. No, no, it's helpful.  
 24 You arrived, I think you say, at about 7.20.  
 25 A. Yes. Yeah, around -- I would say, yeah, about 7.15,

1 7.20 in the morning. There was a lot of traffic as you  
 2 came closer into the area, so it was really hard to try  
 3 to get in, and I remember I came in through sort of near  
 4 where the St Clement James Centre is, and I was able to  
 5 park my car somewhere not far from there. But, again,  
 6 there were a lot of, you know, people around, there was  
 7 police at certain places, sort of stopping random people  
 8 from coming in, I guess, but that didn't work very well.  
 9 And, yeah, that's when I first got to the area, was  
 10 around then.  
 11 Q. How would you describe the scene that you saw when you  
 12 arrived?  
 13 A. I mean, it was just utter madness and chaos, and it was  
 14 just so surreal, and when I got there and I looked up at  
 15 the tower, the top floor had flames still coming out of  
 16 it, you know, thick black smoke, flames coming out of  
 17 it. From that part of the area where I was, I couldn't  
 18 see directly into uncle's flat until I sort of got  
 19 closer towards my nan's house, but you could tell that  
 20 the whole top floor was completely engulfed in flames  
 21 and then a couple of floors below it, and I just  
 22 remember thinking: oh my gosh, like, this is crazy, but  
 23 surely everyone had been rescued, people had been saved,  
 24 you know, with the amount of firefighters that I saw,  
 25 and I remember I saw a group of them crying, crying

1 together, and I sort of like — my initial thought was  
 2 I understand this is, you know, quite a crazy situation,  
 3 but shouldn't you guys be inside saving people? And  
 4 that's what I'd initially thought, I'd initially thought  
 5 that people had been rescued, that Uncle Hesham was one  
 6 of the people that had been saved. I couldn't believe  
 7 what I was looking up at. It was like something from  
 8 a horror film, you know, or a disaster film. It was  
 9 just crazy.

10 And the smell. I can still remember the smell of  
 11 this burning plasticky — I mean, I'd never smelt  
 12 anything like this before in my life, and I still  
 13 remember the smell to this day. And then later on,  
 14 you know, I had some of the stuff all over me.

15 But, again, I'm sorry if I've gone too far.

16 Q. No, no.

17 I think at that stage you went to your grandmother's  
 18 house.

19 A. Yes. So my grandmother lives on the Lower  
 20 Clarendon Walk, which is part of the Lancaster West  
 21 Estate. I mean, you can practically see Grenfell from  
 22 every part of nan's place, really, except if you're at  
 23 the back garden. And I went there, that's where nan  
 24 was. My great uncle, Mohamed, was there too, and  
 25 shortly afterwards my brother and my sister turned up.

17

1 And just in front of where my nan lives, she has a front  
 2 garden and also sort of like this green area where  
 3 people sort of come through to get to Verity Close or  
 4 different parts of the estate, and it was almost  
 5 completely full with, you know, unrecognisable people,  
 6 whether they were journalists or, you know, just  
 7 volunteers, I don't know, and we went there, and my  
 8 grandmother's neighbour and also really close family  
 9 friends, her daughter, Jamie, and her husband, Mahad,  
 10 were also my friends, and they were one of the first to  
 11 escape from the tower, so I was initially speaking to  
 12 them, you know, "Did you see uncle?" They knew uncle,  
 13 they knew what he looked like, they knew he lived in the  
 14 tower, so I was asking them, "Did you see uncle? Did  
 15 you speak to him? Do you know what happened to him?",  
 16 and they didn't, and — but they did say to me that some  
 17 people who had made it out have ended up at the  
 18 Rugby Portobello Club. So it was at that moment  
 19 I quickly realised: right, that's where I need to go.

20 I mean, I think it's important for the Inquiry to  
 21 remember that during this time and with everything that  
 22 was happening and going on, and seeing the despair in my  
 23 family, you go into this, as they say, fight or flight  
 24 mode, if I'm even saying it right, and all I was  
 25 thinking about was: I need to find Uncle Hesham, I need

18

1 to find out what's going on with Uncle Hesham.

2 So I remember at that moment, once they said to me  
 3 that the Rugby Portobello Club had opened — and I know  
 4 the Rugby Portobello Club, you know, it's one of the  
 5 places in the community that I'd spent a lot of times as  
 6 a kid, you know, going to discos and doing all sorts of,  
 7 you know, silly things as a kid growing up and playing  
 8 around with friends, so I knew the place very well,  
 9 I even knew some of the staff that worked there, so  
 10 that's where I went, and ... yeah.

11 Q. Did you have any understanding at that stage about the  
 12 official status of the Rugby Portobello location or any  
 13 other rest centres?

14 A. Sorry, what do you mean?

15 Q. Were you just told that's a place to go and you were  
 16 given no further information?

17 A. No, all I was told was some of the survivors — some of  
 18 the people that had escaped the fire had gone to the  
 19 Rugby Portobello Club and were in there.

20 Q. Right. And you went there, I think?

21 A. I went there straight away, directly.

22 Q. Right. Roughly what time was that?

23 A. I mean, after I — I'd got there and I'd spent a little  
 24 bit of time at nan's place, maybe between 9.00 and 10.00  
 25 in the morning, something like that. I just don't

19

1 remember exactly off the top of my head, but around that  
 2 time. And, I mean, even just the journey to get to the  
 3 Rugby Portobello Club was a difficult journey. It was  
 4 a short walk from nan's place but, I mean, it was —  
 5 like I mentioned earlier, the place was just engulfed  
 6 with people, from all over the place, and I think I say  
 7 in my statement that it was like carnival, and actually  
 8 it wasn't like carnival, it was more busier than  
 9 carnival, because usually carnival is busier towards  
 10 Ladbroke Grove and Portobello, and in these type of  
 11 areas, you know, not so much. But with this, I mean, it  
 12 was just overwhelming with the amount of people. You  
 13 really had to sort of, you know, almost like push your  
 14 way through to try to get to some of these places.

15 And because I wasn't a survivor or somebody that  
 16 lived in the tower, it was very difficult for me to try  
 17 to convince people to let me in or find anything out  
 18 from my uncle. Naturally people were sort of trying to  
 19 protect themselves, because there were massive  
 20 safeguarding issues. I mean, just outside of nan's  
 21 house, what we experienced personally, you know, the  
 22 amount of journalists that came into the area, secretly  
 23 filming people, recording people, I mean, they were just  
 24 absolute parasites, just trying to feed and attach  
 25 themselves to vulnerable people, and, you know, I was

20

1 told things about people turning up to hospitals and  
2 hotels — but this was later on during the week — where  
3 some of the families and survivors were, you know,  
4 trying to leech on to vulnerable people and, you know,  
5 turning up with cameras and stuff like that, and it was  
6 just wrong.

7 So this was a massive issue, and I feel that  
8 somebody in authority, whether it be the council or the  
9 police or the government, should have protected us.  
10 There was no protection for us. These people came from  
11 anywhere. I mean, a lot of great people came and helped  
12 the community organise themselves and sort of led the  
13 donations and volunteers, et cetera, and it was  
14 fantastic, but there were also a lot of people that came  
15 from outside the community who weren't directly involved  
16 that were trying to leech on to vulnerable survivors and  
17 bereaved. And this is, you know, a big safeguarding  
18 issues. The families weren't protected at the time when  
19 they were going through the worst, you know?

20 Q. You mention the conditions in the streets in your  
21 statement. Let's look at what you say.

22 Can we go, please, to page 6 of your statement  
23 {IWS00001783/6}, please, paragraph 26 at the bottom of  
24 the screen. You say there:

25 "The streets were full of local residents and the

1 media and there was a lot of people outside the Rugby  
2 Club. It was chaos on the street, there were so many  
3 people and everyone was moving around. It felt as  
4 crowded and busy as the area feels during carnival."

5 My question on that is: do you remember seeing  
6 anybody from authorities such as RBKC or perhaps the  
7 TMO, or anybody else in a position of governmental or  
8 other kind of authority like that, signposting or  
9 providing information?

10 A. I saw absolutely nobody. And it's crazy to think about  
11 it now, with all of the chaos and all of the madness  
12 that was going on. And I remember very vividly,  
13 you know, who I spoke to, who I saw, what I saw, and  
14 I — every time I turned a corner, I would expect to see  
15 somebody, I don't know, in a high-vis and a clipboard,  
16 but I never did. It was either people that I had knew  
17 that lived in the area that came to help, or people that  
18 had just volunteered their time, and those were the only  
19 people that I was speaking to. Not at any stage during  
20 any of this did I see anybody from the council, the  
21 government, or anything like that. Just police.

22 It seemed that they were more concerned about  
23 an uprising or unrest than they were about looking after  
24 the families. There was more concern about riots and  
25 stuff like that than there was about looking after us,

1 running around with this burnt material all over our  
2 clothes, not knowing anything, and speaking to random  
3 strangers, trying to get any bit of information.

4 Q. And did you get any other information there in that busy  
5 street at the time about where you might be able to —  
6 A. So I was able to — I got to the Rugby Portobello Club,  
7 and I spoke to a couple of people outside, asking them  
8 if they'd seen uncle. I believe it was Turufat and her  
9 husband, Abraham, and I also spoke to Zoe and her  
10 partner, David, at the time. And then I was able to  
11 convince them to let me into the Rugby Portobello Club,  
12 because, like I mentioned earlier, because I hadn't  
13 escaped the tower, it was hard to convince people to let  
14 me into these centres to look for uncle. But because  
15 I knew a couple of people that worked there and I was  
16 a familiar face, they trusted me to go inside.

17 I went inside, Mahad and Jamie were also there, and  
18 that's where I first saw Ed and Willie, and — amongst  
19 other survivors, I think Hamid was there as well,  
20 Turufat and Abraham were there also, and I could see  
21 that they were organising themselves, because they'd  
22 pretty much been left alone to do so. So they were  
23 putting together lists of people that they knew that had  
24 made it out and were sort of hanging them on the walls,  
25 and were just really sort of putting their arms around

1 each other to try to help themselves find basics like  
2 clothes and food and a phone and, you know, how to get  
3 your driver's licence sorted and stuff like that. And  
4 it was at that moment where I realised, you know: this  
5 isn't where uncle is, this isn't where I need to be.  
6 I'm not — you know, obviously I spoke to a few people  
7 and I saw the lists of the names that they believed had  
8 made it out, and Uncle Hesham wasn't on any of these  
9 lists, so I felt I needed to leave and continue my  
10 search.

11 Q. Again, was anybody in an official capacity there,  
12 high-vis, clipboard?

13 A. No, no.

14 Q. Do you know what system they were operating to tell  
15 people apart, so as to be able to let them in or not?  
16 What were the criteria that they were using to allow  
17 people entry?

18 A. So at first I believe that they were — every person  
19 that had made it out of the tower, I don't think that  
20 there was a system where they checked whether you was  
21 a — you know, you'd just escaped or not. I think that  
22 you could quite easily tell — you know, some people  
23 were in their pyjamas and stuff like that. But then  
24 once they were in, you know, they would take their name  
25 down and what flat number they were from, and then they

1 knew who was in, and that was really -- I mean, there  
 2 wasn't anything complicated about it, but it was  
 3 important that they kept it as sort of tight-knit as  
 4 possible because of all of the chaos that was going on  
 5 and, like I mentioned earlier, people trying to get  
 6 inside and get close and whatever.  
 7 But there wasn't any sort of like particular  
 8 operating system, if you will. It was quite, you know,  
 9 basic.  
 10 Q. Did you get any kind of understanding -- and I know it  
 11 must have been very difficult -- about what they were  
 12 doing with the information, what those at the Rugby  
 13 Portobello Trust were doing with the information about  
 14 who had come into there from the building?  
 15 A. I think at that time they were just sort of keeping it  
 16 to themselves. When I say to themselves, I mean, like,  
 17 you know, keeping it to the people that were running or  
 18 looking after the Rugby Portobello Club, or the rest  
 19 centre, if you will, in order just to know who had come  
 20 in, who's here, who's inside, and it was just more for  
 21 themselves and for the survivors, really, because that's  
 22 how people were trying to keep track of who'd made it  
 23 out and who hadn't.  
 24 Q. But so far as you could see -- is this right? -- they  
 25 weren't then disseminating that information to any

1 central or official hub?  
 2 A. Well, there was nowhere to send it to. There was no  
 3 information about, you know, "If you gather information  
 4 or if you have information on people that had made it  
 5 out or people that were still missing, send it to this  
 6 email address", for example. There wasn't any of that.  
 7 So ...  
 8 Q. Were you surprised at the time, do you remember, that  
 9 there was nobody at RP with an official status from RBKC  
 10 or central government, perhaps, or the TMO?  
 11 A. Yeah, of course. I -- like I mentioned earlier, every  
 12 time I was out and about, running around, at every turn  
 13 I would take, I would be thinking: okay, I'm going to  
 14 see someone. Okay, I'm going to see someone now. I'm  
 15 going to see someone now. And it just never happened.  
 16 I never saw anybody. And it shocked me, it surprised  
 17 me, but I guess I wasn't thinking about it so much at  
 18 the time, when I was running around just trying to find  
 19 uncle, but I started thinking about it more and more  
 20 once I was becoming even more frustrated, because  
 21 I wasn't allowed in some of these places, I wasn't able  
 22 to find out who was inside and the list of people that  
 23 they had there, and I just wish that there had been  
 24 somebody that I could go to, whether it be from RBKC or  
 25 the TMO, to sort of say, "Look, this is my uncle, this

1 is who he was, this is where he lived, they're not  
 2 letting me into these places, they're not letting me  
 3 find out what had happened to him, can you help, you  
 4 know, where else do I need to go, what else do I need to  
 5 do, maybe you can go inside and find out these things  
 6 for me", and it just never happened.  
 7 And as the days went on, it just became more and  
 8 more apparent and more and more frustrating that -- the  
 9 realisation of, you know, we were completely left alone.  
 10 We were abandoned. We were abandoned in the worst way  
 11 possible while we were looking for our relatives. And  
 12 they could have helped. You know, we were in such  
 13 a dark limbo for a long time. You know, we'll probably  
 14 talk about this later, but we didn't find out that uncle  
 15 was officially dead until August, you know, and the fire  
 16 happened in June, of course. And even to this day,  
 17 I don't think anybody from the council or the TMO has  
 18 ever contacted my family about the death of my uncle or  
 19 my uncle being missing. I think the only time we got  
 20 contacted was my great uncle, Mohamed, was asked by the  
 21 TMO to be a translator for them. That was the only time  
 22 that they contacted us.  
 23 And as we speak more later this morning, we'll find  
 24 out more about the severity of their abandonment towards  
 25 my family personally. But we were left alone. We were

1 left to suffer publicly.  
 2 Q. Now, let's just go back to -- because we'll take it in  
 3 slow stages -- your statement at the foot of page 6  
 4 {IWS00001783/6}, paragraph 26. You can see you say  
 5 there:  
 6 "When I got to the entrance of the club I spoke to  
 7 people who were volunteering there and I told them I was  
 8 looking [for] uncle Hesham who lived on the 23rd floor  
 9 of the Tower and was now missing. They let me inside.  
 10 I saw that the volunteers had made a written list of  
 11 people who were recorded as having survived. I checked  
 12 the list and uncle Hesham's name wasn't written down."  
 13 Did you find out what the process was for collating  
 14 that list, who was in charge of it, where they were  
 15 getting the information from? Did you find that out?  
 16 A. So what I knew was that there were a couple of  
 17 volunteers sitting at the entrance or sitting by the  
 18 entrance of the Rugby Portobello Club, and they had  
 19 these big I don't know if it's A1 pieces of paper that  
 20 they were just writing on using coloured highlighters,  
 21 and I assumed their process was they were writing down  
 22 the names of the people that had come in. Right? So,  
 23 for example, Ed's name was on there and Willie's name  
 24 was on there because they were already inside, and  
 25 I could see that uncle's name wasn't on there, but



1 I just hoped that, you know, they'd missed his name or  
 2 thought he was somebody else or whatever, and I just had  
 3 to just go in and see for myself.  
 4 But there was no — again, it was just simple as  
 5 a piece of paper, a pen, we need to try to find out who  
 6 had made it out, who was here with us, and who did we  
 7 still need to be looking for.  
 8 Q. On that last point, was there a system in place?  
 9 I mean, did they say to you, "Well, he's not here, your  
 10 uncle's not here, but what's his name, what are his  
 11 details, what flat number was he in?"  
 12 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.  
 13 Q. They did?  
 14 A. Yeah, so what happened was I believe I wrote his name  
 15 down on the paper. I think there was a paper of people  
 16 that were still, like, missing, I guess. I mean,  
 17 I don't remember if it was just a list of people that  
 18 were missing, but I do remember putting Uncle Hesham's  
 19 name on the paper and his flat number, and I think even  
 20 my mobile number, so that if anyone heard or said  
 21 anything while I was somewhere else, you know, they knew  
 22 how to get hold of me.  
 23 Q. How long roughly do you recall spending at the Rugby  
 24 Portobello rest centre?  
 25 A. I mean, it was no more than 15, 20 minutes.

29

1 Q. After you left, what did you do next?  
 2 A. After I left the Rugby Portobello Club, I think  
 3 I started heading towards the Clement James Centre, if  
 4 I remember correctly, and even that was really chaotic.  
 5 I mean, I couldn't get anywhere close to the  
 6 Clement James Centre. But I had this sense that uncle  
 7 wasn't there, that there weren't — there wasn't a lot  
 8 of talk about lots of survivors being there the same way  
 9 they were at the Rugby Portobello Club, so I very  
 10 quickly realised and had the sense that Uncle Hesham  
 11 wasn't there.  
 12 And, again, you know, from the Rugby Portobello Club  
 13 to Clement James, it's not a very long walk, but because  
 14 of the chaos in the streets, you almost had to sort of  
 15 shove your way through people.  
 16 And, again, I just remember that the cloud was still  
 17 smoking, the smell was very potent, and nobody with  
 18 an official status in sight. Apart from, you know,  
 19 volunteers, people from the community, trying to lead  
 20 and organise and help with donations, there was nobody  
 21 from the council, the TMO, or from the government,  
 22 directing or helping or giving out bits of — nothing.  
 23 Q. Now, you went to St Clement's Church, and I think you  
 24 say in your statement at paragraph 29 {IWS00001783/7},  
 25 if we scroll down, that you couldn't get in because it

30

1 was too busy.  
 2 Roughly what time was that? I know it's difficult  
 3 to be anything like precise, but roughly what time of  
 4 the morning was that?  
 5 A. I mean, I would probably say it was between 10.00 and  
 6 11.00 in the morning. Sorry, I can't be any more exact,  
 7 but ...  
 8 Q. When you got to St Clement's, could you tell who was  
 9 running things there?  
 10 A. No. No. I couldn't tell because, again, there was just  
 11 loads of people around everywhere. I couldn't even  
 12 sort of get a glimpse inside. And it was frustrating,  
 13 because I really wanted to be able to go inside and  
 14 physically see for myself whether Uncle Hesham was there  
 15 or not, but I couldn't, and I just had this feeling that  
 16 he wasn't here, he's not here. I didn't know what was  
 17 going on inside, who was inside and who was running  
 18 things, but, again, I didn't see any — there was never  
 19 a feeling where you could see where somebody was — not  
 20 necessarily taking control, but leading people, even  
 21 showing them where an entrance of the place could be.  
 22 There wasn't any of that.  
 23 Q. I think you then went to the Westway Centre, as you say  
 24 in paragraph 30, as you can see in the middle of your  
 25 screen there, and you say when you got there — this is

31

1 the third line, you say:  
 2 "... I saw it was rammed with people ... It was  
 3 absolute chaos with so many people trying to get  
 4 inside."  
 5 Again, was that similar to the St Clement's Church  
 6 scene that you'd seen just earlier on?  
 7 A. Yes, I think it was a little bit more busier, because  
 8 the Westway is a slightly bigger place, the Westway  
 9 Sports Centre is a slightly bigger place, and there's  
 10 a bit of a walk to do before you get to the entrance of  
 11 the centre, and just that walk within itself was just  
 12 flooded with people. Again, nobody in a high-vis or  
 13 a clipboard or anything like that, sort of pushing your  
 14 way past people, and there were a team of people from  
 15 the Red Cross there as well talking to people as well,  
 16 I remember seeing them.  
 17 And then the police were heavily guarding the  
 18 Westway Centre, and then I felt — you know, I knew that  
 19 there were survivors that had made it out and been  
 20 inside. They wouldn't let me in. They wouldn't let me  
 21 find out whether uncle had made it in there or not.  
 22 I don't think there was any list or anything like that,  
 23 like they did in the Rugby Portobello Club, at the  
 24 Westway Centre that they put together that I could check  
 25 whether he had made it in or not. So it was just: "No,

32

1 sorry, you can't come in". I gave them Uncle Hesham's  
 2 name, I said, "Could you at least go and see if" -- this  
 3 is talking to a police officer. I gave him my uncle's  
 4 name and I said, "Could you at least go and check",  
 5 assuming that they had a list inside or something along  
 6 the lines of being able to know who from the tower they  
 7 had inside. And the police officer went in, very  
 8 quickly came back out and said, "Sorry, your uncle is  
 9 not in here". I didn't feel that he'd even checked.  
 10 Q. What was the role of the Red Cross at that point?  
 11 A. I think -- I mean, I don't know.  
 12 Q. Right.  
 13 A. Sorry. I don't think I spoke to them. I think they  
 14 were just there to help, to get details off people.  
 15 I really don't know. I didn't speak to them, I don't  
 16 think.  
 17 Q. Did you leave your details, like your mobile and your  
 18 name?  
 19 A. At the Westway?  
 20 Q. At the Westway.  
 21 A. At the Westway, yes, I did. But, again, I wrote my  
 22 number on a piece of paper and gave it to him, and  
 23 I just -- it felt like he had put it in his pocket or  
 24 threw it away or whatever. I later went back, and we  
 25 can talk about this a little bit later, but I did go

1 back with a poster and stuff.  
 2 Q. You say in the middle of that paragraph there:  
 3 "If you were not a resident then you weren't getting  
 4 inside ..."  
 5 Were you actually barred from entry?  
 6 A. Yes, yes, that was exactly what they said to me. If you  
 7 weren't a resident, you never made it out of the tower,  
 8 so you can't come in, it's only for people that had made  
 9 it out. And I remember arguing and saying, "Okay, well,  
 10 my uncle hadn't made it out, I'm looking for him, we are  
 11 his family, we are his only family that will be looking  
 12 for him, how do I find out, how do I tell, how do  
 13 I know?", and he just sort of shrugged me off. And as  
 14 this kept happening, it just became increasingly more  
 15 and more frustrating and then you just became more and  
 16 more angry. It's just like: so who is going to help me?  
 17 Who's going to help me find Uncle Hesham, because I'm  
 18 not being allowed into any of these places? Even -- and  
 19 the same thing was happening in hospitals, but I guess  
 20 we'll talk about that later as well. And it was just,  
 21 you know, the sinking feeling that we'd been abandoned,  
 22 but not only been abandoned, but we'd almost sort of  
 23 been like kicked aside, "Move along, you know, there's  
 24 nothing here for you", and that's what it felt like.  
 25 And it was just horrible, because I felt that it was

1 up to me to go and find out what had happened to  
 2 Uncle Hesham. I couldn't go back and face my  
 3 grandmother and my family because, I mean, I'm sure you  
 4 can imagine but, you know, my house -- my nan's house  
 5 was -- it was just horrible, absolutely horrible. And  
 6 my grandmother has always been the rock of our family,  
 7 and seeing her like that was very difficult for me.  
 8 Even now, just talking about it, it's extremely  
 9 difficult to see her like that. I mean, you know, to  
 10 witness the death of your son in such a way is so  
 11 horrible. No mother should have to bury her son. And  
 12 I couldn't face that, because I felt that I needed to go  
 13 and find out what happened to him, I needed to go and  
 14 find out where he was, and was just hoping that he was  
 15 unconscious somewhere and nobody knew who he was and he  
 16 didn't have anything with him, and I had to -- that's  
 17 why I spent so much time just running around the streets  
 18 like a hopeless idiot, because I didn't know what else  
 19 to do, and I couldn't face my family, and I had to -- it  
 20 was up to me to find out, and I didn't know what to --  
 21 you know, I couldn't go and comfort my nan and say  
 22 everything was going to be okay, because I didn't know.  
 23 I didn't know what was going on.  
 24 And, you know, thinking about it now, five years  
 25 later, these crooks, these criminals, the government,

1 the local authorities, they've not learnt their lessons.  
 2 They've -- they let people die in the most horrific and  
 3 public way, and don't even help their families to lay  
 4 them to rest or to find them or to understand anything  
 5 about what had happened to them. They just dug their  
 6 head in the sand and tried to portray that we were some  
 7 type of criminals or crooks or we're going to form  
 8 a mob. And like I mentioned earlier, that seems to be  
 9 their main sort of interest. Not helping us or looking  
 10 after the families or the people that survived, the  
 11 people that were in comas in hospitals that were being  
 12 sort of preyed upon by these parasites that had nothing  
 13 to do with us; they were more concerned about  
 14 an uprising or -- you know, and there was times during,  
 15 you know, the first week that there were massive  
 16 tensions in the area. Of course people were angry. But  
 17 none of us -- and I know this for a fact -- nobody from  
 18 the families, none of us wanted craziness around the  
 19 streets. We wanted the police and whoever it is to  
 20 focus on helping us, not focus on looking after idiots  
 21 trying to vandalise stuff and whatever it was that they  
 22 were trying to do. And I remember there was a time  
 23 where this group of guys just ran towards where the  
 24 police cordon was at the bottom of the tower, and I was  
 25 there talking to somebody, all wearing balaclavas and

1 stuff, and my wife took the kids and she ran inside and  
 2 she was scared, and my sister ran inside, she was there  
 3 at the time as well, with her kids, and I was like: no.  
 4 I stood there, and I — there was a few other people  
 5 with me, and I'm pulling these guys' balaclavas off and  
 6 pulling their masks off and was like, "We don't want  
 7 this, we don't want you coming in here causing madness,  
 8 taking the police and whoever else's attention away from  
 9 looking for our families".

10 But that's how we were — that's the picture that  
 11 the council and the government and the media, you know,  
 12 painted of us, that we were these crooks, these  
 13 mindless, you know, fools that were going to ruin our  
 14 community and riot and whatever it was, and that wasn't  
 15 the case.

16 And I ... there are many reasons why I believe they  
 17 didn't come and help us, whether they were scared or  
 18 whether they did really believe within themselves that  
 19 an uprising was going to happen or that we were going to  
 20 riot, and it just tells you their, you know, detachment  
 21 and disconnect from the actual people that were living  
 22 in this area, and they had a duty of care to look after,  
 23 but ...

24 Sorry, I've rambled on a little bit, but I ... I did  
 25 my best to try to get into these places. I did my best

1 to try to get any bit of information through anybody and  
 2 everybody, and through desperation, I probably,  
 3 you know, did things that wasn't the best, but I was  
 4 desperate.

5 Q. How did you feel about having to shoulder, as it sounds  
 6 from what you're telling us, on your own the  
 7 responsibility, personal responsibility, of looking for  
 8 your uncle?

9 A. I don't know. I guess it's something that I'm coming to  
 10 terms with now. It's been so full on for the past  
 11 five years. From the first day up until today, this has  
 12 been my life, and I don't know the actual answer to that  
 13 question, Mr Millett, because I'm still coming to terms  
 14 with that.

15 But I did have my siblings with me, my brother and  
 16 sister, during the first initial stages, and sort of  
 17 they helped co-ordinate the search. So while I was  
 18 running around the streets, my younger brother was going  
 19 from hospital to hospital with my great uncle to try to  
 20 find out, and then my sister would stay at home to  
 21 comfort my nan and stuff like that. I mean, it wasn't  
 22 just me by myself. But, I mean, like, I was, you know,  
 23 the oldest out of my siblings, I was the person that —  
 24 you know, it was my duty, and I feel like, you know,  
 25 I didn't fulfil it, because I couldn't tell them

1 anything.

2 Then I was so upset and angry, because I wished that  
 3 somebody called me. I wished that I was told when the  
 4 fire started. I wish I was there. But the more I think  
 5 about that, I probably wouldn't be here today, because  
 6 there would have been no force that would have stopped  
 7 me from going in that tower. Nothing, nobody, would  
 8 have been able to stop me. And I would have —  
 9 you know, I was quite fit and healthy then. I would  
 10 have put my uncle over my shoulders and ran down the  
 11 stairs with him.

12 Q. Let's go back to paragraph 30 of your statement  
 13 {IWS00001783/7}. You say towards the bottom of the  
 14 screen that you gave Uncle Hesham's name at the door to  
 15 a police officer:

16 " ... and I explained he was missing and I wanted to  
 17 come inside the Centre to see if he was there. An  
 18 officer left the entrance and came back and said to me  
 19 that he had been inside and checked for uncle Hesham and  
 20 he wasn't there, but I didn't get the sense that he had  
 21 actually done this. The officer gave me no assurance  
 22 that there was any kind of list of residents accounted  
 23 for that they were making there, and that there was  
 24 a list for those that were missing."

25 Were you given any information at all to help you in

1 your personal search that you had taken on your own  
 2 shoulders?

3 A. No. So when I was told in this example by the police  
 4 officer that uncle wasn't here, it was like, "He's not  
 5 here, move along", not, "He's not here, but maybe try  
 6 over there, or maybe try and contact this number". So  
 7 even from the police, there wasn't any of that,  
 8 you know, it was like they were there almost like ready  
 9 for a fight, and anyone that wasn't where they were  
 10 supposed to be: move along. You know, that was sort of  
 11 their attitude. And that's what I felt, that's how  
 12 I felt, that I was being moved along all the time,  
 13 because I didn't make it out the tower.

14 And at no point in time going from any of these  
 15 places did anybody say to me, "Try here, try there, call  
 16 this number, call that number, you know, speak to this  
 17 person", none of that happened. All of the information  
 18 that I was being given about, you know, where to go or  
 19 where to check or meetings that were happening in the  
 20 first sort of week or two, was through either people  
 21 that I knew or through the media.

22 Q. Yes.

23 Then at paragraph 32 {IWS00001783/8} you say that  
 24 you began walking around the area:

25 " ... speaking to people asking them if they knew

1 uncle Hesham. People shared information about the  
 2 different centres which had opened up.”  
 3 When you say “people” there, do you mean members of  
 4 the community or just people in the street that you  
 5 didn’t know?  
 6 A. It would have been members of the community, so people  
 7 that I would have known or recognised, would have said  
 8 to me, “Oh, Karim, by the way, Al Manaar had also taken  
 9 in people”, et cetera. So it was through people that  
 10 I knew in the area, that I’d seen. I mean, obviously  
 11 there were a lot of people from the community in the  
 12 area helping, and a lot of them I knew because I’d grown  
 13 up in the area, and that’s pretty much how we were  
 14 getting information. Because, again, there was nobody  
 15 in a clipboard or a high-vis or anything like that,  
 16 or — you know, they could have at least tried to,  
 17 you know, give out a statement or give us something to  
 18 work with, but no, nothing.  
 19 Q. Those rest centres that you had heard about, were they  
 20 community-led, did you get the sense at the time, or did  
 21 you get the sense that at last they were being opened up  
 22 by RBKC officials or people from the TMO, perhaps, or  
 23 more centrally?  
 24 A. These centres, I mean, the ones that I went to, were all  
 25 led by the community.

1 Q. I think you went to the Methodist church next.  
 2 A. Correct.  
 3 Q. But you say you weren’t let in because it was too full.  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Again, full of who? Full of escapees from the tower?  
 6 A. I mean, when I was standing outside there — and I’m  
 7 guessing this is because the people that had escaped  
 8 from the tower, they were sort of inside or downstairs  
 9 or somewhere where people outside couldn’t see them —  
 10 all I saw was either members of the community or  
 11 volunteers that had come down to help, some of them  
 12 I didn’t recognise, and again it was — you know,  
 13 the Methodist church isn’t a big place, and there was  
 14 a lot of people outside anyway because that’s where the  
 15 police had their cordon — had cordoned off the entrance  
 16 to the tower and the academy. So there were —  
 17 throughout the whole time, there were always a lot of  
 18 people there anyway, shouting and talking and doing all  
 19 sorts of stuff, and donations and what have you.  
 20 But the Methodist church wouldn’t let me in because  
 21 it was full. Again, the similar sort of thing, but they  
 22 were — I think I did — was able to speak to Mike,  
 23 Mike Long, who — I’m not sure what his role is, but  
 24 yeah, I know of him and I spoke to him, and I said to  
 25 him, “Look, I’m looking for uncle” and stuff like that,

1 and he sort of said to me, “I’ll try and go inside and  
 2 find out”, but he was pretty sure that he wasn’t in  
 3 there, and then I was just told that I couldn’t go  
 4 inside.  
 5 I mean, I stopped trying to push my way into these  
 6 places. I also appreciated that there were survivors in  
 7 there, and I didn’t want to upset anybody, and everyone  
 8 was going through whatever they were going through.  
 9 I mean, you know, I can’t even comprehend what they were  
 10 going through, so I didn’t want to be sort of like  
 11 forceful and cause any type of like, you know, fight or  
 12 anything like that. Right?  
 13 And that’s how it was outside the Methodist church,  
 14 just like it was everywhere else. You could tell that  
 15 there were people from the community, along with  
 16 volunteers who had come to help, that were organising,  
 17 you know, themselves and what was going on with  
 18 donations and helping people and, you know, just as  
 19 basic as giving someone a bottle of water and a blanket,  
 20 because like I said, some people came out in just their  
 21 pyjamas, and that’s all I could see in terms of help or  
 22 visual assistance. There wasn’t anything else or  
 23 anybody else.  
 24 Q. I think you next went to the Al Manaar Mosque.  
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Now, that’s quite a way, as we’ve seen from the map this  
 2 morning —  
 3 A. Yeah.  
 4 Q. — up towards Ladbroke Grove to the northeast. Did that  
 5 take long to get to? Did you walk?  
 6 A. I did, yeah, I was walking the whole time. And, yeah,  
 7 Al Manaar was a little bit more of a walk, but as I got  
 8 towards Ladbroke Grove and then further up towards  
 9 Al Manaar and Portobello and Goulbourne, it wasn’t as  
 10 busy as it was in and around Grenfell, Lancaster Road,  
 11 the Methodist church and stuff like that, it wasn’t as  
 12 busy, so the walk didn’t take that long.  
 13 And, again, just thinking about it now, I don’t even  
 14 know why I went to Al Manaar, you know, it just seemed  
 15 like it would be such a long way for him to walk if he’d  
 16 made it out of the tower. But, again, just through  
 17 desperation and through not knowing anything, you know,  
 18 I was willing to walk anywhere if it meant that I could  
 19 find Uncle Hesham.  
 20 Q. Did you find out anything when you got there?  
 21 A. No.  
 22 Q. Was there a system in place for disseminating any kind  
 23 of information when you got there?  
 24 A. I mean, I remember there being a lot of people there.  
 25 I don’t think there were any survivors there. I could

1 be wrong, but I don't remember seeing anybody there,  
 2 I just remember speaking to a few people outside,  
 3 a couple of my friends and one person that I didn't  
 4 know, and, you know, they were sort of saying to me,  
 5 "Have you tried here and have you tried there and have  
 6 you tried" -- and I was like, "Yes, I've tried all these  
 7 places", and I think, you know, "Your best bet is really  
 8 being closer to the tower and your place than being up  
 9 here", I was like, "Yeah, I just came here because  
 10 I didn't know where else to go". But there wasn't -- it  
 11 was all, again, them. It was, you know, people who had  
 12 either worked at Al Manaar or people from the local  
 13 community who go and use the mosque to pray on a regular  
 14 basis.  
 15 Q. I think by this point we've counted, I think, five  
 16 centres that you had visited but had found no  
 17 information about where Uncle Hesham might be. This is,  
 18 what, mid-morning --  
 19 A. Yeah.  
 20 Q. -- by now?  
 21 A. This would have been about mid-morning, yeah.  
 22 Q. And how were you feeling by that point?  
 23 A. So I just remember during the time obviously I,  
 24 you know, was working or moving on adrenalin. I was  
 25 still in -- I had my shirt, my work shirt and my

1 trousers, it was really hot, and I remember my white  
 2 shirt being covered in this mess that was coming off the  
 3 tower. I didn't even know what cladding was or even  
 4 heard of cladding, and we all know now what cladding  
 5 is ...  
 6 Sorry, I forgot your question, Mr Millett.  
 7 Q. Well, no, it's rather an open question, but let me try  
 8 a narrower one: who did you think was in charge, in  
 9 charge of giving you information about where your uncle  
 10 might be?  
 11 A. That's a good question, Mr Millett, and, you know, even  
 12 to this day, I don't know if anyone ever was. I don't  
 13 know. I -- it was always down to us, even to this day.  
 14 It's always been down to us.  
 15 You know, I'll tell you something. How we were able  
 16 to get information, and this was probably later on  
 17 during the week, I was speaking to my friend Ahmed, who  
 18 I've known pretty much all my life, and unfortunately he  
 19 lost his mum and his sister, and I -- we got -- we were  
 20 talking on a regular basis, and he was also talking to  
 21 other bereaved family members through doing similar  
 22 things that I was doing, sort of going around, speaking  
 23 to people, seeing them, wherever, and we were able to --  
 24 well, he was able to put together a watertight group,  
 25 which didn't exist until probably a month later, but the

1 basis of it was there, we were in communication with  
 2 a lot of bereaved families, and that's how we were  
 3 getting information, in terms of: right, they've started  
 4 to identify people on the top floor, that means we might  
 5 be next, in the next few weeks we might get some  
 6 information, they've started to go through this process  
 7 or that process, and that's how we were able to find out  
 8 key bits of information about our loved ones.  
 9 And then the WhatsApp group came, and it was a very  
 10 watertight group, still to this day, where we shared,  
 11 communicated. So we were able to do this, in days. Yet  
 12 still to this day, the council have not been able to  
 13 give us a list of who was in that building. Still to  
 14 this day, the landlords or the so-called landlords or  
 15 the people that had been put in charge to look after our  
 16 families, our vulnerable families, they still couldn't  
 17 do that. But yet we were able to do that within days,  
 18 because we were determined to find out what was going  
 19 on, what the plans were, what the next moves were, and  
 20 that's how we found things out.  
 21 Q. Now, in paragraph 33 there {IWS00001783/8}, just coming  
 22 back to the statement for a moment, you say that you  
 23 spoke to someone from the Red Cross, I think at the  
 24 Al Manaar Mosque, and you gave them your details.  
 25 Did you ever hear back from them with any

1 information about Uncle Hesham?  
 2 A. No. No, I never heard back from anybody from  
 3 the Red Cross or, like I said earlier, never from  
 4 anybody from RBKC or the TMO. I only got phone calls  
 5 from people, and this was after we'd put up posters and  
 6 my number was on these posters, and people just,  
 7 you know -- I wouldn't call them prank calls, maybe  
 8 these people believed they saw my uncle in certain parts  
 9 of London. I knew that wasn't true, but that's the only  
 10 time I got phone calls about Uncle Hesham.  
 11 Q. You then say at paragraph 34 that:  
 12 "I went back to my Nan's house so we could put  
 13 together a plan of where to visit. My brother said he  
 14 would go to the local hospitals and see if uncle Hesham  
 15 had been taken there as we had found out from other  
 16 people in the area that some survivors had been taken to  
 17 hospitals."  
 18 I think you then put a plan of action together, but  
 19 did your brother get any information? Was he able to  
 20 get any information from the hospital visits?  
 21 A. No, no. So he was being told that in the -- he wasn't  
 22 allowed in the A&E and they weren't giving him any  
 23 information in terms of who was in the A&E because there  
 24 was an issue of journalists turning up to these  
 25 hospitals and pretending to be family members. So they

1 had basically made it really strict to give out any bit  
2 of information as to who was there from the  
3 Grenfell Tower fire.

4 And, I mean, just even -- you know, I find that  
5 quite -- you know, it was crazy that because of these  
6 so-called journalists, we weren't able to identify our  
7 loved ones if they were in hospital. So because of  
8 them, we had to continue searching like mindless fools  
9 because they wanted to get a story or leech on to  
10 vulnerable people when they're in hospital in their  
11 hospital bed in comas.

12 And from hospital to hospital, that was the same  
13 story. And, I mean, he visited pretty much every  
14 hospital in London, along with my great uncle, and it  
15 was almost the same thing, "No, we can't tell you who's  
16 here, no, you can't go inside", because of the issues.

17 Q. Now, you say in paragraph 35 that you spoke to your  
18 aunt, Noha, on the phone, and you say that:

19 "... she told me that she had been in contact with  
20 someone from Sky News and they would get in contact with  
21 me to help us in the search for uncle Hesham."

22 Did your aunt call Sky or did Sky call her?

23 A. I think she reached out to them. I think they -- during  
24 the time they had sort of maybe put out a message on one  
25 of their -- on the news or something like that, that if

1 you're looking for somebody, get in touch, you know, we  
2 can maybe try to help. That's what I think --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- from what I remember had happened. And again, this  
5 was just through desperation. My auntie wasn't there on  
6 the day and she lived quite far, but obviously saw  
7 everything unfold on TV and on social media, and  
8 I think -- I remember her telling me that, you know,  
9 she'd seen obviously on the news and somewhere on  
10 Sky News it said that, "You can get in touch and we can  
11 try to help", and just out of desperation, and knowing  
12 what I was doing and going around, because I was talking  
13 to her quite a lot, she'd reached out to them to try to  
14 get their help.

15 Q. You go on to say they called you and said they wanted to  
16 help.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And they said they'd put up posters and would cover your  
19 search for your Uncle Hesham. Did you accept that  
20 offer?

21 A. I did. I did accept that offer. It probably wasn't the  
22 best thing to do. I mean, I'm not taking anything away  
23 from the guys at Sky, you know, Charlotte and --  
24 you know, they'd been great. But, you know, I just  
25 didn't know what else to do. I was so desperate, I --

1 and from running around all these places that I'd known  
2 from childhood, and speaking to people that I've known  
3 since I was a kid, and still not getting any closer to  
4 where I was when I first got to the area on 14 June,  
5 I was desperate. I just thought that maybe by using the  
6 media, someone that I haven't seen will see it and will  
7 know me from the area or will get in touch because my  
8 number's there. I was just doing whatever it took to  
9 try to get any ounce of information about Uncle Hesham,  
10 because no one was telling us anything, and we were left  
11 alone to find this information out.

12 So had somebody, again, in a high-vis or a clipboard  
13 said to me, maybe, you know, "We can try to help you  
14 with this or try to help you with that", we wouldn't  
15 have reached out to mainstream media to put up posters  
16 and look for uncle.

17 Q. Did it lead to anything, your contact with Sky, anything  
18 helpful?

19 A. I mean, it was helpful because, yeah, it did get the  
20 message out, and I think there were also other family  
21 members that were putting up posters the same way we  
22 was, and it just brought it to people's attention that  
23 there were -- obviously we knew people didn't make it  
24 out, but who it was, who these people were, you know,  
25 you were able to put faces on them, because the families

1 like myself were looking around, had spoken to their  
2 family members earlier in the night and then stopped --  
3 hadn't been able to speak to them and they haven't been  
4 able to find them.

5 But other than that, I mean, apart from, you know,  
6 phone calls and stuff like that, people telling me that  
7 he's in Primrose Hill and Hyde Park or whatever, which  
8 obviously wasn't true, it didn't help.

9 Q. No.

10 As the day progressed from the morning into the  
11 afternoon, did you get any further information that you  
12 were looking for?

13 A. On the first day?

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. No.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. No.

18 Q. During the course of that day, did you see anybody at  
19 all from RBKC or the TMO or central government?

20 A. I kept waiting. I said this earlier. Every time  
21 I turned the corner, I would think I would see somebody,  
22 maybe it's here, maybe it's there. I saw -- and  
23 I covered every part of that area, and, you know, I kept  
24 doing the same loop over and over again, thinking maybe  
25 this time, maybe this time I'll see someone who might

1 know something, maybe this time I — and I never saw  
 2 anybody from the council, from the TMO, or from any  
 3 sort of authority.  
 4 I did later see somebody who I've known for a very,  
 5 very long time, who used to be my grandmother's  
 6 neighbour and used to work for the TMO. I'm not sure  
 7 when this was, but I remember him telling me that he  
 8 went into work the next day, in the TMO, and was told to  
 9 not go into the area, and if he is going to go into the  
 10 area, to not wear his uniform and to not wear his badge,  
 11 and he was really angry and upset about this, and  
 12 I remember him saying to his senior that, "I'm from this  
 13 community, they all know me, I'm not hiding, you should  
 14 be ashamed of yourselves", and I think he quit his job.  
 15 Q. Now, going back to your statement, if we can go to  
 16 page 9 {IWS00001783/9}, please. This is after  
 17 paragraph 37, "I was constantly walking around the  
 18 area", and you say in paragraph 37 you spoke to  
 19 Jon Snow, who was covering the fire, and you saw all the  
 20 cladding and burnt material on the ground near the  
 21 tower, and it was in your nan's garden.  
 22 Then at paragraph 38 you say:  
 23 "I went back to my nan's home and watched the news  
 24 because this was where the information was coming from  
 25 about the number of fatalities. It was really

53

1 frustrating that this is how I was learning about the  
 2 facts, rather than from a police officer or a person in  
 3 authority. The news were reporting that there was  
 4 dedicated helpline you could call. I rang this number  
 5 several times but I wasn't put through to an operator.  
 6 I think the line was so busy with calls."  
 7 Now, just a couple of things about that paragraph.  
 8 Do you remember roughly what time it was when you  
 9 went back to your nan's house?  
 10 A. Between late morning and midday.  
 11 Q. Right.  
 12 A. I would say probably closer to midday.  
 13 I think it's important for the Inquiry to understand  
 14 that I'd never and a lot of us had never heard the word  
 15 "cladding", they didn't know what it was, but it was  
 16 everywhere. It was flying off the building, it was all  
 17 over my nan's garden. I remember there was this  
 18 particular piece, it was a page, a burnt-out page of  
 19 a book, in Italian, I think it was, and I remember  
 20 thinking, "Oh, you know, I wonder whose book this is",  
 21 and I think my wife complained to the police because  
 22 there was a lot of it in my nan's front garden, and  
 23 complaining to — you know, somebody should come and  
 24 clean this up.  
 25 And as I mentioned earlier, the smell was very

54

1 potent. I can still smell it now. And I had to take  
 2 the stuff off my shirt. And it was — you know,  
 3 cladding and any of these type — we didn't know what  
 4 this was. We didn't know. You know, as far as we were  
 5 concerned, the — you know, the building was made of  
 6 concrete. I don't know. You know, we'd never knew what  
 7 this stuff was. And now, today, we all know how  
 8 dangerous and flammable this material is, and we all  
 9 know that it was the main cause of the spread of the  
 10 fire. And it was when I met Jon Snow when I started to  
 11 realise that there could be something a little bit more  
 12 sinister here about what had happened with the tower and  
 13 the refurbishment, et cetera, et cetera, and that was  
 14 the first moment that I realised that there was  
 15 something very wrong about how things had played out,  
 16 and it then made me start to realise: well, maybe this  
 17 is why I'm not seeing anybody from the council or the  
 18 TMO or anything like that, because they were scared.  
 19 Q. Now, just a question about the helpline, was that the  
 20 first time you'd heard about the helpline?  
 21 A. Sorry. Yes, it was the first time I'd heard about the  
 22 helpline through what we saw on TV. We did ring the  
 23 number many times and all it did was just ring and ring  
 24 and ring. No —  
 25 Q. Was there like an answering machine or —

55

1 A. No.  
 2 Q. It would just ring?  
 3 A. It would just ring and then eventually it would just cut  
 4 off.  
 5 Q. Yes.  
 6 A. So you weren't able to, you know, speak to anybody, or  
 7 there wasn't an automated voicemail or — sorry,  
 8 an automated person, you know, saying, "Hang up and try  
 9 again", there wasn't a way to leave any contact details  
 10 or anything like that, it just rang, and after a certain  
 11 amount of rings, it just completely cut you off, and  
 12 that happened all the time. And I remember it was the  
 13 BBC, I believe, that had posted that number initially on  
 14 one of their media sort of broadcasts, and I know whilst  
 15 I was away somebody from the family was constantly  
 16 calling that number —  
 17 Q. Right.  
 18 A. — to try to, you know — because we knew it would be  
 19 busy, so we knew that we'd need to — you know, we  
 20 wasn't going to get through to somebody straight away,  
 21 but we'd keep trying, and we did, and we were never able  
 22 to speak to anybody.  
 23 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, is that a convenient moment for  
 24 a break?  
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I think it is.

56

1 I think it's time we had a break, Mr Mussilhy, so  
 2 we'll stop there. We'll resume, please, at 11.40. As  
 3 I think you know, I've said this to every witness who  
 4 has come, please don't talk to anyone about your  
 5 evidence while you're out of the room.  
 6 THE WITNESS: Okay.  
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right? Thank you very much.  
 8 Would you like to go with the usher, please.  
 9 THE WITNESS: Okay.  
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.  
 11 (Pause)  
 12 Thank you very much, Mr Millett. 11.40, then,  
 13 please.  
 14 MR MILLETT: Thank you.  
 15 (11.24 am)  
 16 (A short break)  
 17 (11.40 am)  
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, Mr Mussilhy, are you  
 19 ready to carry on?  
 20 THE WITNESS: Yes.  
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good. Thank you very much.  
 22 Yes, Mr Millett.  
 23 MR MILLETT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.  
 24 You then, I think, tell us in your statement,  
 25 Mr Mussilhy, that that was the end of that day and we

57

1 move to 15 June, the next morning.  
 2 Is it right that at that stage more of your family  
 3 members arrived into the area to search for your uncle?  
 4 A. Yes, I believe — so my brother and my sister came just  
 5 after I did, and then later on in the day my mum and  
 6 other sort of family friends that lived in the area had  
 7 come to nan's house to try to help.  
 8 Q. If you go, please, back to your statement, page 10  
 9 {IWS00001783/10}, paragraph 42, you say there — and  
 10 I want to pick this up, if I can, at the second line —  
 11 that you had met a friend of Uncle Hesham's with  
 12 a photograph, and you say:  
 13 " ... [I] was surprised she had done this but because  
 14 there was a lack of a coordinated response from the  
 15 authorities so people in the community were taking it  
 16 upon themselves to do things to help and get information  
 17 about missing people."  
 18 Did you ask her where she'd been searching?  
 19 A. No, I didn't. I think her initial plan was to create  
 20 these posters — she'd had a photo of him, printed some  
 21 posters — and then to come and meet with us, because  
 22 I think she'd seen or heard that we were out looking for  
 23 him. So that was sort of her way of coming to try to  
 24 help with us.  
 25 But, absolutely, this is what people were doing,

58

1 you know, not only just from the community, but from all  
 2 over, because they could see how chaotic everything was,  
 3 especially for us, the families looking for our missing  
 4 loved ones. You know, they wanted to help and they did  
 5 whatever they could to help, even if it meant just  
 6 printing off a picture of the person who was missing,  
 7 because there was nothing else.  
 8 Q. What time did you arrive back at the area on the morning  
 9 of the 15th?  
 10 A. It would have been quite early, because I remember  
 11 I left and my wife was getting the kids ready to go to  
 12 school, and then I came — I don't remember if I came  
 13 first or — and then my brother brought her or whether  
 14 she came with me, I'm not — but to answer your  
 15 question, probably between 8 and 9 am in the morning  
 16 I was there.  
 17 Q. And I think your wife also came —  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. — after dropping the children off.  
 20 A. Yes. My wife came to help me that day with putting up  
 21 posters.  
 22 Q. Yes.  
 23 From that point in the morning, whenever it was you  
 24 arrived, was there any detectable improvement in the  
 25 flow of information or in the organisation systems that

59

1 you could see?  
 2 A. No. It was exactly the same, if not it was worse,  
 3 because emotions and tensions were rising, people  
 4 weren't being told anything, and when you're not  
 5 receiving any sort of communication from leaders or  
 6 whoever, you know, your mind runs with all sorts of  
 7 scenarios and theories of what's going on and what's  
 8 happening. So it felt worse.  
 9 And again, when I got there, the amount of people  
 10 that were trying to record what was going on — whether  
 11 they were journalists or not, I don't know. I mean,  
 12 I just remember — and I think I mentioned this  
 13 slightly, but just outside of nan's house, there's like  
 14 a green area, and then a place where you could sit and  
 15 people would walk through to get to different parts of  
 16 the estate. There were people sitting on that green  
 17 area with laptops and writing stuff, and walking up and  
 18 down with their phones in their pockets on their shirts  
 19 and in their jeans, secretly trying to record my family  
 20 and Jamie's family, and, you know, there were a few  
 21 arguments and stuff, you know, to get these people to  
 22 give us a little bit of privacy. But it felt the same,  
 23 if not more chaotic the next day.  
 24 Q. You go on at paragraph 42, two-thirds of the way  
 25 through, you say:

60



1 "There was no sense of anyone being in charge, or  
 2 there being a central place you could go to get  
 3 information about what was happening. I decided that if  
 4 anyone should be handing posters out about Hesham it  
 5 should be his family so I asked her for the posters and  
 6 I wrote my contact details on each of them."  
 7 First of all, were you aware of anything called  
 8 a friends and family assistance centre being set up to  
 9 provide information to people in your position?  
 10 A. No. No, not at all. And it wasn't like I was trying to  
 11 find ... you know, I was actively, consistently trying  
 12 to find out anything, you know, and when I say -- in  
 13 these type of situations, the smallest bit of  
 14 information was -- you know, it felt like the biggest  
 15 sort of -- I wouldn't say relief, but it was like  
 16 a weight lifted off your shoulders: okay, I've found  
 17 something in terms -- okay, this is a place I haven't  
 18 checked, and then you have that little bit of hope that  
 19 this little bit of information is going to get you  
 20 closer to finding out what happened to Uncle Hesham. So  
 21 I was actively looking for this, consistently, and  
 22 I never got it.  
 23 Q. You say, I think, that you put up posters of your uncle  
 24 in the local area, and Sky were of help. You say that  
 25 at paragraph 43.

1 Was there a focal point for friends and family, even  
 2 though not an official one? You obviously used Sky and  
 3 your friend's posters on your own initiative, but was  
 4 there a more general focal point for people to feed  
 5 into?  
 6 A. No. I mean, it was just people in the streets, people  
 7 outside community centres, at the Rugby Portobello,  
 8 Clement James, Methodist Church, the Westway. I was  
 9 never aware of a friends and family place or centre or  
 10 a point or place that you would go to find out bits of  
 11 information.  
 12 Like I said earlier, everything from my personal  
 13 experience that I found out was due to going out and  
 14 speaking to people. That's how I got every bit of  
 15 information, and through stuff that was sometimes put  
 16 out in the media.  
 17 Q. Did you --  
 18 A. Sorry.  
 19 Q. No, no, sorry.  
 20 A. Yeah, so it was through anything that had been put out  
 21 in the media.  
 22 I say here in the statement, so Charlotte from  
 23 Sky News, she was the person that was sort of  
 24 co-ordinating, and I know I said what I said about the  
 25 journalists earlier, but, I mean, I used them to try to

1 gain any bit of information about Uncle Hesham, and that  
 2 was just through desperation, and, you know, they didn't  
 3 make me feel like they were there for a story, or to,  
 4 you know, to try to show me and my family's trauma.  
 5 You know, for me it felt like they were there to  
 6 actively just: "You do what you need to do to find your  
 7 uncle, we'll help you and we'll film it so that people  
 8 can hopefully get in touch with you about seeing  
 9 anything -- if they've heard or seen anything". And it  
 10 was literally me and my wife putting up posters on  
 11 lampposts, on bits of the wall, you know, and people  
 12 would walk past and take pictures of it and make videos  
 13 of it and stuff like that. And I'd handwritten my  
 14 number on pretty much every single one of them, which  
 15 probably wasn't the smartest thing to do, put my number  
 16 out in the media, but I didn't care. I wanted --  
 17 I needed to find out anything about Uncle Hesham. So we  
 18 spent the majority of the day doing that.  
 19 Q. Did you have any thoughts at the time about why it was  
 20 that it was Sky News giving you this assistance and not  
 21 anybody from or in a position of authority?  
 22 A. I mean, at the time, no, I ... I mean, of course it  
 23 crossed my mind that there should be somebody here to  
 24 help, whoever that person was, whether it was somebody  
 25 from RBKC, TMO, police, government, whatever, I knew and

1 I felt that somebody should be here or be in contact  
 2 with us or tell us where we needed to be or needed to  
 3 go, but that never happened, it never came, and I wasn't  
 4 going to wait around for it to happen either.  
 5 And, I mean, even having Sky News with us, you know,  
 6 it helped, but I felt like it kind of made things  
 7 a little bit worse at times, walking around in the  
 8 community. Obviously there were people with cameras,  
 9 and like I mentioned earlier, you know, parasites that  
 10 were coming in trying to leech and prey on the  
 11 vulnerable, and, you know, the community didn't take  
 12 very well to that and some of them were being very  
 13 intrusive, so naturally whenever they're seeing these  
 14 type of cameras, they felt some type of way towards  
 15 them, and I think there were physical -- at times,  
 16 you know, the cameras had to be pushed away because they  
 17 were really sort of being intrusive.  
 18 Sky weren't like that, but just having them around,  
 19 you know, it made people at times feel uneasy, and also  
 20 it drew other camera crews towards them, because it felt  
 21 like something was happening here: there's a story here,  
 22 let's go there. And I think Sky had arranged for  
 23 security to walk around with us to stop this from  
 24 happening, because a couple of times we got mobbed and  
 25 surrounded by people and cameras and stuff like that,

1 sort of right in your face.  
 2 But I always waited for somebody from authority to  
 3 come and take over, but in a way -- I mean, it never  
 4 happened, and I kind of knew that it wasn't going to  
 5 happen, and I didn't wait for it to happen, and because  
 6 of this, and out of sheer desperation, I used Sky News.  
 7 Q. Now, I think it's right, as you say in your statement at  
 8 paragraph 45 {IWS00001783/11}, that Mahad and Jamie  
 9 helped you by going to different rest centres to check  
 10 the lists of people who were there.  
 11 Was there by this time -- this is the morning of  
 12 15 June -- a list, at least, of rest centres that you  
 13 could check?  
 14 A. The rest centres were pretty much the same. The main  
 15 ones that had sort of taken in the vast majority of the  
 16 survivors were the Rugby Portobello, the Westway,  
 17 Clement James, et cetera. I mean, I'm still not certain  
 18 to this day how many people stayed at Clement James, but  
 19 I know the vast majority went into the Rugby Portobello  
 20 and Westway. So nothing had changed in terms of there  
 21 was this new place that you could go that would have any  
 22 new bits of information, it was still the same.  
 23 And I think it's also important for the Inquiry to  
 24 understand that the building was still smoking quite  
 25 heavily and there were still flames. Not like the first

1 day, but still flames coming out of the top floor and  
 2 a couple of floors below it, flames coming out of the  
 3 windows, and I remember seeing Uncle Hesham's flat and  
 4 there was smoke and flames coming out of his flat, and  
 5 just convincing myself that he wasn't in there,  
 6 you know, there's no way that I am standing here  
 7 watching my uncle smoking and burning. I just wouldn't  
 8 allow myself to believe that. I would then just stick  
 9 my head down and continue marching wherever I was  
 10 marching to try to find out. I was -- you know, and  
 11 I knew at the time that I was probably in denial  
 12 a little bit, but I didn't want to lose hope. I just  
 13 kept feeling and thinking that he was unconscious  
 14 somewhere, maybe in someone's house, and he was asleep,  
 15 nobody knew who he was, he didn't have anything, and  
 16 that's -- I held on to that so tightly, because  
 17 I couldn't believe that still the second day, the  
 18 building was still burning the way it was on the top  
 19 floor, and I knew that there is no way he would have  
 20 made it out by himself.  
 21 There were times where I was worried about  
 22 Uncle Hesham because he spent a lot of time in his flat.  
 23 I later then found out that the reasons why -- because  
 24 he would go to leave his flat and the lifts wouldn't be  
 25 working, and if the lifts weren't working, he would just

1 turn straight back into his flat and stay, because,  
 2 you know, he had a problem walking, and most of the time  
 3 he used a walking stick. He had a, you know,  
 4 disability. He had a disability car under the  
 5 Motability scheme, he had a disability parking badge  
 6 from RBKC. I also believe that when he first moved in,  
 7 he had a disability shower and toilet. So the council  
 8 were aware of his condition. They were aware that my  
 9 uncle was disabled. They were aware that if anything  
 10 was to happen, if the lifts weren't working, that he  
 11 would need help to get out of the building. So I was  
 12 worried about him at times because I knew that,  
 13 you know, he spent a lot of time up there, and I knew  
 14 later that that was why.  
 15 So when I was looking up at the tower and it was  
 16 smoking and burning and it was coming out of his flat,  
 17 and I was saying to myself: they must have rescued him,  
 18 he must have been rescued, because that's the only way  
 19 he would have been able to make it out.  
 20 Q. Now, you say in paragraph 45 that there wasn't a central  
 21 list and it seemed like each centre was keeping its own  
 22 list. How did you form that impression?  
 23 A. Sorry ...  
 24 Q. Let's go to paragraph 45 on page 11 {IWS00001783/11},  
 25 the next page. You say in the last sentence there:

1 "There wasn't a central list, it seemed like each  
 2 centre was keeping its own list."  
 3 Can you help us how you formed that impression?  
 4 A. Yeah. So I knew -- I mean, Mahad himself was putting  
 5 together a list, and I think that list had started in  
 6 the first day when I was at the Rugby Portobello Club,  
 7 where everybody was sort of trying to, you know, look  
 8 after each other and organise themselves, and that's,  
 9 you know, kind of pretty much how Grenfell United  
 10 started, and I know that Mahad was putting a lot of  
 11 effort into putting together a list which was on paper  
 12 and then eventually he transferred it into some type of  
 13 document or spreadsheet on a computer or laptop, and  
 14 I knew that others were trying to do the same, because  
 15 it seemed that it was the only way for people to know  
 16 who'd made it out, who still needed to be looked for,  
 17 and also because of the lack of communication from  
 18 authorities, especially from the police, there were  
 19 a lot of talks about the number of people that had died  
 20 in the fire and, you know, hundreds of people dead and  
 21 missing and stuff like that, and when you're not  
 22 communicating with people in these type of situations,  
 23 you know, your minds are going to run wild with all  
 24 sorts of theories.  
 25 So I remember -- I mean, I thought it was a good

1 idea, and then every list that I saw people trying to  
2 put together, I put uncle's name on it and I put my  
3 details so that if anyone saw him -- I made it clear  
4 that this person didn't make it -- as far as I know,  
5 didn't make it out the tower, or if he has, for somebody  
6 to contact me.

7 I mean, it's quite sad, really, when you think about  
8 it, that the survivors were trying to piece together  
9 where their missing neighbours were by putting together  
10 their own lists, yet their landlord was nowhere to be  
11 seen, who should have been able to access or have this  
12 information very easily, so you'd think.

13 Sorry.

14 Q. Can we just look down towards the bottom of page 11 to  
15 paragraph 48, and you say in paragraph 48:

16 "I remember that when I walked back to the front of  
17 the Tower by Latimer Road station, I saw red London Fire  
18 Brigade t-shirts that had been placed there that had  
19 notes on them written from firefighters. One of them  
20 stood out to me 'to all those on the 21st floor and  
21 above we are sorry we couldn't get to you'. This was  
22 a really surreal moment where I began to realise the  
23 truth, that the firefighters hadn't made it to him and  
24 that it was really bad for those on the top floors.  
25 That to me was the first communication from an official

1 about the extent of the fire and what it was like inside  
2 on the night."

3 Now, I'm sorry to ask you this question, but do you  
4 remember roughly what time that was?

5 A. I don't remember the exact time, off the top of my head,  
6 probably some time in the afternoon. I'd actively  
7 spoken or tried to speak to a lot of firefighters in my  
8 moving around, and I think Sky captured it one time.  
9 I saw someone in a fire engine and I just would go and  
10 approach them and say, you know, "Could you tell me  
11 anything about who you rescued? Did you get to the top  
12 floor?", and they were obviously told to not say  
13 anything. And I could see it in their face, they wanted  
14 to, but they couldn't, and that was frustrating. But  
15 that moment where I saw that -- where I saw the T-shirt,  
16 it was ... Sorry. The moment when I saw that T-shirt,  
17 it was the first time I realised that uncle was probably  
18 dead, and we watched him burn, and it was just --

19 I mean, I'm sure you can imagine what that was like,  
20 seeing that T-shirt sort of hang sideways on the  
21 railings somewhere. I can't remember where the railings  
22 were, whether it was the Methodist church or somewhere  
23 near Maxilla or the Clement James, and I remember there  
24 was a lot of talk about firefighters not being able to  
25 make it to the top because it was the hottest and it

1 burnt the longest.

2 And again, I didn't know too much of the details in  
3 terms of the firefighters, whereabouts and what they  
4 were doing, and them -- you know, their ladders not  
5 reaching and the water not reaching, I didn't know any  
6 of this stuff, right, all we were hearing was rumours  
7 that it was really bad at the top of the tower. And  
8 when I saw that T-shirt, and that being the first time,  
9 like I've said in my statement, anybody from authority  
10 giving us any sort of detail about what they had done to  
11 try to rescue some of the people, it was just a heart  
12 sinking moment, and I still feel it today. You know,  
13 not just my uncle, for everybody that was on the top  
14 floors, you know, they were doomed. There was no way  
15 they were going to survive. They were left.

16 Q. You say in paragraph 49 {IWS00001783/12}, at the start  
17 of the paragraph:

18 "Despite becoming increasingly sure that uncle  
19 Hesham had not made it out, I still wanted to carry on  
20 and I didn't want to stop until I had done everything  
21 I could to find answers."

22 A. I held on to that, for as long as I could. Even seeing  
23 that T-shirt, I couldn't go back and say to nan, "I'm  
24 sorry, nan, the firefighters never made it to the top  
25 floor, your son is dead, you watched him burn with the

1 rest of the world". I couldn't. I held on. You know,  
2 maybe he got out sooner and made it down to the lower  
3 floors and someone grabbed him and took him out.  
4 You know, I was creating these scenarios in my head  
5 where he was still alive, because I didn't want to let  
6 go to the fact that uncle was gone. I didn't want to go  
7 home and tell nan that her son was gone, you know. So  
8 I -- any -- in any way that I could hold on to that  
9 hope, I did, and I carried on for as long as I could.

10 Q. And you went back to the Rugby Club, as you go on to  
11 say, where it was very stressful and chaotic. What was  
12 happening there?

13 A. I mean, similar to what was sort of happening on the  
14 first day. I know that there were still some people  
15 inside. I'm not sure whether they spent the night there  
16 or not. Most likely they did, because they had nowhere  
17 else to go, and the council had not offered them  
18 anywhere to stay. And I remember I was allowed inside  
19 again, I saw the same people, just really sort of being  
20 busy talking to each other, organising themselves,  
21 putting their arms around each other. I think there was  
22 a couple of people really upset as well. And, again,  
23 I just realised that -- obviously, once I'd checked to  
24 see whether Uncle Hesham's name had been put on any of  
25 these pieces of paper or anything like that, I then

1 realised that, you know, I needed to be back on the  
2 street again.

3 But it was a similar group of people, the same  
4 people that were there, you know, the residents from the  
5 tower, and they were, you know, just trying to do  
6 whatever they could to not only help each other, but  
7 like try to get back pieces of their lives, whether it  
8 was, you know, getting your driver's licence or  
9 a passport or a watch or a phone or a pair of shoes,  
10 you know, whatever it was, and they were sort of helping  
11 each other organise all of this, but again there was  
12 nobody in there with a clipboard or a high-vis or  
13 whatever from the council or any authority to say to  
14 them where they were going to sleep that night,  
15 you know, where their next sort of meal was going to  
16 come from. There was nothing like that. It was just  
17 the people doing it all themselves, you know.

18 Grenfell United exists because of their  
19 non-existence. They purposely left people to — I don't  
20 know what the right terminology is — fend for  
21 themselves, you know, piece back their lives together.  
22 Everything had been taken away from them. You know,  
23 there wasn't just people that survived; there were  
24 people that survived that also lost family members.

25 Q. Now, in that moment, at Rugby Portobello Club, you had

73

1 seen this red T-shirt with this news on it. Did you  
2 have thoughts at the time about how you could verify,  
3 check out that information that might or might not be  
4 true with somebody who might know the truth and tell  
5 you?

6 A. I think that's where it initially sort of came from  
7 anyway, from some of the people that I'd spoke to that  
8 had got out, and were saying to me how bad it was inside  
9 the tower, how thick the smoke was, like, visibility was  
10 almost non-existent, and some of them who lived in the  
11 lower floors, like the 4th floor where the fire had  
12 started, and even up until, I think, like the 8th or 9th  
13 floor, how bad it was. So I think it all started from  
14 them anyway sort of saying to me, like, "I don't think  
15 they even got to the top". And that's why I — when  
16 I was running around, whenever I met a firefighter,  
17 I would ask him, "Did you guys make it to the top  
18 floors?", not just the top, the top floors, and,  
19 you know, they were never able to answer my question.  
20 So it came from them anyway.

21 I don't know if I'd spoken to anybody about the  
22 T-shirt that I saw. I might have done. I don't  
23 remember if I'm being honest.

24 Q. I think you say that you were able to see the accounted  
25 for list, but Uncle Hesham's name was not on that list.

74

1 A. Correct, yes.

2 Q. Then I think you left the Rugby Club and went back to  
3 Westway. Again, just trying to piece together the  
4 timings, do you remember what time that was?

5 A. Again, I would have — probably late morning, midday, in  
6 and around that time. It was just as busy going to  
7 Westway, not only just outside of it, but, you know, the  
8 main road, just after Maxilla Nursery, and, you know,  
9 people everywhere and stuff like that. But, again,  
10 nobody from authority, nobody sort of directing people  
11 where to go or what to do.

12 I had posters this time, so I'd put up a lot of  
13 posters there on the football cages and on the railings  
14 and on the lampposts, and I think I gave a poster to  
15 somebody from the Red Cross because they had sort of  
16 like a station there with a desk and stuff. And then,  
17 again, police wouldn't let me into the Westway Centre,  
18 I had to be a wristband. I didn't know where this  
19 wristband came from or where to get the wristband from  
20 or what I had to do in order to qualify for this  
21 wristband, and I explained this to the police officer,  
22 and again he was very adamant that he wouldn't let me  
23 in, he wasn't going to help me to try to see if  
24 Uncle Hesham was inside, but he agreed to let me put up  
25 a poster on the window, which is what I did.

75

1 Q. Yes, this wristband, you saw people wearing them, did  
2 you?

3 A. I don't remember seeing anybody wearing these  
4 wristbands, I was just told at the door — when I got  
5 there and I was obviously trying to explain who I was  
6 and what I was trying to achieve, he was like, "Well,  
7 you need a wristband."

8 And I was like, "Where do I get these wristbands  
9 from?"

10 "I don't know."

11 "Well, where did these guys get their wristbands  
12 from?"

13 "I don't know, you need to get a wristband."

14 Q. What did it signify, this wristband?

15 A. Well, for me it signified that if you had this  
16 wristband, you were allowed in, you were considered  
17 somebody who was allowed to be around the people that  
18 escaped the fire. That's what it felt like.

19 Q. Was there any other rest centre that you came across  
20 during the course of that day which was operating  
21 a wristband entry scheme?

22 A. No, no, there weren't any other centres that were  
23 operating on any type of wristband or pass scheme that  
24 you had to come in. I mean, they were extremely  
25 difficult to get in anyway because of everything that

76

1 was going on and all the people outside and stuff like  
 2 that, and I think people knew that there were survivors  
 3 inside, and whether they were friends or volunteers from  
 4 the community or maybe even journalists, I don't know,  
 5 hanging around these areas. So I can understand why you  
 6 would, you know, make sure that you're letting the right  
 7 people into these places. But, you know, you could  
 8 clearly see that, you know, I was distressed and wasn't  
 9 trying to make things up to get into these places. But  
 10 the Westway was the only place that was operating on any  
 11 type of sort of entry pass, if you will.

12 Q. Right.  
 13 Did they have a system in place, even if they  
 14 wouldn't let you in, at least for allowing you to obtain  
 15 information about where to go next, what to do next,  
 16 where to find out any information if they weren't going  
 17 to provide you with any?

18 A. No, there was nothing of the sort. It was, like  
 19 I mentioned earlier, "Sorry, can't help you, move  
 20 along".

21 Q. Anybody there from the council or the TMO or central  
 22 government?

23 A. No. You know, I thought about this a lot, because  
 24 obviously a lot was going on and I was moving around  
 25 a lot, and I've thought about this a lot, because

1 I don't want to say that there wasn't anybody there when  
 2 there was. But I went everywhere, all day, every day,  
 3 and I don't even know for how long for, for so long, and  
 4 I've run this over and over in my head, and I remember  
 5 everything so vividly, to the point where I can still  
 6 smell the smell so potently today. There was nobody  
 7 from any type of authority to help co-ordinate, discuss,  
 8 there was none of that. The only presence of authority  
 9 that I saw was the police, and it didn't feel like the  
 10 police were there to help us.

11 Q. And was that the similar experience that you had at the  
 12 other rest centres during the course of the day?

13 A. Pretty much, yes. I think the Rugby Portobello Club was  
 14 the only place that I was really able to get inside.  
 15 I was never allowed in the Westway. The Methodist  
 16 church, I don't think I ever went inside until sort of  
 17 after all the chaos had calmed down. And Al Manaar --  
 18 it was a similar experience everywhere, really.

19 So then, you know, you're sort of put in this place  
 20 where: okay, I can't get into any of these places, I've  
 21 walked around everywhere, putting up posters everywhere,  
 22 I've got this camera crew behind me broadcasting to the  
 23 nation or whatever, what else can I do? Where else can  
 24 I go? And that was where my mind was at the time.

25 Q. You say in paragraph 51, if we just scroll down to that,

1 please, at page 12 {IWS00001783/12}, towards the foot of  
 2 the page, that the centres were overwhelmed with people  
 3 and donations. Was that causing a problem?

4 A. Yes, it was causing a problem. Because of the amount of  
 5 things that were being donated, whether they were food  
 6 or clothes or whatever, and there wasn't anyone helping  
 7 co-ordinate with these donations, the rest centres got  
 8 very full very quickly, and to the point where,  
 9 you know, things were being piled outside and in boxes  
 10 and all sorts of stuff, and I feel like had there have  
 11 been somebody sort of co-ordinating, knowing, "Right,  
 12 this bit of clothes need to go to this family or these  
 13 people in this rest centre" at least, then it would have  
 14 maybe freed up a lot more space for us to be able to go  
 15 in and find out bits of information or to try to maybe  
 16 help with people who were looking for their families, to  
 17 try to come in to -- you know, whether it was one by one  
 18 or whatever, to see if their families were inside or  
 19 anyone inside knew of the whereabouts of their family.

20 So it was just so chaotic and unorganised, and you  
 21 could see volunteers and people from the community  
 22 trying to orchestrate and organise what to do with all  
 23 of this stuff and where to put it, but -- and they did  
 24 an amazing job, obviously, but I felt that there was so  
 25 much, and there was no one to -- from authority to

1 co-ordinate this, that it was a little bit chaotic, and  
 2 it probably prevented, at times, people from getting in  
 3 and finding out key bits of information about their  
 4 loved ones.

5 Q. So now we get to the end of 15 June, the Thursday, and  
 6 apart from the message written on the red LFB T-shirt  
 7 that you'd seen at the foot of the tower, this is now  
 8 almost two full days after the night in question, did  
 9 you have any hard facts about Uncle Hesham?

10 A. No. The only facts that I knew was that my grandmother  
 11 spoke to him between 2 and 3 am, I knew that he'd called  
 12 the LFB and that they told him to stay where he was, and  
 13 I knew that ... sorry, I've just lost my train of  
 14 thought. I knew that his phone was still ringing up  
 15 until the early hours of the morning. I think -- I'm  
 16 not sure if it was still ringing on the 15th. But those  
 17 were the only facts that I knew.

18 There was -- I mean, even through what was being --  
 19 what was coming out in the mainstream media about --  
 20 I mean, there was nothing about the amount of people  
 21 that were missing or had passed or anything like that,  
 22 who had got out. There was no facts that any of us knew  
 23 about what had happened on 14 June on the 15th. We were  
 24 still in the same sort of position as we were the first  
 25 day, and it wasn't until, I think, that Friday, in the

1 afternoon, we got our family liaison officers , and even  
 2 then, all they were interested in was just taking  
 3 details about uncle. There was never any, "Right, this  
 4 is what's happened" or "This is what we think has  
 5 happened" or "This is what is going" — the only facts  
 6 that I knew was that nan spoke to him and his phone was  
 7 still ringing, and he called the LFB and they told him  
 8 to stay. That was all I knew.

9 Q. We will come to the afternoon of the 16th, the Friday  
 10 afternoon, in a moment, with the FLO's visit, but  
 11 between the Thursday afternoon, the 15th, and the  
 12 afternoon of the 16th, the Friday, do you remember  
 13 learning any more from all of the efforts that you have  
 14 described in your statement?

15 A. No. No. We'd learnt nothing new about what had  
 16 happened at Grenfell. We'd learnt nothing new about  
 17 where Uncle Hesham was or what had happened to him on  
 18 the night. Absolutely nothing.

19 Q. Now, if we go, then, to paragraph 56 of your statement  
 20 on page 13 {IWS00001783/13}, at the foot of page 13, you  
 21 say:  
 22 "On 16 June we were assigned Family Liaison Officers  
 23 (FLOs) called Graeme and Tom. They came to my nan's  
 24 house in the afternoon and met with the family. Our  
 25 FLOs took down details from us about uncle Hesham.

1 That's all they really did before they left again."  
 2 How did they know where to come? Did they explain?

3 A. I'm just trying to remember now. I think through ...  
 4 I'm not too sure, Mr Millett, if I'm being honest.  
 5 Either they got in contact with my great uncle, Mohamed,  
 6 or whether he got in contact with them to report that  
 7 Uncle Hesham was missing, and I think he'd given them  
 8 details of where to come. I think that's how they knew  
 9 where to come.

10 Q. I think you say at paragraph 63 {IWS00001783/15} — we  
 11 don't need to go to it unless you want to — that they  
 12 took statements from family members about your uncle and  
 13 they put together a family tree.

14 A. Correct, yes, that's what happened.

15 Q. And also, I think, asked for details of who should be  
 16 contacted if there was any news?

17 A. Correct, yes.

18 Q. Did they give you any news, any information about what  
 19 the system was?

20 A. No, no.

21 Q. Did you ask?

22 A. Yeah, of course, we asked them what happens from now,  
 23 what — I mean, even then, we didn't know the process  
 24 until a later meeting, I believe it was on the 19th,  
 25 with the police and the LFB and the ambulance, and

1 I think that was the first initial meeting. We didn't  
 2 know then that the process would be that they would be  
 3 technically missing until they were identified as being  
 4 dead. So — and the FLOs didn't explain that to us. We  
 5 didn't even talk about that. It was just more who  
 6 Uncle Hesham was, who we were, a family tree was put  
 7 together, a couple of statements, and that was it.

8 Whenever we asked, we were told that they didn't  
 9 know anything. They weren't being told information by  
 10 their seniors, so they couldn't tell us anything anyway,  
 11 and that's pretty much the — how it went for a while,  
 12 really, with the family liaison officers. I mean,  
 13 nothing against Graeme and Tom, they were good people,  
 14 but it's just it felt like — whether they were keeping  
 15 things from us on purpose or whether they just didn't  
 16 know and weren't being told, I don't know, but it was  
 17 a constant battle to try to get information, understand  
 18 what the process was.

19 And I think I spoke about this publicly during the  
 20 time, just saying, you know, even if they don't have  
 21 anything to tell us, still tell us that you're going  
 22 through some type of process to be able to get us  
 23 information, you know, we'd been able to understand  
 24 that. But the lack of communication or the non-existent  
 25 communication just made things worse, and that was

1 increasingly frustrating, because these meetings, these  
 2 were taking place inside my grandmother's house, and  
 3 obviously everything was being said to my grandmother.  
 4 She speaks English and understands English, but it's not  
 5 perfect, so at times you would have to translate stuff  
 6 to her, and, you know, she's getting frustrated because  
 7 I'm saying to her, "They're not — they can't tell us  
 8 anything."

9 "Well, what happened? Where is he?"  
 10 "I don't know, Nan."  
 11 "well, what's going on? When are we going to know?"  
 12 "I don't know, Nan, because they're not telling us,  
 13 they're not telling us."  
 14 So it was just this really sort of horrible  
 15 experience that we were, you know, going back and forth  
 16 and felt like we was in the middle between the police  
 17 and my grandmother and some of my family members  
 18 sometimes, and it was just frustrating.

19 Q. You say in paragraph 64 that you were shown photographs  
 20 by the FLOs of what Uncle Hesham's flat looked like  
 21 after the fire, and you described what those photographs  
 22 showed. Why did they show you photographs?

23 A. I don't think that was until a bit later.

24 Q. Right, I see.

25 A. Yes, that wasn't — you know, they hadn't — I mean,

1 I know -- well, they hadn't got to the top floor at that  
2 time, or I don't think they'd even gone into the tower  
3 at that time. I do know that Commander Cundy did go in  
4 early on, but I don't think it was then, and I believe  
5 that the photos -- we were showed a number of photos,  
6 first the photos of my uncle's flat before they had  
7 searched it, and then photos of it afterwards, and then  
8 there was a point where I had actually physically gone  
9 up and gone inside his flat myself, and I wasn't able,  
10 and still to this day not able, to bring myself to look  
11 at the pictures that the coroner has of him when he had  
12 been found in his flat.

13 But to answer your question, Mr Millett, I don't  
14 believe it was at that time when we saw the pictures.

15 Q. So it was a later time?

16 A. Correct, yes.

17 Q. What was the purpose of showing you the photographs  
18 then?

19 A. I think it was then that they were trying to explain the  
20 process of identifying --

21 Q. I see.

22 A. -- somebody, because obviously we kept going on about,  
23 you know, "Where is he? Is he dead? Is he not dead?  
24 What's going on?", and they were explaining that,  
25 you know, there was a lot of debris and they had to go

85

1 through, you know, inch by inch and do all of these  
2 different sorts of processes, and to try to give us  
3 an understanding of the severity of the job by showing  
4 us the state of his flat --

5 Q. I see.

6 A. -- so that we could, I guess, understand that this is  
7 not going to be an easy, quick process.

8 Q. Did you find that explanation they gave you at that time  
9 helpful to your understanding of that particular  
10 process?

11 A. Not really, because I couldn't understand it, you know,  
12 they weren't very clear about -- it was just: "This is  
13 the state of his flat, here is a picture of it, and we  
14 have to go in and sieve through all of these different  
15 types of debris before we even get to trying to find out  
16 where your uncle was." But I couldn't understand --  
17 sort of understand: well, how are you -- you know, is  
18 somebody going in there picking things up with a shovel,  
19 are you using your hands? I didn't fully understand, or  
20 maybe I just wasn't in the right state of mind to  
21 understand what the process was.

22 But also it was during that time as well that,  
23 you know, we were hearing a lot of -- I wouldn't call  
24 them rumours, because I had a friend, somebody who I'd  
25 spoken to, who lived just -- closer to Grenfell than my

86

1 nan was, and where his flat was, in his window, you  
2 could see where everything had been sort of cornered off  
3 right underneath the tower, so the guys in their suits  
4 and putting together the tents and stuff like that, and  
5 he was telling me that they were going up and down the  
6 tower and having these meetings with these dogs and  
7 saying, "Make sure the dogs don't bite any human  
8 remains". So I was just confused as to what the actual  
9 process was, because I'm hearing one thing from the  
10 police and then I'm kind of sort of hearing another  
11 thing from people that were living right where all of  
12 this was going on, and it was all happening at night  
13 because they didn't want people to see during the day.  
14 So I didn't really understand.

15 So to answer your question: no, it wasn't helpful.

16 If anything, it just raised more questions, created more  
17 frustration, and more upset, you know. Still to this  
18 day -- I mean, I understand it a little bit more now.

19 I mean, you know, I haven't seen what they were doing,  
20 but it must have been tough, difficult, a difficult job  
21 to sieve through all of the debris and try to find  
22 people.

23 Q. Out of interest, has anybody ever explained to you the  
24 process of identification that was undertaken?

25 A. You know, they might have done, Mr Millett, and I'm

87

1 probably leaning more towards Dr Fiona Wilcox, because  
2 she communicated very well to our families, very well to  
3 my family, in terms of the processes, and really tried  
4 to make you understand the significance of what had to  
5 happen in order to get these people's remains, and  
6 I remember this because I remember when we found out  
7 about Uncle Hesham being identified, and he was  
8 identified complete, right, so he was -- his remains  
9 were all found together, and I remember us being really  
10 happy about that, almost feeling lucky that we were able  
11 to get him all back. I mean, this wasn't until  
12 September.

13 But just to answer your question, yes, I think more  
14 from her, because of that feeling of relief of finding  
15 Uncle Hesham, because I know that others weren't as  
16 lucky.

17 Q. Yes.

18 Now, moving back a little bit in your statement,  
19 paragraph 57, you say there, page 14 {IWS00001783/14}:

20 "By the 16 June there was a lot of anger in the  
21 community and tension. I think communications from  
22 officials to the community was really bad and this led  
23 to false information being spread and a feeling that the  
24 authorities were trying to cover something up."

25 You go on to say:

88

1 "The rumours got out of control and I blame this on  
 2 the lack of information and communication from those in  
 3 authority and the absence of any leadership from them."  
 4 That's right, is it? You stand by that?  
 5 A. Yeah, I mean, it's in my statement, I ... I mean,  
 6 I still believe to this day, and we've learnt -- and  
 7 also through what we've learnt through the Inquiry that  
 8 there were officials or organisations, if you want to  
 9 call them that, and I'm referring to the local authority  
 10 and the government, were actively trying to go against  
 11 what was coming out, was trying to make us out to be  
 12 some type of, you know, crazy people who were going to  
 13 be rioting and causing havoc on the streets and all of  
 14 this type of stuff. We now know that there were -- the  
 15 government and the local authorities weren't actively  
 16 trying to help us, they were actively trying to suppress  
 17 any sort of uprising, but also to try to control the  
 18 narrative that there was something wrong with the tower  
 19 or the refurbishment or these materials or whatever it  
 20 may be. You know better than myself, Mr Millett, you  
 21 have been questioning these crooks directly yourself.  
 22 So I still believe that a cover-up was taking place.  
 23 In terms of the amount of people that died, yeah,  
 24 I believed for a long time that there were a lot more  
 25 people than 72 that died, but that was because,

1 you know, like I say in my statement, there was a lack  
 2 of communication, and there was a lot of anger in the  
 3 community, and people had the right to be angry. We  
 4 were angry. But I can say this with confidence,  
 5 you know, the community, and especially the families,  
 6 didn't want any sort of crazy stuff going around in the  
 7 community, and if that was happening -- and it kind of  
 8 almost did, you know -- we were stopping it.  
 9 Q. At the time -- I know it's difficult to cast your mind  
 10 back to that time -- in those days immediately after the  
 11 fire, 14, 15, 16 June, what expectations did you have at  
 12 that time about what was supposed to be in place by way  
 13 of public communication for people in your position,  
 14 looking for loved ones?  
 15 A. I mean, obviously I've never experienced anything like  
 16 this before in my life and I don't know anybody that  
 17 has, so there wasn't a sort of guideline of  
 18 expectations. But living in London, living in the Royal  
 19 Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, in 2017, you'd think,  
 20 or I believed, that it was just a matter of time for,  
 21 you know, these heroes to show up and to tell us that  
 22 everything was going to be okay and take care of  
 23 everything, and it never happened. I don't know what  
 24 these heroes looked like, whether they were government,  
 25 police, I don't know. It could have been, you know --

1 but -- and I won't even say as each day went on; as each  
 2 hour, as each minute went on, it was more and more of  
 3 a realisation that they were never coming. They were  
 4 never planning to come.  
 5 Q. Well, then, that takes us to those days, the  
 6 Saturday/Sunday, the 17/18 June, and you say in your  
 7 statement at paragraph 59 that you continued doing the  
 8 same thing as before, and you still had no contact from  
 9 RBKC or the TMO about Uncle Hesham, and the police  
 10 hadn't told you about what they believed had happened to  
 11 him. Now, that's now five days since the fire.  
 12 At that stage -- I think you have probably answered  
 13 the question -- what were your thoughts or your  
 14 expectations about getting any of the information you  
 15 were after?  
 16 A. I mean, like I said, I was holding on to the hope with  
 17 everything I can that Uncle Hesham was still somewhere,  
 18 and as long as I had that hope, then I had the means and  
 19 the adrenalin and the motivation to keep running around  
 20 and try to speak to someone.  
 21 I mean, this is how silly I was, thinking that even  
 22 if I saw the same person and I asked him the same  
 23 question, maybe today he will remember something he  
 24 didn't yesterday, you know, it was that type of  
 25 desperation, but nothing changed.

1 Q. You then describe a meeting at paragraph 60 of your  
 2 statement, just at the foot of the screen there, on  
 3 19 June, which was the Monday, at the Harrow Club with  
 4 police, and you say:  
 5 "It wasn't a community centre ... There were about  
 6 100 people there. The ambulance service was also there  
 7 and I think someone from the London Fire Brigade was  
 8 there too but I don't know who."  
 9 And you have a 17-minute meeting of that meeting.  
 10 Was anyone from central government or the RBKC or  
 11 TMO at that meeting?  
 12 A. Absolutely not, no. I remember quite vividly who was  
 13 there and even where they were seated, and you had  
 14 Commander Cundy and then next to him I believe you had  
 15 somebody from the Fire Brigade, and then the ambulance  
 16 guys were sitting all the way towards the left, and  
 17 I remember at the beginning they'd all sort of like  
 18 introduced themselves and what they did, and when it  
 19 came to the ambulance guys, everybody sort of applauded,  
 20 and it was this unified sort of feeling of gratefulness.  
 21 But everybody else, it was like, you know, we didn't  
 22 believe a word that was coming out of their mouths,  
 23 you know. I think somebody from the Fire Brigade had  
 24 said that they'd got to the top floors, and we believed  
 25 them. I now know that that was a lie. He was lying to



1 us, because they never did, they never got to the top  
2 floors, the firefighters, and he stood there, and it was  
3 the first meeting -- I'm not sure -- remember who he  
4 was, and the first meeting he had with us, he lied.

5 Commander Cundy I could see was -- or I felt was  
6 a little bit shaken up. I think he'd just been in the  
7 tower. I mean, if you're a human being and you walk  
8 into the tower, I mean, and see what he saw, I'm sure it  
9 would affect you, so I could see that in him. But,  
10 again, as he was talking, you know, we were all  
11 frustrated, we didn't believe what they were saying, we  
12 felt that they were hiding information from us or they  
13 weren't telling us things because they were worried that  
14 we were going to get upset and angry, and people were  
15 there crying, and it was a really hot day as well, it  
16 was really hot in there, and I definitely remember not  
17 seeing anybody from local government, central  
18 government, from RBKC, or the TMO, it was just the  
19 police, the Fire Brigade, the ambulance, and some  
20 volunteers and stuff like that.

21 There were lots of police standing outside, standing  
22 inside. I remember there was a moment where I got up  
23 and I was really frustrated, and I was talking to this  
24 police officer and saying, "Why are you guys not telling  
25 us the truth, why are you not helping us?", and he just

1 grabbed me and started crying, and I was just thrown  
2 back by this. And I remember just thinking: wow,  
3 you know, if he's crying, like, how bad things --  
4 you know, how bad are they really?

5 And this is why people kept feeling like they  
6 weren't being told things, and that was the worst thing  
7 you can do in these type of situations to us, is make us  
8 feel like you weren't telling us anything. So if you  
9 could see that we're feeling like this, try to reassure  
10 us, and they didn't.

11 You know, all they told us was -- that was when we  
12 found out that people -- whoever was missing was going  
13 to be technically missing until they were identified.  
14 That was the first that we'd heard that, or that was the  
15 process. And that he believed 79 people were missing,  
16 and also he -- they had only identified three or five  
17 people, but they had 37 bodies. I remember that quite  
18 vividly. And it was just a very emotional meeting,  
19 a very angry meeting, people were shouting, people  
20 were -- I mean, naturally people were upset, people were  
21 crying. I remember my auntie, Noha, was there with me,  
22 and the guys from the ambulance had to come and help her  
23 because she got really upset after Commander Cundy told  
24 her about the process of Uncle Hesham being technically  
25 missing until he had been identified, and, yeah, that's

1 what I remember from that meeting. But definitely  
2 nobody from government or the council.

3 Q. Was any information, any support services even  
4 signposted?

5 A. No. No. There was no bits of information that they  
6 were giving out, there was no sort of phone line or  
7 helpline or this is where to go, it was just they  
8 gathered us together, they told us what they wanted to  
9 tell us, and that we should all have -- for the families  
10 who have relatives that are missing, we should all have  
11 family liaison officers by then or soon, and they would  
12 be giving us information as to the processes and the  
13 next steps in terms of identifying our relatives.

14 Q. Now, in the end, as I think you say in your statement at  
15 paragraph 65 {IWS00001783/15}, it wasn't until  
16 August 2017 that Uncle Hesham's remains had been found  
17 in his flat. Do you remember who gave you that  
18 information?

19 A. It would have been the family liaison officers.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. Either Graeme or Tom, probably Graeme.

22 Q. Did they explain the lapse of time?

23 A. Sorry, Mr Millett, what do you mean?

24 Q. I was going to use the word "delay", but that might be  
25 the wrong word, but the period of time it had taken to

1 identify the information.

2 A. No. So, I mean, we -- I knew before the family liaison  
3 officers that Uncle Hesham was about to be identified,  
4 and this was through, like I was saying earlier, the  
5 group that Ahmed had created, and I was -- I remember my  
6 family convinced me to go away for a period of time,  
7 take my wife and the kids away to Poland, just to get  
8 away for a little bit, and I just -- I really didn't  
9 want to go. I felt that I was abandoning my grandmother  
10 and I was abandoning my family, but I felt that I needed  
11 to do this for the kids, because they'd seen everything,  
12 and I was in constant communication with Ahmed, and  
13 I remember Ahmed had called me and said to me -- this  
14 was in the middle of July -- that they've started to now  
15 identify people in the top floor. I think he even knew  
16 what flat they had gone into. And it was -- so we knew  
17 that we were next. In the next few weeks, we were going  
18 to be told that Uncle Hesham had been identified.  
19 I think by then we'd sort of come to terms -- were  
20 starting to come to terms that he had passed, and it was  
21 through that.

22 So when the family liaison officers came and spoke  
23 to the family, we kind of anticipated it, because of the  
24 communication we had with Ahmed and his communication  
25 with the other family members.

1 They didn't explain what the delay was, apart from  
 2 that it was this very big job, that they had to get  
 3 people in from abroad to sieve through this stuff,  
 4 I think they even mentioned archaeologists and stuff  
 5 like this, who had to go through all of this stuff, bit  
 6 by bit, inch by inch, and that's why it took so long,  
 7 and I understood that. I think I had this argument with  
 8 them one time, I said, "Well, you know, you guys must  
 9 have known that this was the process from the beginning,  
 10 had you have said this to us then we could have  
 11 anticipated, okay, we're not going to hear anything from  
 12 you for the next three weeks because this is what you're  
 13 doing, whereas you're not telling us anything and  
 14 leaving us in this sort of dark limbo, you know,  
 15 naturally it just makes things worse".

16 So I wasn't so surprised, and I think by then I kind  
 17 of knew the process for identifying Uncle Hesham's  
 18 remains.

19 Q. Yes.

20 Now, I just want to ask you one or two questions  
 21 about key worker support. You pick it up at  
 22 paragraph 70 at the foot of page 16 of your statement  
 23 {IWS00001783/16}, and you say:

24 "I was allocated a key worker called Jackie but  
 25 I don't believe that this happened within the first

1 seven days of the fire. I believe that she worked for  
 2 RBKC."

3 Do you remember when she was allocated to you?

4 A. I really don't.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. It wasn't until a lot later.

7 Q. Okay. Was she useful?

8 A. Not really. Not because -- she just -- there wasn't  
 9 anything that she offered we needed. You know, all we  
 10 wanted was Uncle Hesham. Where is he? Can we have him  
 11 back? And we weren't interested in any other support  
 12 that RBKC were offering. I mean, they were, you know,  
 13 throwing money around like it was nothing, and  
 14 I remember me and my family sort of saying, "We don't  
 15 want any of your blood money, we don't want anything,  
 16 just give us back our uncle".

17 So, I mean, maybe the help would have been -- it's  
 18 just -- it's not what we needed at the time. We were  
 19 very fixated on one thing and one thing only, and,  
 20 you know, it seemed like they'd allocated these people  
 21 to try to, you know, whether help you or calm you down  
 22 or make you feel a little bit better about the council,  
 23 I don't know. But what I do know, I've had many  
 24 key workers. I also remember in the time in the  
 25 beginning they were using foreign exchange students with

1 no experience to be key workers, some of which didn't  
 2 speak very good English, I was hearing from some of the  
 3 families, and they were just putting people in this  
 4 place probably just to tick the box and say, "We're  
 5 supporting these families".

6 Q. Now, if you go to paragraph 71 on page 17 of your  
 7 statement {IWS00001783/17}, you say:

8 "In January 2018 I was assigned a new key worker  
 9 called Wendy. She wasn't as good as Jackie in terms of  
 10 supporting us as she tended to just point me in the  
 11 direction of Grenfell United (GU) who were helping  
 12 survivors and the bereaved. GU had set themselves up  
 13 early on and I have described how I saw them forming at  
 14 the Rugby Club on 14 June. They stepped in and helped  
 15 organised the bereaved and survivors when there was no  
 16 leadership and help from government, to try and support  
 17 one another. In the months after the fire, they  
 18 continued to offer support and to make sure the bereaved  
 19 and survivors knew of what support they were entitled  
 20 to, as some people had key workers who were not as good  
 21 as others and the system RBKC had put in place clearly  
 22 wasn't working. I wasn't aware until I started becoming  
 23 involved with GU of the different types of support  
 24 I could receive to help me after the loss of uncle  
 25 Hesham and what we had been through in the aftermath."

1 Now, I'm interested in the immediate few days after  
 2 the fire, and you say that you saw them forming at the  
 3 Rugby Club on 14 June.

4 Who was it who was organising Grenfell United at  
 5 that stage?

6 A. So I think it was mainly sort of Ed, Willie, they were  
 7 the ones that were sort of like standing at the top and  
 8 talking to everybody. But, I mean, like, I'm almost  
 9 making it sound like it was like this big sort of -- it  
 10 just happened organically, you know. They were people  
 11 that knew each other, some of which we also now have  
 12 learnt that they were -- I wouldn't say campaigning, but  
 13 were discussing the issues and concerns that they had  
 14 during the refurbishment. So, you know -- and obviously  
 15 we know about Ed and the blog that he wrote with  
 16 Francis.

17 So I didn't know any of this then, but when I was  
 18 there, you could see obviously they knew each other,  
 19 they had a history together of being together and  
 20 I guess talking about the council and the lack of  
 21 support that they were getting, or whatever that was.  
 22 But it was just an organic thing, where these neighbours  
 23 that had escaped this horrific disaster together were  
 24 sort of like saying, "Right, this is what we need to do,  
 25 we need to now do this and we need to now do that, and

1 in order to get this we're going to do that", and they  
2 just, you know, switched on and became this humanitarian  
3 group.

4 And there wasn't so much -- you know, a lot of  
5 bereaved there at the time, because a lot of them were  
6 probably doing what I was doing, running around and  
7 stuff like that, but it was mainly for all of the guys  
8 that were able to get out of the fire that weren't in  
9 hospitals, and they were just organising themselves  
10 because they knew that no one was coming, you know.  
11 I was still naive enough to think that this hero was  
12 going to turn up at some stage, and I think through  
13 their experiences and through knowing RBKC, they knew  
14 nobody was coming to help them or save them or to  
15 even -- I mean, you know, when did they have somewhere  
16 to stay for the first time, you know? How long did that  
17 take? How long did the council take to give these  
18 people a roof over their heads? So this is what I saw  
19 happening organically. But I very quickly realised that  
20 this isn't my path, I need to find uncle.

21 But then I later got involved with Grenfell United  
22 in November that year. I was co-opted on to the  
23 committee in November 2017.

24 Q. We have been through a lot of evidence today together  
25 with your statement, but my last question for you,

101

1 before we take the standard break, is: in general,  
2 Mr Mussilhy, how did the absence of any presence of  
3 authority and leadership, as you saw it, as you've told  
4 us, in the immediate aftermath of the fire affect you  
5 and your family?

6 A. I mean, naturally it's affected us really badly,  
7 Mr Millett. Like I mentioned earlier, for me  
8 personally, Grenfell has completely changed my life, my  
9 family's life, and the life we had before Grenfell is  
10 almost non-existent.

11 I thought we lived in a country where the people we  
12 vote for and the people that are put in place to look  
13 after its people, its most vulnerable people, would  
14 help, would come swooping in, and it never happened.  
15 The sad part about that, Mr Millett, is that they never  
16 planned to. They don't care about us. They care more  
17 about themselves, their pockets, and I won't go into  
18 detail, because you questioned these crooks, you sat  
19 here and spoke to these criminals who acted so  
20 fraudulently and with this constant detachment. I mean,  
21 how many more politicians, ministers and lords are going  
22 to insult our dead families before something is done  
23 about what happened to us? And it's sad.

24 I've almost completely lost faith in humanity. I've  
25 almost completely lost faith in the world, because it's

102

1 always the same thing everywhere. We suffer, and they  
2 prosper. And I've said this before: the system isn't  
3 broken; it was built this way specifically to benefit  
4 them.

5 Our families died in the most public and horrific  
6 way possible, and here we are, five years later, with no  
7 arrests, no accountability, but yet the ones who were  
8 put in charge or the ones who were involved have been  
9 able to prosper since the fire, and how can we allow  
10 this to happen?

11 I feel like as time goes on, the general public have  
12 forgotten about us, or every time they hear about us,  
13 they're fed up, and this is the problem. People need to  
14 see themselves in us. People need to understand that  
15 what's happened to us and what's happening to us is also  
16 happening to them.

17 Putting aside these corporates that behave the way  
18 they behave, because it's in their nature, it's what  
19 they do, but the government, the government's duty is to  
20 protect us, to look after its people. But yet only last  
21 week, a lord was sitting here, calling our families  
22 nameless, getting the numbers mixed with Hillsborough,  
23 and couldn't even say Grenfell, said "Grenbell", and  
24 these are the people put in place, Mr Millett, to look  
25 after us. The government we elect and we pay our taxes

103

1 to, and they can't even get our families' name right.  
2 They can't even get the name of where our families  
3 remains still live to this day. And it's sad.

4 I've given up on the world. I think it's completely  
5 messed up, and I almost want to just create a bubble for  
6 me and my family and live in it. I don't do what I do  
7 with Grenfell United because I want to be an activist,  
8 because it's a battle we're never going to win. The  
9 government will do whatever they can to try to keep us  
10 quiet, sweep this under the carpet and continue to make  
11 money the way they have been doing for decades, and  
12 either we change it or we accept it.

13 I don't know what changing it looks like. All  
14 I know is my uncle's gone, we're never going to get him  
15 back, our families are broken, and they will never be  
16 fixed.

17 That's all I have to say.

18 MR MILLETT: Thank you very much.

19 Well, Mr Mussilhy, what I'm going to do is ask  
20 the Chairman to rise for a few minutes to see if there  
21 are any questions that I have failed to ask you which  
22 I should have done, or whether others outside this room  
23 or within this room would like me to put other questions  
24 to you.

25 Mr Chairman, it's 12.56. I know that we would

104

1 normally break at 1.00, but I am in your hands as to  
 2 what we do.  
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Well, I think it would be sensible  
 4 to try and finish Mr Mussilhy's evidence before lunch.  
 5 I think you would prefer that, wouldn't you?  
 6 THE WITNESS: Yes, please.  
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: We have to have a short break at  
 8 this point, as I think you know, because there are other  
 9 people following the proceedings who may want to suggest  
 10 questions that should be put to you.  
 11 Do you think 1.05 is going to give you long enough  
 12 for that?  
 13 MR MILLETT: Yes.  
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right.  
 15 We'll break until 1.05 and then, when you come back,  
 16 we'll see if there are any more questions for you.  
 17 THE WITNESS: Okay. All right.  
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: As I asked you before, please don't  
 19 talk to anyone about your evidence, although I don't  
 20 think you will have much chance to do so. All right?  
 21 Thank you. Would you go with the usher, please.  
 22 (Pause)  
 23 We'll say 1.05, Mr Millett, but if it turns out that  
 24 you do need more time, you know how to contact us.  
 25 MR MILLETT: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairman.

105

1 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you very much.  
 2 (12.58 pm)  
 3 (A short break)  
 4 (1.05 pm)  
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right, Mr Mussilhy, we'll see if  
 6 there are any more questions for you. All right?  
 7 THE WITNESS: Okay.  
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you.  
 9 Yes, Mr Millett.  
 10 MR MILLETT: Yes, Mr Chairman, thank you.  
 11 Mr Mussilhy, just one short question.  
 12 During the seven days after the fire at  
 13 Grenfell Tower, did you actually get into the  
 14 Westway Centre at all?  
 15 A. Not once, no. I was never able to get into any of the  
 16 other centres, really, apart from the Rugby Portobello  
 17 Club, and that was because I was able to get in there on  
 18 the first day and obviously some of the people had seen  
 19 me, so it was easy for me to get back into there, but  
 20 I was never able to get into the Westway or any of the  
 21 other places. But the Westway, like I said earlier, was  
 22 the only place that was only letting people in with the  
 23 wristbands.  
 24 MR MILLETT: Yes, thank you very much.  
 25 Well, Mr Mussilhy, it's been very useful to hear

106

1 your evidence and we're extremely grateful to you for  
 2 coming here and assisting us with our investigations, so  
 3 thank you very much indeed. Thank you.  
 4 THE WITNESS: Thank you.  
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: It's right that I should add the  
 6 thanks on behalf of all the members of the panel. It's  
 7 really been very interesting and very helpful to us to  
 8 hear what you have to tell us, because you were there  
 9 and obviously we weren't, and we need to know what  
 10 things were going on on the ground shortly after the  
 11 fire. So thank you very much indeed.  
 12 I know it must have been difficult for you to go  
 13 over this ground yet again, but it really has helped us  
 14 a lot, so thank you very much indeed.  
 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you. I'm glad I came.  
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Certainly, yes. Thank you very  
 17 much.  
 18 THE WITNESS: Thank you.  
 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Well, now you're free to go. Thank  
 20 you very much.  
 21 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Goodbye.  
 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Goodbye.  
 23 (The witness withdrew)  
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Good. Well, thank you very much,  
 25 Mr Millett.

107

1 MR MILLETT: Now, thank you, Mr Chairman. It's just short  
 2 of 1.10.  
 3 Now, the next thing that's going to happen after the  
 4 break and for the rest of the day, I think, is that  
 5 Ms Islam of counsel will read to you and the public  
 6 extracts from a large number of written witness  
 7 statements that the Inquiry has received under some  
 8 grouped headings on themes. So she will be here in my  
 9 place when we come back.  
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes, thank you very much.  
 11 Well, I'm going to suggest we come back at 2.05.  
 12 MR MILLETT: Very good.  
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: And at that point we'll look forward  
 14 to hearing Ms Islam.  
 15 MR MILLETT: Thank you very much.  
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you all very much. We break  
 17 there until 2.05, please. Thank you.  
 18 (1.08 pm)  
 19 (A short break)  
 20 (2.05 pm)  
 21 Thematic Summary of BSR Evidence  
 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes, Ms Islam.  
 23 MS ISLAM: Good afternoon.  
 24 Mr Chairman, members of the panel, we're now going  
 25 to read extracts from a number of statements provided by

108

1 the bereaved, survivors and residents relating to their  
 2 experiences in the immediate aftermath of the fire.  
 3 We will be taking a thematic approach to the  
 4 evidence and will be addressing the following eight  
 5 sections:  
 6 Section 1: rest centres set up in the immediate  
 7 aftermath of the fire ;  
 8 Section 2: emergency accommodation;  
 9 Section 3: financial assistance;  
 10 Section 4: psychosocial support;  
 11 Section 5: information for those looking for the  
 12 missing;  
 13 Section 6: public communication;  
 14 Section 7: observations on the response; and  
 15 Section 8: impact.  
 16 Dealing with this important evidence in this way is  
 17 designed to provide illustrative examples of the  
 18 experiences of those directly affected in the immediate  
 19 aftermath. This includes the experiences of the  
 20 bereaved, tower residents, tower survivors and also  
 21 evacuated residents.  
 22 I wish to emphasise that we recognise the  
 23 experiences of those affected are not homogeneous. The  
 24 lived experience of every affected person is individual  
 25 and distinct. Seeking to draw out selected extracts is

1 not at all intended to take away from this, and every  
 2 statement is important in its entirety .  
 3 The Inquiry has received in the region of 215  
 4 Phase 2 statements relevant to Module 4. Whilst we will  
 5 not be reading from every statement, this does not take  
 6 away from the significance of every individual 's  
 7 contribution to the Inquiry. Every statement has been  
 8 reviewed by the Inquiry team and has shaped our work in  
 9 Module 4, and will form part of the Inquiry record.  
 10 Many of these statements have already been published on  
 11 the Inquiry website as they were pertinent to issues  
 12 under consideration for Module 3. Some of the  
 13 statements dealt solely with aftermath and they are yet  
 14 to be published, and we will endeavour to publish these  
 15 in the ensuing days.  
 16 This document has been drafted as a thematic summary  
 17 and, as such, I do not propose to take the panel to each  
 18 and every statement as I read through the document.  
 19 I will do my best when reading through the document  
 20 to pronounce names as best I can and I apologise in  
 21 advance for any that I do not get right.  
 22 Before we begin, I need to give a trigger warning.  
 23 Some may find hearing about their experiences and the  
 24 experiences of others in the immediate aftermath  
 25 distressing . If anybody wishes to leave the room or

1 stop the live stream, please do so now.  
 2 (Pause)  
 3 Turning to the first section , then, please, dealing  
 4 with the initial hours and the rest centres that were  
 5 set up in the immediate aftermath.  
 6 On the night of the fire , survivors , tower residents  
 7 and evacuated residents from nearby properties report  
 8 not knowing where to go or what to do. Many people with  
 9 loves ones who lived in the tower arrived at the scene  
 10 to try and find information.  
 11 Jenny Dainton lived in flat 12 on the 4th floor with  
 12 her two daughters. She was at the scene on the morning  
 13 of 14 June and said {IWS00000939/12-13}:  
 14 "There were lots of people searching for their loved  
 15 ones, who were missing. Everyone was trying to  
 16 understand what had happened. We were in a state of  
 17 shock and disbelief ... I saw people with no shoes, men  
 18 sobbing and people collapsed on the floor. No one at  
 19 that time had any answers. No one was there to tell us  
 20 what we should do or where we should go ... Immediately  
 21 after the fire the only support I received was from my  
 22 sister and mum ... Initially I was not aware of any  
 23 support being provided in the local area. However, the  
 24 local community started pulling together during 14 June  
 25 2017 ... Through word of mouth, I also became aware that

1 the Rugby Portobello Club had opened its doors and was  
 2 offering support to those affected ."  
 3 Marcia Levi was evacuated from Testerton Walk at  
 4 around 1.30 am and said {IWS00001753/8-9}:  
 5 "We did not know where to go or what to do. No one  
 6 told us where to go ... I did not see anyone from RBKC  
 7 ... there was no direction. There was no one of  
 8 authority ... it was understandably disorganised but it  
 9 went on for far too long, with us not knowing what to do  
 10 and being told that you could not go back to your flats .  
 11 We were left outside for hours without being updated of  
 12 what to do or where to go, and there didn't appear to be  
 13 anyone around to ask, or offer guidance. We were  
 14 outside until around 9am ... We were petrified, we  
 15 thought the Tower was going to fall down."  
 16 William Thompson lived in flat 52 of the tower with  
 17 his partner and their two daughters. He says that  
 18 {IWS00000158/10}:  
 19 "We were told that buses would be coming to  
 20 transport us somewhere but weren't told where. We  
 21 remained here waiting for the buses. One bus turned up  
 22 but moved off after five minutes. We remained on  
 23 Clarendon Road for another two hours waiting for  
 24 transport. Nobody was telling us anything and we did  
 25 not know what to do. After another three hours someone

1 came and told us that if we went to the Rugby Club there  
 2 would be tea and refreshments there and they would  
 3 supply us with clothing. We decided to walk to the  
 4 Rugby Club. We arrived at around 4.30am and were given  
 5 blankets and refreshments.”  
 6 A number of spontaneous rest centres were set up by  
 7 the community and faith leaders in the early hours of  
 8 the morning of 14 June 2017. These provided shelter and  
 9 support to those directly affected. These rest centres  
 10 include but are not limited to the Rugby Portobello  
 11 Club, the Clement James Centre and St Clement’s Church,  
 12 Al Manaar Mosque, Notting Hill Methodist Church, Latimer  
 13 Community Church and the Harrow Club.  
 14 Elizabeth Sobieszczak lived in flat 43 on the  
 15 7th floor of the tower with her husband, Michael, and  
 16 their daughter, Florentyna. She says {IWS00001539/9}:  
 17 “We waited there amongst the chaos for what seemed  
 18 an incredibly long time, and then a policeman told us  
 19 that the Rugby Portobello Club had been opened ... We  
 20 were some of the first people to arrive at the Rugby  
 21 Portobello Club. When we went in, they gave us blankets  
 22 and hot drinks and the three of us just sat there  
 23 huddled together, waiting to be told what we should do  
 24 next ... the atmosphere became increasingly oppressive  
 25 and harrowing, as so many people were traumatised and

113

1 grieving, and looking for missing relatives or friends  
 2 who had been in the Tower. Those who were trying to  
 3 find people were desperate because they were going  
 4 between various sites ... and there was no way of them  
 5 knowing where they would find their loved ones at that  
 6 time, or if they would at all.”  
 7 Michele Chiapetto lived in flat 155 on the  
 8 18th floor with his partner, Berkti Haftom, and her son,  
 9 Biruk, both of whom perished in the fire. He says  
 10 {IWS00001780/4–5}:  
 11 “Immediately after the fire, information about what  
 12 to do or what was happening was not clear and it seemed  
 13 the council and TMO had vanished. I went to the Rugby  
 14 Portobello Club and for the first time found somewhere  
 15 that was actually trying to help the Tower residents.  
 16 They were trying to help the people who lived in the  
 17 Tower as well as the bereaved ... I knew Rugby  
 18 Portobello because I went there with Biruk for the  
 19 homework club. It meant I knew it and was comfortable  
 20 going there. They focused on people from the  
 21 Grenfell Tower ... it created a space where we could be  
 22 without lots of people. It was somewhere that  
 23 understood what was going on and who wanted to help.”  
 24 Abraham Abebe lived in flat 44 on the 7th floor of  
 25 the tower with his wife, Turafat Yilma Girma, and their

114

1 son. He says {IWS00000847/10}:  
 2 “We had very good support at the Rugby Portobello  
 3 Trust. In the hours after the fire the Portobello Rugby  
 4 Trust became an informal information exchange for the  
 5 residents of the Tower, it was where we went to find out  
 6 about people or to inform others that people were  
 7 missing. In the days following the fire the staff of  
 8 RBKC and the TMO were conspicuous by their total  
 9 absence.”  
 10 Jevon Moses, a Grenfell Walk resident, says  
 11 {IWS00001276/14}:  
 12 “On the night of the fire, Grenfell Tower residents  
 13 went to the Rugby Portobello Club and Grenfell Walk  
 14 residents went to Clements Church. Someone at Rugby  
 15 Portobello Club themselves confirmed that they were only  
 16 helping Grenfell Tower residents as they turned me away.  
 17 After a few weeks, Rugby Club opened their services to  
 18 residents who were not living in the Tower.”  
 19 Hazel Burke, a resident from Barandon Walk,  
 20 describes being outside on the street until 4 am when  
 21 St Clement’s Church opened. She states  
 22 {IWS00001544/7–8}:  
 23 “I did not know where else we could have gone apart  
 24 from the Church at this time. Volunteers started  
 25 bringing donations to the Church in the morning. It was

115

1 like a flea market ... there was so much food, clothing  
 2 and toiletries — all in donations. People turned up  
 3 from everywhere to try to help ... St Clements was open  
 4 and busy for the rest of the week. Donations kept  
 5 arriving and people came continually to collect things  
 6 that they needed ... I know that the Rugby Club, Harrow  
 7 Club and Methodist Church also opened and offered  
 8 assistance ... St Clement’s Church, and other churches,  
 9 mosques and local community groups played a vital role  
 10 in supporting the community at that time.”  
 11 Ibtisam Alfawaz, who lived in Hurstway Walk, says  
 12 {IWS00001274/7}:  
 13 “On the second day a lot of people from the Walkways  
 14 and families who did not have anywhere to go slept at  
 15 the Clement James Centre ... I rejected any food and  
 16 drink that was provided in the initial relief centres in  
 17 Westway and Clement James Centre as I felt like this was  
 18 meant for people who lost their clothes and belongings.  
 19 I understood that this was also available to me, but  
 20 I felt like it was not my right to take it.”  
 21 Simon Jolly, a resident of Barandon Walk, says that  
 22 {IWS00001621/6}:  
 23 “St Clements had an open door policy and was a huge  
 24 source of help to the community more widely.”  
 25 The Latimer Christian Centre was set up in the early

116

1 hours of 14 June and was open to all.  
 2 Shahin Sadafi lived in flat 22 on the 5th floor of  
 3 the tower with his mother. Speaking about his arrival  
 4 at the scene he says {IWS00001806/3-4}:  
 5 "There was absolute chaos and confusion everywhere  
 6 ... there were tons of people still in the area looking  
 7 for loved ones and having faces of shock and loss ... we  
 8 had no information about what to do. We noticed that  
 9 people were going into [Latimer] Christian Centre ... we  
 10 went inside and saw it was a relief centre. There were  
 11 piles of bags of clothes and donations already there.  
 12 People were making tea ... it was full of people in the  
 13 community ... people seemed to sense we were Tower  
 14 residents and began surrounding us and asking us if we  
 15 were okay and hugging us ... We sat in shock at their  
 16 kindness."  
 17 Joseph Kyle John lived in flat 6 on the 2nd floor of  
 18 the tower with his former partner, Leanne Mya  
 19 Jackson Le Blanc, and their son. He says  
 20 {IWS00001685/7-8}:  
 21 "After escaping the fire, we went to Latimer Church  
 22 and stayed there. It was mainly the Church and local  
 23 community that were helping survivors immediately after  
 24 the fire ... I stayed at Latimer Church for a few days  
 25 after the fire. If it was not for the Church, I was

117

1 walking the streets. I slept at night on the floor of  
 2 the Church ..."  
 3 Survivors and residents also attended other  
 4 community rest centres that had been set up.  
 5 Nina Masroh was evacuated from Testerton Walk and  
 6 said that at around 7 or 8 am she went to the  
 7 Harrow Club. She says {IWS00001759/12-13}:  
 8 "The Red Cross were there. I think they had just  
 9 arrived when we got there as they hadn't set up an area  
 10 yet. They were handing out forms for people to fill in  
 11 their information ... The Club was packed with people.  
 12 I remember seeing Jessica Urbano's family there. They  
 13 were looking for Jessica. I remember hugging her mum  
 14 and dad. I spoke to another woman there who had  
 15 recently lost a baby and she was still bleeding. I went  
 16 around the place looking for sanitary towels. I was  
 17 trying to help the best I could but I was also in  
 18 shock."  
 19 Turning now to the Westway Centre, which initially  
 20 opened as a spontaneous rest centre and later became the  
 21 official rest centre.  
 22 Survivors describe confusion at the Westway Centre,  
 23 issues with gaining entry, being unsure of what support  
 24 was available and the absence of a visible presence from  
 25 RBKC and the TMO.

118

1 Omar Alhajali lived in flat 112 on the 14th floor  
 2 with his brother, Mohammad Alhajali, and his friend,  
 3 Mahmoud Al-Karad. His brother, Mohammad, perished in  
 4 the fire. After being discharged from hospital on  
 5 15 June, he was taken to the Westway Centre. He says  
 6 {IWS00001533/12-13}:  
 7 "I did not know what I was meant to be doing. I  
 8 just kept asking myself why I was there and what was  
 9 happening. I had a lot of fears, like whether I will be  
 10 homeless now, and what will happen next. No one came up  
 11 to talk to me about what help I needed. That was what  
 12 I needed. No one knew anything about me, like whether  
 13 I had been in the Tower or not ... I didn't see anyone  
 14 from the Council, any doctors or hospital staff, or any  
 15 officials at the Westway. There were no information  
 16 desks. It was just lots of people who looked like they  
 17 were volunteers or from the community, but who weren't  
 18 able to give me any advice about what I should be doing  
 19 ... It was emotionally difficult to be with so many  
 20 people."  
 21 Manuel Miguel Ferreira Alves lived in flat 105 on  
 22 the 13th floor of the tower with his wife and his  
 23 children. Initially they stayed with friends and on  
 24 16 June they went to Westway {IWS00001587/16}:  
 25 "When we went to the Westway, there was simply

119

1 confusion everywhere. There were lots of people around  
 2 but I do not remember anyone making it clear that they  
 3 were from the Council."  
 4 Nadia Elbouti, a resident from Hurstway Walk, says  
 5 {IWS00001605/13}:  
 6 "We had to spend a lot of time looking around the  
 7 Westway before we found someone official. I'm not sure  
 8 if they were from RBKC or another Council."  
 9 Jason Miller lived in flat 145 on the 17th floor  
 10 with his partner, Corinne Simone Jones, and their two  
 11 children. He says {IWS00001940/12}:  
 12 "RBKC had a desk at the Westway Centre, but they did  
 13 not offer anything beyond getting temporary or emergency  
 14 accommodation. Their role was really marginal and they  
 15 could not offer anything to help us at that time. The  
 16 staff there seemed as powerless as us."  
 17 Simon Jolly describes going to the Westway Centre.  
 18 He says {IWS00001621/6-7}:  
 19 "It seemed really chaotic as there had been a huge  
 20 influx of donations on the Friday and Saturday, but  
 21 there was no apparent structure to process and store it.  
 22 We were concerned that there were not even basic things  
 23 like signs or notices, so that people could know where  
 24 to go for what. It was a free-for-all for anyone who  
 25 turned up, whilst survivors were being discharged from

120

1 hospital with nothing. It was clearly problematic that  
2 people were required to show up to make themselves and  
3 their needs known in order to receive support, as this  
4 automatically meant that those who were most injured,  
5 traumatised or isolated were left at a disadvantage when  
6 they should have been the priority."

7 However, he goes on to say that once Ealing council  
8 had been brought in:

9 "... by the Sunday afternoon, the Centre was  
10 completely different — systems were in place and there  
11 was a real sense of community and various services  
12 working together."

13 A registration system was introduced at the  
14 Westway Centre, where people were asked to provide  
15 identification before entering.

16 Suhayb Hirsi lived in flat 7 on the 3rd floor of the  
17 tower with his father and brother. He states  
18 {IWS00001776/4}:

19 "My experience at the Westway was terrible. When  
20 I arrived, I was asked for identification at the door.  
21 I explained that I did not have any identification given  
22 everything I owned was still in our flat in the Tower.  
23 They continued to ask me for some sort of  
24 identification. I had to wait until the person at the  
25 door was not looking and sneak into the centre. It was

121

1 absolutely ridiculous that I had to sneak into the place  
2 that was supposed to be offering me support."

3 William Thompson says {IWS00002110/34}:

4 "I remember joining a queue to speak to a woman at  
5 a desk, I think from the NHS or a social worker but I'm  
6 not sure. The person in front of me had escaped the  
7 tower with nothing at all except what he was wearing and  
8 the person at the desk asked him for identification,  
9 like a passport or a driving licence, and insisting one  
10 needed to be produced before any help would be given.  
11 I made clear I had known him for years and that he was  
12 a Grenfell Tower resident but it was pointless as I was  
13 also asked for identification documents and I did not  
14 have any to show I was from the tower."

15 As part of the verification process, survivors were  
16 given wristbands upon entry.

17 Jose Vieira, who lived in flat 46 on the 7th floor  
18 of the tower with his wife and daughter, says  
19 {IWS00001798/12}:

20 "I remember the British Red Cross being in the  
21 Westway. I did not like what they were doing. They  
22 marked us like we were going into a concentration camp.  
23 They gave you a wristband which was coloured differently  
24 every day; and every day you had to register to get into  
25 the Westway Centre. You were marked and easily

122

1 identifiable when you walked down the street."

2 Similarly, Zoe Dainton who lived in flat 12 of the  
3 tower, says {IWS00001974/31}:

4 "It also meant that journalists in the area could  
5 easily identify you."

6 Jenny Dainton says {IWS00001804/24}, speaking about  
7 the Westway Centre:

8 "I found it was more formal and bureaucratic  
9 compared to the Rugby Club. I believe it had been set  
10 up by RBKC. You had to wear wristbands to get through  
11 security. There were lots of different organisations  
12 here including the DVLA, Home Office and RBKC. They all  
13 sat behind tables, which I felt created a barrier  
14 between them and me. I found the Westway to be  
15 impersonal."

16 As a result, some people used the Westway Centre  
17 less.

18 Turafat Yilma Girma lived in flat 44. She says  
19 {IWS00001732/12}:

20 "We used the Westway Centre less. It was not as  
21 easily accessible because the Red Cross made it  
22 difficult to get in at all. You were asked so many  
23 questions just to be able to get in that it became  
24 unpleasant for me and my family ... the problems with  
25 getting access at all was so bad. Additionally, it felt

123

1 like a shelter for government representatives and the  
2 Council staff rather than a refuge and support centre  
3 ... it felt as though rather than coming to us for  
4 support, we had to go to them."

5 Other witnesses also share negative experiences of  
6 the British Red Cross.

7 Zohra Al—Assad, a Grenfell Walk resident, says  
8 {IWS00001267/6}:

9 "We were given forms to complete by the Red Cross.  
10 My son and I completed the forms and we were not given  
11 anything. We also submitted our passports and at the  
12 end we got nothing. Later, we were told that only the  
13 people that were admitted to hospital would benefit from  
14 the Red Cross relief."

15 Contrastingly, others share positive observations of  
16 the British Red Cross.

17 Hamza Jones lost his brother—in—law,  
18 Abdulaziz El—Wahabi, his wife, Faouzia El—Wahabi, and  
19 their three children, Yasin, Nur Huda and Mehdi, who  
20 lived in flat 182 on the 21st floor of the tower. He  
21 says {IWS00001710/6}:

22 "The Red Cross with limited funding, did an  
23 excellent job. When they first came, there was no one  
24 telling anyone what to do. They started to organise  
25 things, where the people needed help, how they could get

124



1 food and clothing, and in the background there was  
 2 someone organising somewhere for people to go. They  
 3 were like a light.”  
 4 Sandra Ruiz, bereaved aunt of Jessica Urbano  
 5 Ramirez, says {IWS00001689/5}:  
 6 “The Red Cross were friendly and welcoming but they  
 7 seemed out of their depth in terms of organisation. The  
 8 lines were really long, and it was too hot in the room  
 9 to be waiting ages there. They were meant to be helping  
 10 coordinate information and donations and food and  
 11 drink.”  
 12 Evacuated residents from the walkways also had  
 13 issues with gaining access to the Westway Centre.  
 14 Jevon Moses of Grenfell Walk says {IWS00001276/14}:  
 15 “I went to Westway on the night of the fire and they  
 16 were just horrible. They were not letting anyone from  
 17 Grenfell Walk in, with lots of the staff standing  
 18 outside saying nothing ... After the fire I did not know  
 19 where to go.”  
 20 Ahmed Moussaid lived in Grenfell Walk and was  
 21 initially not allowed in {IWS00001282/5-7}:  
 22 “... I gave my name and address to the Red Cross and  
 23 they didn’t let me in as they couldn’t find my name and  
 24 there was no organisation of what was happening. I was  
 25 left waiting outside. There was security there and

125

1 people weren’t allowed in.”  
 2 When he was later allowed in, he said:  
 3 “As a relief centre at first, I thought Westway was  
 4 chaos, you couldn’t speak to anyone, everyone would tell  
 5 me a different story. Nobody was clear what was going  
 6 to happen, when I was going back to my flat.”  
 7 Jessica Gomez, a Grenfell Walk resident, says  
 8 {IWS00001264/8}:  
 9 “When we first went to the Westway they refused to  
 10 help us because we were not from the Tower and they did  
 11 not know what we had been evacuated and in fact had lost  
 12 our homes. We had to fight for everything we got ... We  
 13 had to go to the Westway to register with the Red Cross  
 14 ... they were kind and tried to be helpful but they did  
 15 not really know who we as Grenfell Walk residents were  
 16 and said they would need to check and come back the next  
 17 day.”  
 18 Some walkway residents say they were also issued  
 19 with wristbands.  
 20 Cesar Ranito, who lived in Testerton Walk with his  
 21 wife, Isabel Ranito, says {IWS00001249/7} that on  
 22 15 June, someone from the council was at the Westway  
 23 with a register of walkway residents, which they marked  
 24 people off the list and gave them wristbands.  
 25 Giuseppe Razza, who lived in Barandon Walk, said

126

1 {IWS00001607/7}, when queueing to get into Westway:  
 2 “As far as I can recall, there was no method of  
 3 prioritisation, and I queued with Tower residents and  
 4 Walkway residents alike.”  
 5 Some survivors slept at the Westway Centre.  
 6 Branislav Lukic, who lived at flat 84 on the  
 7 11th floor of the tower, says {IWS00001760/4-5}:  
 8 “I felt really lost and did not know what to do. No  
 9 one around the Tower told me where I could go to sleep  
 10 or what I could do to get help ... The next day,  
 11 I wanted to get back to the Tower to see what was going  
 12 on ... I was directed to the Westway Centre ... The  
 13 Westway had been set up as a centre for survivors ...  
 14 There were what seemed like hundreds of mattresses on  
 15 the floor of the centre for people to sleep. I can’t  
 16 remember how long I slept there for – I think it was two  
 17 nights. I do remember that it felt very strange there.  
 18 There were about 20 of us amongst all of the empty  
 19 mattresses. It was a very sad place to be. It really  
 20 felt like it was somewhere for people that did not have  
 21 anywhere better to go.”  
 22 The Jafari family, from flat 86 on the 11th floor,  
 23 stayed in the Westway Centre for 10 days and were the  
 24 last to leave. Maria Jafari describes her experiences  
 25 of staying at the Westway Centre and says

127

1 {IWS00001815/13}:  
 2 “Staying and sleeping in the Westway was horrific.  
 3 As a Muslim woman modesty is important and when sleeping  
 4 I did not want to expose parts of my body. I found this  
 5 very stressful. For two days after the fire, I stayed  
 6 in the same clothes I was wearing on leaving the Tower;  
 7 no one offered us a change of new clean clothes. All  
 8 day there were people coming in and out, it was very  
 9 public.”  
 10 Rashida Ali, who lived in flat 125 on the 15th floor  
 11 of the tower with her husband and daughter, says  
 12 {IWS00001617/17}:  
 13 “I didn’t know that people were staying in Westway  
 14 overnight on the night of the fire. When we took Sid to  
 15 the hospital [her husband], we missed that. If I knew  
 16 that I would have stayed there. This also would have  
 17 meant that I would have had earlier access to the  
 18 clothing and other donated items that I needed.”  
 19 Turning now to section 2 on emergency accommodation.  
 20 A number of issues were experienced, including  
 21 a lack of information about where to go, uncertainty  
 22 about the length of stay in hotels, unsuitable room  
 23 arrangements, issues with the provision of food,  
 24 distance of hotels from the community and specific needs  
 25 not being met.

128

1 Sepideh Minaei Moghaddam lived in flat 4 on the  
 2 1st floor of the tower with her son. She states  
 3 {IWS00001266/4}:  
 4 "... I escaped from the tower with my son and sat at  
 5 the grass verge outside the tower ... I then went to my  
 6 car and drove to the end of the road where I was blocked  
 7 in by fire engines so I just parked there. My son and I  
 8 slept in the car that night until around approximately  
 9 09:00."  
 10 Maher Khoudair lived in flat 64 on the 9th floor  
 11 with his wife and three daughters. They went to the  
 12 Rugby Club after escaping the tower, and he says  
 13 {IWS00001616/11}:  
 14 "My daughter was pregnant, she slept under the table  
 15 because there were no mattresses around."  
 16 Abdulwahab Abdulhamid lived in flat 14 on the  
 17 1st floor of the tower with his wife, her brother and  
 18 her friend, Amina Yousif Mohammed. After escaping the  
 19 tower, he and his wife were taken to hospital where he  
 20 says {IWS00001919/3}:  
 21 "My wife called RBKC to enquire about what we should  
 22 do as my wife was heavily pregnant and we did not know  
 23 where to go, we were looking for information. RBKC told  
 24 us to wait there and wait for a call back for further  
 25 instructions. After waiting a few hours, we had not

129

1 received a call back ... We decided to go directly to  
 2 the town hall but when we arrived we were again told to  
 3 wait until someone came out to see us. We were  
 4 eventually told that no one was available and we would  
 5 have to come back the next day ... as we stood outside  
 6 a security guard, who could see our distress, agreed to  
 7 find someone to help us. After waiting outside for  
 8 approximately 30 minutes a woman came out, gave us  
 9 Oyster cards, and told us to make our way to the  
 10 Premier Inn Hotel ... She did not explain anything to  
 11 us, the lady just handed us the Oyster cards and told us  
 12 to go there. We took a taxi to the hotel. A friend ...  
 13 of mine gave me money to take the taxi ..."  
 14 Alison Moses lived in flat 11 on the 4th floor of  
 15 the tower. She describes having mobility issues which  
 16 RBKC and the TMO were aware of. She says that in the  
 17 early hours of 14 June {IWS00001281/9}:  
 18 "Someone called me about emergency accommodation.  
 19 I don't know who they were. A woman's voice said she  
 20 had a room for me at a hotel in Earls Court ... She did  
 21 not give me any details or any choice. After the person  
 22 hung up, I realised I had a room reserved but no way to  
 23 get there, no money, no clothes. I didn't know what  
 24 I was supposed to do. I was in my dressing gown."  
 25 Chiraag Patel's parents lived in flat 56 on the

130

1 8th floor of the tower. He describes how his parents  
 2 went to stay with his uncle for two weeks. He says  
 3 {IWS00001610/10}:  
 4 "No one from RBKC or the TMO had reached out to any  
 5 of us during this time."  
 6 Accommodation was arranged for his parents about  
 7 two weeks after the fire.  
 8 Some survivors had issues with finding their hotels  
 9 and experienced problems upon arrival.  
 10 Genaro Batoon lived in flat 146 on the 17th floor of  
 11 the tower and says {IWS00001687/11-12}:  
 12 "I went to three different hotels before I arrived  
 13 at the correct one as there were some errors with the  
 14 bookings."  
 15 Rashida Ali was placed in the Premier Inn hotel on  
 16 14 June, but when they arrived she says  
 17 {IWS00001617/12-13}:  
 18 "The workers in reception didn't have our names  
 19 recorded. I had to prove myself ... it was late in the  
 20 evening and everywhere was closed with nowhere else for  
 21 us to go. I was sitting in the lobby of the hotel  
 22 waiting for someone to tell us what to do and where to  
 23 go."  
 24 She was eventually given a double room for her and  
 25 her daughter, until the next day being moved to another

131

1 hotel, where her husband joined them. She says:  
 2 "We needed a family room, but they only gave one  
 3 room, with just one double bed for three people."  
 4 Survivors raised issues around the lack of  
 5 communication about their length of hotel stay.  
 6 Bellal El Guenuni lived in flat 152 of the tower  
 7 with his wife, Rabia Yahya, who was pregnant at the  
 8 time, and their three children. He was placed in  
 9 a hotel on 17 June but received {IWS00002034/9}:  
 10 "... a knock on the door in the morning after the  
 11 second night in the hotel. It was the hotel manager  
 12 saying that I needed to find alternative accommodation.  
 13 I couldn't believe it. Where were we meant to go?"  
 14 He continues:  
 15 "RBKC eventually offered me a night in a hotel in  
 16 West Kensington, but I needed to stay in Edgware Road  
 17 because that location allowed me to visit my family in  
 18 two hospitals; they were split across the Royal Free  
 19 hospital in north London and King's College hospital in  
 20 south London, and I was going back and forth between the  
 21 two everyday. It was hard enough being based in  
 22 Edgware Road, and had I moved I would not have been able  
 23 to travel between the two hospitals within visiting  
 24 hours. I slept in my car that night ... We were treated  
 25 like second class guests at the hotel."

132

1 Hoang Khanh Quang lived in flat 76 on the 10th floor  
2 of the tower with her former partner and their daughter,  
3 Jenny Fei Quang. She describes her arrival at the hotel  
4 {IWS00001821/12}:  
5 " ... the staff confirmed that I had a room there for  
6 a night. They told me that we would have to check-out  
7 the next day ... I did not know how long the room had  
8 been paid for. I felt really worried. I thought where  
9 will I stay if I can't continue to stay here? ...  
10 I think that someone from RBKC or the TMO should have  
11 been at the hotel when we arrived to give me information  
12 ... I would have felt a lot less anxious ... It was  
13 really stressful ."  
14 Sener Macit lived in flat 133 on the 16th floor of  
15 the tower with his wife and son. He states  
16 {IWS00001563/12}:  
17 "I was really anxious about how long we would be  
18 able to stay in the hotel. I did not know who was  
19 paying for the hotel but I knew it was not cheap. There  
20 was not anyone from RBKC to say 'you have the room for  
21 this period of time' ..."  
22 Samuel Daniels lived in flat 135 on the 16th floor  
23 of the tower with his father, Joseph Daniels, who  
24 perished in the fire. He says {IWS00002065/15}:  
25 "RBKC would never tell you how long you were able to

133

1 stay at a hotel. The manager of the hotel would simply  
2 put a note under your room door saying 'you booked for  
3 another week.' There was not one person to contact for  
4 information or assistance."  
5 Shahin Sadafi says {IWS00001806/23}:  
6 "Some hotels were giving people notice to leave  
7 because the booking was at an end. A note was left  
8 under the door or attached to the door. People were  
9 told to leave with just a few hours notice because the  
10 hotel needed the rooms."  
11 Walkway residents also experienced issues about  
12 their length of stay.  
13 Brahim El Amine, a Grenfell Walk resident, was given  
14 a room and was told by RBKC that he would only be able  
15 to stay there for a week {IWS00001946/11}:  
16 "I asked where was I supposed to go after that week.  
17 The Housing Officer told me not to worry: they might  
18 re-book my room or send me somewhere else and someone  
19 will be in touch to let me know. This was incredibly  
20 distressing for me and the Housing Officer did not seem  
21 to realise this ... At the end of the week at the hotel,  
22 no one contacted me to say that the room was re-booked  
23 or where I should move to, or even that I had to move  
24 out – so I went back to my friend's home to stay. Four  
25 or five day[s] later, someone from RBKC Housing called

134

1 and asked me if I was still in Dorset House. I told him  
2 that of course I wasn't ..."  
3 Survivors and residents report that their  
4 accommodation arrangements were unsuitable.  
5 Maryam Yusuf Adam lived in flat 14 with her husband,  
6 brother and friend. They were given one room with one  
7 double bed for four people. She was pregnant at the  
8 time, as she says {IWS00001296/4}:  
9 "I was unable to get onto the bed as it was too high  
10 off the floor, so I slept either on the sofa or the  
11 floor. I requested a mattress but the hotel did not  
12 provide one. One of the many volunteers that attended  
13 the hotel provided a duvet for me to sleep on. I was in  
14 a lot of pain and my back condition worsened while I was  
15 at this hotel."  
16 Sahar Jamalvatan lived in flat 10 on the 3rd floor  
17 with her mother, Mahboubeh, and her brother. She says  
18 {IWS00001704/5}:  
19 "On the afternoon of the first day, we were taken to  
20 the Tara Copthorne Hotel in Kensington ... we had to  
21 wait in reception there for two hours. At first they  
22 gave us one room with two double beds in it, even though  
23 all three of us are adults, as they told us they didn't  
24 have enough rooms for us to have separate rooms. We  
25 spent three weeks in that room. I had to share a bed

135

1 with my mum ... my brother was supposed to have slept in  
2 the other bed but he went to reception each night and  
3 slept on the settees there."  
4 Manuel Miguel Ferreira Alves and his family were  
5 offered {IWS00001587/18}:  
6 " ... one room with double beds for all four of us.  
7 It was completely unsuitable, especially as they knew  
8 that my children were young adults. They had also only  
9 offered us a two-night stay, so we decided not to sleep  
10 there because it would have been too disruptive for our  
11 family at what was already a very unsettled time."  
12 Two days later, they went back to the Westway Centre  
13 and were offered rooms in the Holiday Inn in Earl's  
14 Court. His wife and daughter went to check in but:  
15 "They were told by staff that there were no rooms  
16 reserved for us. She tried to explain our situation but  
17 the staff were very rude to her. At this point, it was  
18 already 7pm, so the Council office was closed, and we  
19 had not been given an out of hours contact number, so we  
20 went back to stay with our friends."  
21 As a result, the Alves family did not end up  
22 checking into a hotel until 21 June.  
23 Melanie Urbano lived with her parents and sister,  
24 Jessica Urbano Ramirez, in flat 176 on the 20th floor of  
25 the tower. Jessica perished in the fire. She says

136

1 {IWS00001721/2}:  
 2 "RBKC allocated us a room at the Holiday Inn. It  
 3 was one room for all of us – my mum, dad and me – so  
 4 I stayed in that room for a few days whilst my parents  
 5 stayed with other family. Then RBKC gave my mum  
 6 a separate room, but in a different hotel, though we  
 7 needed to be near each other."  
 8 Mahmoud Kabouh, a resident at Testerton Walk, had to  
 9 share a single bed with his wife in a single room until  
 10 given a double room about a month later {IWS00001613/6}.

11 A number of survivors raise concerns about the  
 12 condition of their hotel rooms.  
 13 Meriam Abdulkadir Yousef and her husband were not  
 14 offered hotel accommodation by RBKC for three days.  
 15 However, when they were, she says {IWS00001626/3}:  
 16 "... as soon as we saw the accommodation RBKC had  
 17 arranged for us, we left immediately. It was very dirty  
 18 and not fit for human habitation. We could not believe  
 19 that the council expected us to stay there."  
 20 Amina Mohamed lived in flat 51 on the 8th floor of  
 21 the tower with her nephew. She says {IWS00001545/11}:  
 22 "When I arrived, I found that the hotel was actually  
 23 more like a hostel. It was completely unsuitable. It  
 24 was dirty and very cramped ..."  
 25 Mustafa Abdu lived in flat 184 on the 21st floor.

137

1 He was initially placed in the Haveli Hotel on 16 June  
 2 which he describes {IWS00001956/10}:  
 3 "I was put in a basement, it was dirty and dingy.  
 4 I could not stay there so I went to make a complaint to  
 5 RBKC at Rugby Portobello. RBKC then arranged for me to  
 6 move into another hotel ... This hotel had no hot water  
 7 I couldn't take a shower. I still felt in shock over  
 8 what had happened to my home and to the people I knew in  
 9 the Tower and I could not believe the terrible hotels  
 10 I had been put in."  
 11 Some survivors were allocated to rooms on high  
 12 floors.  
 13 Rabia Yahya lived in flat 152 of the tower. She  
 14 says {IWS00000498/8}:  
 15 "... RBKC offered my family (all 5 of us) a room  
 16 with one bed on the 22nd floor [of the] Hilton Metropole  
 17 Hotel on Edgware Road. I refused to go. There was no  
 18 alternative room offered to us on a lower floor, so we  
 19 went to my mother in law's house to stay for a few days,  
 20 while we tried to get RBKC to sort out proper  
 21 accommodation for us, which was frustrating. It felt  
 22 that we had to fight to get our most basic needs met,  
 23 even when we were in a fragile, vulnerable condition  
 24 just out of hospital."  
 25 William Thompson explained that {IWS00002110/33}:

138

1 "We had all just come out of a burning tower block  
 2 and it should have been obvious that placing survivors  
 3 on higher floors would be distressing."  
 4 Nicholas Burton lived in flat 165 on the 19th floor  
 5 with his wife, March del Pilar, Pily. He describes  
 6 being given a room on the 14th floor {IWS00001661/24}:  
 7 "As soon as I got to my room, I had a panic attack  
 8 and immediately left again and followed the signs to the  
 9 fire escape all the way down to the ground floor."  
 10 Some survivors did not receive food provision at  
 11 their hotels.  
 12 Genet Grebemaïam Shawo lived in flat 153 on the  
 13 18th floor of the tower with her two sons. Her son,  
 14 Isaac Paulos, perished in the fire. She was not aware  
 15 of a food allowance. She says {IWS00001290/4}:  
 16 "Whilst in the hotels, I did not know about a weekly  
 17 food allowance. It was only when I moved to the  
 18 permanent accommodation that I was aware of the weekly  
 19 allowance. I did not know what I was entitled to so  
 20 often I would just eat one meal a day as no one told me  
 21 what I was allowed to have."  
 22 Others were unsure what they were entitled to.  
 23 David Lewis, who was visiting his ex-wife,  
 24 Mariko Toyoshima-Lewis, and their two children, who  
 25 lived in flat 9 on the 3rd floor of the tower, says

139

1 {IWS00001629/6}:  
 2 "There was a lot of confusion regarding whether  
 3 council would pay for us to order food at the hotel ...  
 4 we had heard that the council would only be paying for  
 5 drinks so we only ordered drinks."  
 6 Meron Woldesesslassie-Araya, a survivor of the fire,  
 7 was not aware until a month after the fire that her food  
 8 would be paid for and, as such, she spent her own money  
 9 on food {IWS00001648/4}.  
 10 Walkway residents also experienced issues with the  
 11 provision of food in their hotel.  
 12 Diego Ortiz, who lived in Grenfell Walk, says  
 13 {IWS00001283/7}:  
 14 "There was a lot of discrimination in this hotel,  
 15 because there was a budget for our food. We had  
 16 a special menu with four different meals that we could  
 17 choose from, and we could not order from the main menu  
 18 ... The hotel workers were not very nice and were always  
 19 looking at us like we do not belong in that hotel ...  
 20 I felt like a refugee there."  
 21 A number of survivors and residents experienced  
 22 issues with food allowances in hotels.  
 23 Amina Mohamed says {IWS00001545/14}:  
 24 "The survivors got together and insisted on RBKC  
 25 providing us with substance payments because of all the

140

1 issues with food provided by the hotel. Eventually,  
 2 I cannot remember exactly when, the Council provided us  
 3 with £300 a week. It was so disappointing that the  
 4 Council did not consider this issue at all, and that we  
 5 had to fight for this.”  
 6 Ahmed Al-Assad lived in Grenfell Walk with his  
 7 parents, brother and sister. He says that he received  
 8 £500 approximately three weeks after the fire. He says  
 9 {IWS00001789/11};  
 10 "I believed it was not enough, especially because  
 11 for the first three months we could not eat at the hotel  
 12 and had no food allowance, so we had to pay for food out  
 13 of our pocket.”  
 14 Many reported their specific needs were not met at  
 15 hotels. Some parents felt that their children’s needs  
 16 were not accommodated.  
 17 Rawda Said says {IWS00001729/21} the hotel she was  
 18 placed in:  
 19 "... did not have a cot or any facilities for those  
 20 with a baby ... eventually the manager of the hotel felt  
 21 sorry for us and helped us with our needs including  
 22 giving us a microwave which we could use for heating  
 23 food/milk for our baby.”  
 24 Wesley Ryan Ignacio lived in flat 62 on the  
 25 9th floor of the tower with his parents, his wife and

141

1 their daughter. He states {IWS00001829/14}:  
 2 "It was difficult to sterilise the bottles in the  
 3 hotel room. Initially we had no choice but to wash them  
 4 out by hand until we had some money to buy a new  
 5 steriliser. There was no urgent additional support from  
 6 RBKC for our daughter.”  
 7 Those with disabilities and mobility issues also  
 8 raised concerns about their accommodation.  
 9 Alison Moses says {IWS00001281/10}:  
 10 "There were no adaptations or allowances for my  
 11 mobility issues, I was given a room with a bath which  
 12 I struggled to use. I reported my difficulties ... I  
 13 was told I was going to be moved to a hotel room with a  
 14 walk-in shower but this did not occur.”  
 15 Monica Lokko lived in flat 3 on the 1st floor of the  
 16 tower. She outlines her mobility issues and says that  
 17 she needed help getting in and out of bed. Despite  
 18 being told she would be provided with a bed lever, she  
 19 had to buy one herself due to the time it was taking.  
 20 On one occasion she describes falling off the bed and  
 21 two security guards having to help her get up  
 22 {IWS00001516/4}.  
 23 Some survivors felt that their religious needs were  
 24 not met in hotels. During the time of the fire, it was  
 25 Ramadan and a number of residents were fasting.

142

1 Alison Moses says {IWS00001281/10}:  
 2 "The food offered in the hotel was a nightmare.  
 3 I am a practising Muslim. The hotel food was not Halal.  
 4 The hotel did not make any accommodations for this at  
 5 all. The serving staff made us feel unwelcome.”  
 6 Rawda Said says {IWS00001729/16}:  
 7 "The mosque delivered food and drink to us at our  
 8 hotel. This was really important for us as it was  
 9 Ramadan and we could only eat certain foods at  
 10 particular times. The hotels did not seem to be able to  
 11 meet this important need.”  
 12 Brahim El Amine, who lived in Grenfell Walk, said  
 13 {IWS00001946/10}:  
 14 "Breakfast was included but it was at a set time;  
 15 I had to buy my own lunch and dinner as it was Ramadan  
 16 the eating arrangements were completely unsuitable for  
 17 me. For the last seven days of Ramadan, I went to  
 18 a mosque in Paddington for iftar and would buy my own  
 19 food to eat early in the morning before starting my  
 20 fast.”  
 21 Senate Jones lost their uncle, Abdulaziz El-Wahabi  
 22 and his family. They say {IWS00001691/5}:  
 23 "It was Ramadan, and the local community were very  
 24 helpful in being sensitive to the needs of Muslim  
 25 survivors and family members. There was Halal food

143

1 available for breaking the fast. I didn't feel that  
 2 RBKC were considering our religious needs. I don't know  
 3 how we would have managed without the community.”  
 4 Some survivors and residents were unhappy with the  
 5 location of their hotels as they were placed further  
 6 away from the tower. This made it difficult to travel  
 7 to rest centres, visit family in hospital, and take  
 8 children to school.  
 9 Wesley Ryan Ignacio says {IWS00001820/15}:  
 10 "All information tended to be based at relief  
 11 centres ... I found it stressful having to return to the  
 12 area and go to multiple sources for information and  
 13 support ... I had no choice but to walk to and from the  
 14 hotel ... to different relief centres ... ”  
 15 Branislav Lukic initially stayed with a friend, then  
 16 spent some nights at the Westway Centre, before being  
 17 offered a hotel in Wandsworth. He says  
 18 {IWS00001760/5-6}:  
 19 "I was really disappointed with the offer of a hotel  
 20 in Wandsworth.”  
 21 He then spoke to someone at the Rugby Portobello  
 22 Club who found a room in South Kensington. However,  
 23 after a few days, he says:  
 24 "... a man came to the hotel and said that we had to  
 25 leave. I do not know where he was from but I presumed

144

1 he was from the Council. It felt brutal ... I remember  
2 thinking that we were just being moved further and  
3 further away."

4 He then went to the Westway Centre to find help on  
5 staying closer.

6 "This did not seem to get anywhere and I was told I  
7 would have to move. I felt that I was being ignored."

8 Alemishet Demissie, who lived in flat 94 on the  
9 12th floor of the tower, was discharged from hospital on  
10 16 June and describes being taken to the offices of  
11 Wandsworth Council. He says {IWS00001540/5-6}:

12 " ... I did not know why I was being taken there as  
13 this had not been explained to me by anyone ... The  
14 woman I spoke to at Wandsworth Council was very  
15 sympathetic. She said that there was a local Bed and  
16 Breakfast where I could stay for the weekend ... I did  
17 not know the area and I had an acute sense of being  
18 completely isolated. I think perhaps I took two buses  
19 from the Council building to get to the Bed and  
20 Breakfast. I had to ask people along the way where the  
21 place was and they were doing their best to direct me  
22 there. I eventually made it there after quite a long  
23 and difficult journey."

24 Marcio Gomes lived in flat 183 on the 21st floor  
25 with his wife and children. He says that

145

1 {IWS00001078/30}:

2 "RBKC wanted to place me in a hotel which was a  
3 considerable distance from the hospital. This was at  
4 the point when my wife and daughters were all in induced  
5 comas and in critical condition."

6 Farhad Neda lived in flat 205 on the 23rd floor of  
7 the Tower with his parents. He lost his father,  
8 Saber Neda, in the fire. He says {IWS00001302/3}:

9 "The hotel accommodation was far away from where my  
10 mother was in hospital and I was using cabs to travel to  
11 see her 2 to 3 times each day, which was expensive and  
12 inconvenient."

13 Walkway residents also experienced issues with the  
14 distance of their hotels.

15 Fahd Vaqar Malik lived in Barandon Walk with his  
16 mother, Saira Malik. He was placed in a hotel in  
17 Westminster, but he says {IWS00001242/3}:

18 "Because of my dyspraxia I was not familiar with my  
19 surroundings. I find it difficult to navigate new  
20 places ... I would rather have been closer to the RBKC  
21 borough as it was familiar to me."

22 Mariama El-Hassani lived in Hurstway Walk with her  
23 three children. She was placed in a hotel in  
24 North Acton. She says she was struggling to take her  
25 children to school and was too far to access support

146

1 from the community. She says {IWS00001636/17}:

2 "I was offered a taxi service ... However there were  
3 occasions where the taxis never turned up and my  
4 children were left stranded. As such I took my children  
5 to and from school and whilst they were at school,  
6 I would have no option but to remain in the area until  
7 they were finished with school ... When I spoke to the  
8 officers at the Council, I felt that I was not being  
9 listened to, that our struggles were not relevant.  
10 I felt that others were provided with support and that  
11 my family and I were being left out of borough and  
12 isolated ..."

13 Some share their experience of feeling isolated in  
14 their hotels.

15 Michele Chiapetto says {IWS00001780/3}:

16 "Nobody came and explained what was going on and  
17 although I had a room, it felt cold, lonely and empty.  
18 It was horrible being in the hotel room. I felt  
19 isolated. I was just left and it became clear that it  
20 was up to me to get out and find stuff and see what  
21 I could do ... Life in the hotel was very difficult and  
22 lonely."

23 Turning now to the experience of walkway residents.

24 On 14 June, walkway residents were evacuated from  
25 their homes but unclear where to go.

147

1 Isabel Ranito, a resident of Testerton Walk, says  
2 {IWS00001256/4-5} that she and her husband:

3 "... spent most of the night in the communal garden  
4 between Barandon Walk and Testerton Walk watching the  
5 fire ... We then went to sleep in our car for a couple  
6 of hours. We then spent the day wandering around the  
7 Estate ... We didn't really know where to go or what to  
8 do. We were displaced."

9 Kelly Dowlut, a resident of Barandon Walk, says that  
10 she stayed with her cousin on the night of the fire and  
11 the next day she tried to get back into her flat. She  
12 says {IWS00001787/10-11}:

13 "I tried that afternoon to get back into my flat,  
14 probably at around 3pm or 4pm, and then again at 6pm.  
15 There were people there manning the doors to the  
16 Walkways and they wouldn't allow me even to go in and  
17 get an overnight bag ... Between Thursday 15th and  
18 Saturday 17th June, I returned again to the Walkways,  
19 and there were police officers standing outside, who  
20 informed me that I still wasn't able to enter my flat  
21 until they could confirm it was safe to do so ... the  
22 police did not say how long it would be before I could  
23 get back to my flat ... eventually I was allowed back  
24 into my flat just over a week after the fire. I was  
25 shocked and felt desperately guilty when I saw that

148

1 there were people actually sleeping on the grass by the  
 2 Walkways close to the Tower."  
 3 Hélène Hartley lived in Hurstway Walk with her son.  
 4 She went to stay with her mother while her son went to  
 5 stay with his father. They moved back into their flat  
 6 on 19 June. She states {IWS00001257/11}:  
 7 "I did try to phone a helpline set up by the  
 8 council, which I found out about through other residents  
 9 ... However, no one on the helpline seemed to know  
 10 anything about whether it was safe for us to return to  
 11 the Walkway flats. They referred to a press release  
 12 that was going to come out, but had no immediate update  
 13 for residents who rang up ... I eventually heard that  
 14 the survivors of the Tower were being housed in hotels  
 15 temporarily, but I did not think that this emergency  
 16 housing was available for residents of the Walkway  
 17 flats."  
 18 Marcia Levi was placed in a hotel, but after a week  
 19 she went back to the flat to get some clothes. She says  
 20 {IWS00001753/12}:  
 21 "There were TMO representatives with clipboards  
 22 knocking on doors and walking along Testerton Walk ...  
 23 One of them asked us 'Who told you that you can't come  
 24 back?' We were told by the council at the Westway that  
 25 we couldn't come back."

149

1 Eliane Lara, a Barandon Walk resident, stayed at  
 2 a hotel until 16 December 2017, which is when she says  
 3 {IWS00001589/12}:  
 4 "... the heating and hot water were turned back on  
 5 and we returned to Barandon Walk."  
 6 Farah Serroukh lived in Hurstway Walk with her  
 7 husband and four children. She says {IWS00001747/5}  
 8 that on the day after the fire :  
 9 "I called the TMO's 0800 number that I would always  
 10 call if I had a problem. I was told that I could go  
 11 back to my flat in Hurstway Walk if I wanted to, but it  
 12 would be at my own risk. They were not able to give me  
 13 any information about what the risks were, or what was  
 14 the long term plan for residents of the Walkways ... We  
 15 then briefly stayed at my mum's house, I think only for  
 16 one night, before returning to Hurstway Walk. We  
 17 couldn't stay with family forever, and I was not told at  
 18 that stage about any alternatives. We had nowhere else  
 19 to go."  
 20 She goes on to say:  
 21 "There was no heating and no hot water in any of the  
 22 Walkway flats, which made it very difficult to live with  
 23 small children. The TMO had told us that the heating  
 24 and hot water would be back up and running at some  
 25 point, but they didn't say when ... some of my

150

1 neighbours told me that Virgin Active in Kensington had  
 2 let them use the shower there. I called them up about  
 3 this, and they agreed we could go there to wash. It was  
 4 quite embarrassing, and difficult showering with my  
 5 baby ..."  
 6 Hadija Archid from Hurstway Walk says  
 7 {IWS00001618/14-15}:  
 8 "As we had no hot water and all the gas was switched  
 9 off we were told that we could go to the Westway to have  
 10 a shower, so we did so."  
 11 She continues:  
 12 "As soon as they established that we were from the  
 13 walkways it's like your needs weren't as great as those  
 14 from Grenfell Tower or walk."  
 15 Some walkway residents were let back into their  
 16 properties and then subsequently asked to leave.  
 17 David O'Connell, who lived in Barandon Walk with  
 18 Viviana Rullo, says {IWS00001574/5} in relation to  
 19 15 June:  
 20 "We had heard rumours that some Barandon residents  
 21 were being let into the flats, so we headed over there  
 22 ... at about 2pm we were let back in. We started to  
 23 settle down and checked up on our pets. A few hours  
 24 later, between 4 and 5pm, a police officer ... told us  
 25 we had to leave."

151

1 Some walkway residents were allocated hotel  
 2 accommodation at rest centres. Margaret Novell,  
 3 a Grenfell Walk resident, spoke to someone at the  
 4 Westway Centre who arranged a hotel for her that evening  
 5 on 14 June {IWS00001288/10}.  
 6 Others were not. Christine Richer lived on  
 7 Hurstway Walk. On 14 June she went to the Rugby  
 8 Portobello Club and spoke to someone at the desk who she  
 9 believed to be either from the council or the TMO. She  
 10 says {IWS00001253/11}:  
 11 "... when I told her I lived alone she said that  
 12 they were not providing emergency accommodation for  
 13 anyone who lived alone and told me that I should go and  
 14 sleep on a friend's sofa."  
 15 Beinazir Lasharie lived in Testerton Walk with her  
 16 two children and her parents. She says {IWS00001546/5}:  
 17 "I was told by a representative from RBKC ('the  
 18 Council') in the Westway that they would not arrange for  
 19 me/my family to go to stay in a hotel. This was because  
 20 she said we lived too far away from the Tower, although  
 21 my next-door neighbours were offered a hotel  
 22 immediately. At the time it was so chaotic that the  
 23 Council officers who were there to provide emergency  
 24 assistance did not know who lived where, where the flats  
 25 were in relation to Grenfell Tower. They did not seem

152

1 to have a plan.”  
 2 Maria Gil lived in Hurstway Walk with her daughter.  
 3 She was told a hotel would be organised, but it was not.  
 4 She says {IWS00001679/7}:  
 5 “The person I spoke to took notes and told me they  
 6 would organise for a hotel and they would give me a call  
 7 on the same day, but nobody called.”  
 8 Charlotte McMahon lived in Barandon Walk. She says  
 9 {IWS00001966/10}:  
 10 “I had been calling the homeless housing needs  
 11 number at RBKC from the morning after the fire. I would  
 12 be waiting on the line for an hour to speak to someone.  
 13 When I spoke to someone, I was told they would call me  
 14 back and they never did. I had been calling them as  
 15 I could not go back to my flat ... I was told that RBKC  
 16 would book a hotel for my family and I, but this took  
 17 countless efforts on my and my friends’ part before this  
 18 was arranged. It took one week before my children and I  
 19 were provided with hotel accommodation.”  
 20 Cesar Ranito says {IWS00001249/8}:  
 21 “Another resident gave me a ‘housing line’ number  
 22 for the Council and told me that people from the  
 23 Walkways were able to get temporary accommodation ...  
 24 I called on the evening of the 18th June. At first the  
 25 Council did not want to give us anything. I mentioned

153

1 that Isabel had a chronic health condition and that  
 2 seemed to change their minds. We were then told that  
 3 they only had one hotel room available and it would only  
 4 be for one night.”  
 5 Other walkway residents were placed in hotels much  
 6 later .  
 7 Layla Raihani, a Barandon Walk resident, received  
 8 a call from a housing officer, Dionne Wilkes, three to  
 9 four days after the fire {IWS00001263/2}:  
 10 “She asked me if I was safe and where I was staying.  
 11 I informed her that I couldn’t go back home, I had no  
 12 money and nothing to wear ... I also informed her that  
 13 my son had no uniform to go to school. She advised me  
 14 to go to the uniform shop and go to Westway to stay  
 15 there. I told her that I did not want to go and sleep  
 16 in a gym because I was pregnant and had a 1yr old, a  
 17 6yr old and a 12yr old ... She advised me to call for  
 18 temporary accommodation to see if they could help me and  
 19 gave me a number. After this phone call from RBKC/TMO,  
 20 I can’t remember being contacted by RBKC/TMO again.”  
 21 As a result, she stayed with family for 10 days and  
 22 was later placed in a hotel.  
 23 Ahmed Al-Assad says {IWS00001789/9}:  
 24 “The Council never contacted us to tell us about  
 25 hotels. It was my sister who went to the Council trying

154

1 to place us in a hotel. This was over 3 weeks after the  
 2 fire. We should have been given a hotel straightaway.”  
 3 Eliane Lara lived in Barandon Walk. She and her two  
 4 sons were not placed in a hotel until October 2017  
 5 {IWS00001589/11}.  
 6 Some did not know that hotel accommodation was  
 7 an option.  
 8 Paul Norbert, who lived in Testerton Walk, says  
 9 {IWS00001252/8}:  
 10 “I was very stressed and upset. I could feel my  
 11 mental state deteriorating because of the shock of  
 12 witnessing the fire and the chaos around us. I knew  
 13 that I needed to be alone to try to gather my thoughts.  
 14 I knew that I would not have the space to do that in a  
 15 chaotic emergency shelter. Based on what I heard from  
 16 the community, I believed that that was the only option  
 17 being offered by RBKC, so I booked myself a room in a  
 18 hotel in Bayswater.”  
 19 Some walkway witnesses report receiving differential  
 20 treatment to tower residents.  
 21 Jevon Moses says {IWS00001276/13}:  
 22 “Because RBKC did not clarify whether Grenfell Walk  
 23 residents would be able to go back to our flats, they  
 24 kept us in the dark for a long period of time. Because  
 25 of this, I lost out on housing and was about six months

155

1 behind everyone else. Before the fire, there was a  
 2 strong sense of community between the residents of  
 3 Grenfell Tower, Grenfell Walk and the Walkways. We were  
 4 one. However, after the fire we quickly realised that  
 5 because of the inefficiencies of RBKC and TMO there  
 6 became a hierarchy and a division between us all. We  
 7 were all treated differently, and this made me and other  
 8 residents of Grenfell Walk feel unvalued and not  
 9 worthy.”  
 10 Gill Bedford, a resident of Testerton Walk, says  
 11 {IWS00001652/8}:  
 12 “In the aftermath of the fire I was concerned about  
 13 how the Council decided which of the non–Grenfell  
 14 households would be allocated emergency accommodation  
 15 and which would not. It is impossible to draw a  
 16 physical boundary dividing those to benefit from a set  
 17 of policies designed to address issues around mental  
 18 health to have arisen from the fire, from those who will  
 19 not benefit. That is because trauma does not work along  
 20 strict geographical lines like this, and is instead  
 21 a subjective factor ... this should have been part of  
 22 the eligibility criteria for the provision of services,  
 23 like those relating to the provision of emergency  
 24 accommodation for non–Tower residents.”  
 25 Tomassina Hessel lived in Barandon Walk with her son

156



1 and stayed at her neighbour's friend's house for two  
 2 nights. She says {IWS00001645/8}:  
 3 "At around 9am on 15 June ... I called the RBKC  
 4 housing line. I wanted more information and to arrange  
 5 a hotel room ... When I spoke to someone they told me  
 6 somebody else would call me back at around midday. They  
 7 didn't so I called them up again. They then told me  
 8 someone would call me at around 3pm. They didn't, so  
 9 I called them again ... whoever I was speaking to told  
 10 me not to call anymore as I was taking up the line ...  
 11 I was told I was not a priority ... I could not return  
 12 home: my flat had no heating and I was terrified of the  
 13 Tower collapsing. I understand that there were lots of  
 14 people who needed help, but I too was in shock and  
 15 despair at that point and I needed somewhere to stay  
 16 too."  
 17 Virginia Sang says {IWS00001939/11}:  
 18 "As time went on the attention seemed to shift just  
 19 to Grenfell. The Walkways were almost forgotten and we  
 20 feel like the forgotten residents. We are still living  
 21 in the same place, in the shadow of the Tower. We have  
 22 had to fight for help of any sort."  
 23 Mr Chairman, I'm about to move on to section 3, and  
 24 I wonder if that might be an appropriate time for  
 25 an afternoon break, or if you would like me to continue.

157

1 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, if that's convenient to you,  
 2 it's probably a good point to have a break, so let's do  
 3 that, shall we?  
 4 MS ISLAM: Thank you.  
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: We will stop at that point,  
 6 therefore, and resume at 3.25, if that's convenient.  
 7 MS ISLAM: Thank you.  
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good, thank you very much.  
 9 Thank you, 3.25, then, please.  
 10 (3.08 pm)  
 11 (A short break)  
 12 (3.25 pm)  
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, Ms Islam.  
 14 MS ISLAM: Mr Chairman, can I repeat the trigger warning,  
 15 just because we're talking about the experiences in the  
 16 immediate aftermath. For anyone that may want to leave  
 17 the room or pause the live stream, please do so now.  
 18 (Pause)  
 19 Turning then, please, to section 3 dealing with  
 20 financial assistance. Key issues include delayed  
 21 financial assistance, difficulties in obtaining  
 22 financial assistance, inconsistencies in the amounts  
 23 paid, and some say that they did not receive any  
 24 financial assistance at all.  
 25 Some survivors report that they received delayed

158

1 financial assistance.  
 2 Aziza Raihani lived in flat 126 on the 15th floor of  
 3 the tower with her daughter. She says {IWS00001300/4}:  
 4 "I had no access to my own finances as all my  
 5 belongings were destroyed in the flat, including bank  
 6 cards and ID documents. I did not receive any funds  
 7 from RBKC, including my weekly allowance for over  
 8 four months. I was therefore grateful for funds  
 9 I received from charitable funds, like the  
 10 Zakat Foundation."  
 11 Oluwaseun Talabi lived in flat 113 on the 14th floor  
 12 of the tower with his partner and their child. He says  
 13 {IWS00001731/7}:  
 14 "We did receive money from RBKC a few weeks  
 15 (probably a month) after the fire, but it was too little  
 16 too late. If it had not been for the charities and  
 17 voluntary groups, we would have been lost. They were  
 18 100 times more helpful than government."  
 19 Rosita Bonifacio lived in flat 83 on the 11th floor  
 20 of the tower with her husband. She says  
 21 {IWS00001887/7}:  
 22 "I do not recall whether RBKC provided any financial  
 23 assistance to me immediately after the fire. I do not  
 24 remember receiving any assistance from them. All of the  
 25 support I received was from charities."

159

1 Rawda Said says {IWS00001729/17}:  
 2 "The first payments we received were from the  
 3 charities. I cannot express the importance of receiving  
 4 cash payments especially straight after the fire. We  
 5 had lost all our cash, bank cards, IDs, without which it  
 6 is virtually impossible to do anything ... We received  
 7 no cash from RBKC on the first days following the fire.  
 8 RBKC did provide the hotel room and later transferred  
 9 cash to our bank account. However, you had to chase  
 10 your key worker to receive this. I am not sure if they  
 11 need[ing] to be chased meant that it was only given to  
 12 people who asked."  
 13 Alison Moses describes receiving financial  
 14 assistance. She says {IWS00001281/11}:  
 15 "I appreciated how much people donated, but having  
 16 some money made a big difference. It's about dignity,  
 17 being able to get the item you would choose for  
 18 yourself. I was more grateful for money as I could buy  
 19 things I needed."  
 20 Walkway residents also experienced delays in  
 21 receiving financial assistance.  
 22 Diego Ortiz says that he did not receive any  
 23 financial support from the council for six weeks  
 24 {IWS00001283/8}.  
 25 Christine Richer received £100 from the

160

1 Westway Centre when she first visited and then £5,000  
2 from the town hall at Christmas {IWS00001253/12}.

3 Turning now to the process of how survivors and  
4 residents had to obtain financial assistance.

5 Corinne Simone Jones lived in flat 145. She says  
6 {IWS00001548/12}:

7 "In the week after the fire, through word of mouth,  
8 I learnt that RBKC were providing money for survivors.  
9 I went to the Rugby Portobello Club to ask about this.  
10 When we got there, the council wanted us to fill out  
11 applications for benefits, but because both Jason and I  
12 worked they told us we were not entitled to anything.  
13 I remember thinking 'what are they talking about, we  
14 have lost everything and can't afford to replace it'."

15 Abdulwahab Abdulhamid says {IWS00001919/5}:

16 "It was very difficult to get financial assistance  
17 from the Council, as I did not know who was responsible  
18 for controlling the distribution of funds ... It was an  
19 uphill battle for my brother—in-law and I to obtain  
20 funds from the Council and why, as a resident and  
21 survivor, I received no help or information. It was  
22 extremely distressing and I later found out that I had  
23 not received or even been told about all of the support  
24 and assistance that I was entitled to. When I tried to  
25 claim for that assistance, RBKC told me that it was too

161

1 late."

2 Jenny Dainton, when describing her interaction with  
3 RBKC at the Rugby Club, says {IWS00001804/19}:

4 "We had to write down on a piece of paper everything  
5 that we needed money for. It was ridiculous that we  
6 were being treated this way after our home had just been  
7 destroyed in the fire. I found it embarrassing and  
8 dehumanising to be treated this way ..."

9 Maria Gil went to the Westway Centre to ask for more  
10 money. She says {IWS00001679/11}:

11 "... the amount I received was not enough. The man  
12 I spoke with was incredibly patronising, he told me:  
13 'what did you use the £500 we already gave you for?' and  
14 again, he asked 'Why did you have to buy clothes, you  
15 have lots of second hand clothes here?' I had to explain  
16 to him and he backed down, eventually. I felt demeaned  
17 and humiliated."

18 There were discrepancies in the amount of money that  
19 people received.

20 Rebecca Ross lived in flat 122 on the 15th floor of  
21 the tower with her brother, Bobby Ross, and father,  
22 Steven Power. Her father perished in the fire. She  
23 says that she received £500 within the first week of the  
24 fire from RBKC to be shared with her brother  
25 {IWS00001826/12}.

162

1 Mohamed Hariri, who lived in flat 21, says he was  
2 given £100 in cash around 16 June {IWS00001295/11}.

3 Elizabeth Sobieszczak says that {IWS00001539/11}:

4 "We were given cash at the Rugby Portobello ... This  
5 was just to start us off as we had absolutely nothing at  
6 that point. There were representatives of RBKC there  
7 who were asking people how much they thought they would  
8 need, but of course, this was impossible to answer  
9 because we had no idea where we were going or what was  
10 in store for us. I can't remember exactly but I think  
11 we were given around £300 at that point."

12 Elsa Afeworki lived in flat 16 of the tower but was  
13 not the named tenant. She says {IWS00001756/5}:

14 "When I went to the Westway kiosk to collect the  
15 money, the woman from the council who was there did not  
16 believe me that I was a resident of Grenfell Tower.  
17 I think she was going to give me £150, which was less  
18 than the £500 that I had been told was available for all  
19 residents to help pay for emergency items. She asked me  
20 to tell her what I was going to spend the money on, and  
21 why I needed it. It felt insensitive. I felt that she  
22 did not believe that I had lost everything. I was still  
23 very distressed as it was only a few days after the  
24 fire, and I ended up simply giving the money back."

25 Brahim El Amine, a walkway resident, went to

163

1 Westway, where he saw a table for financial assistance.  
2 He says {IWS00001946/10}:

3 "The man at the stand asked for my address and asked  
4 if I wanted £50. I felt that this was ridiculous; I was  
5 made to feel like a beggar because I needed more than  
6 that. They asked how much I needed ... Then they gave  
7 me £100. The whole experience was embarrassing and felt  
8 like an insult."

9 Simon Jolly says {IWS00001621/10}:

10 "In my view, the system was really badly managed, in  
11 that anyone who showed their proof of address would be  
12 given some cash with no idea of how long it was supposed  
13 to last for or what it was intended to cover."

14 Some people say that they did not receive any  
15 financial assistance at all.

16 Mariko Toyoshima—Lewis, who lived in flat 9, says  
17 {IWS00001725/66}:

18 "I did not receive any money or vouchers from the  
19 Westway Centre as they had all gone by the time I was  
20 able to go and I did not know about them."

21 Some survivors were refused assistance as they were  
22 not a formal tenant of Grenfell Tower.

23 Nagawa Prossy Nalukwago lived in flat 71 on the  
24 10th floor. She says {IWS00001568/1}:

25 "I was very scared to approach organisations and

164

1 authorities because I was not a formal tenant of  
 2 Grenfell Tower ... I approached the Westway together  
 3 with Lillian Olwa who was the official tenant of  
 4 Flat 71, to ask for clothes and because I understood  
 5 they were providing financial assistance. They refused  
 6 to give me a grant of funds because I was not a formal  
 7 tenant."  
 8 Viviana Rullo lived in Barandon Walk with her  
 9 partner, David O'Connell. She says {IWS00001655}:  
 10 "... we could not afford to eat regularly in the  
 11 hotel, and we were not receiving any financial  
 12 assistance. RBKC staff kept on telling us that we were  
 13 not entitled to anything as we were leaseholders."  
 14 Ahmad Al Sadi, a Hurstway Walk resident, says:  
 15 "I went back to work on Saturday 17 June 2017, not  
 16 because I felt ready to, but because I could not afford  
 17 not to, I had to support my family."  
 18 Some residents did not receive assistance due to  
 19 issues with the process and being told the money had  
 20 already been paid.  
 21 Farrah Serroukh from Hurstway Walk went to the  
 22 Westway Centre to ask for financial assistance and said  
 23 that {IWS00001747/7}:  
 24 "I was told that the money allocated under my name  
 25 had already been given to someone else. They hadn't

165

1 checked that person's ID. I spoke to other residents  
 2 that this happened to as well. I just gave up in the  
 3 end."  
 4 Mohamed Yahya lived in Barandon Walk with his wife  
 5 and two children. He also went to Westway for financial  
 6 assistance and says {IWS00001827/8}:  
 7 "I was told that someone else had used my name and  
 8 had taken the money that was meant for me and my family.  
 9 This was never resolved."  
 10 Turning now to section 4 on psychosocial support,  
 11 dealing first with the provision of psychological  
 12 support, and secondly the key worker system.  
 13 A number of witnesses describe the significant  
 14 impact the fire had on their mental health and their  
 15 experiences of support in the immediate aftermath. Key  
 16 issues included the lack of information on psychological  
 17 support available, and delayed offers of support being  
 18 made.  
 19 Gitiara Pahlavani lived in flat 22 of the tower with  
 20 her two sons. She says {IWS00001244/15}:  
 21 "... I felt broken. Looking back now, it would have  
 22 been really helpful to have been offered some  
 23 professional support in those days and weeks following.  
 24 I do not remember hearing about the possibility that  
 25 I could get counselling until quite a long time after

166

1 the fire."  
 2 Jason Miller says {IWS00001940/19}:  
 3 "There was no information in the immediate aftermath  
 4 of the fire telling you where to go for psychological  
 5 support ... at the time, if you did not sort yourself  
 6 out then you would be left behind. Nobody offered it  
 7 directly; you had to go yourself."  
 8 Leanne Mya Jackson Le-Blanc lived in flat 6. She  
 9 says {IWS00001271/25}:  
 10 "I asked my Social Worker for counselling right at  
 11 the beginning ... I said I just want to talk about the  
 12 fire because I could not talk or sleep. I just needed  
 13 to get it all out of my system. However, I was told by  
 14 my key worker that you must wait six weeks after  
 15 experiencing a trauma to be able to receive counselling.  
 16 This was not right; how could that be okay?"  
 17 Florentyna Sobieszczak lived in flat 43. She  
 18 describes the delay in being offered counselling  
 19 {IWS00001555/8}:  
 20 "About a year later, I remember receiving  
 21 a voicemail and a letter which had details of a number  
 22 to call if you wanted to have counselling ... From what  
 23 I remember, there was no other support at the time or  
 24 offers of counselling before then ... About two years  
 25 after, I received a second letter, which referred to

167

1 a specialist Grenfell Tower Counselling Service at the  
 2 local GP Centre ... the information should have been  
 3 made available much sooner, because in the first  
 4 few weeks after the fire, when we needed it most, it was  
 5 not clear how to access these services. By the time  
 6 these access points were clear, it seemed a bit late."  
 7 Sahar Jamalvatan says {IWS00001704/7}:  
 8 "The support I got was minimal. I was under the  
 9 mental health team for about two weeks. They called  
 10 into the hotel on a couple of occasions and then I never  
 11 saw them again. I feel that all along it was a battle  
 12 for me to get any form of counselling or psychological  
 13 support to deal with the trauma that I was living with.  
 14 I did not receive any counselling until 2019."  
 15 Bobby Ross lived in flat 122. He says  
 16 {IWS00002356/8}:  
 17 "The Council should have but failed to provide  
 18 urgent mental health support in the immediate aftermath  
 19 of the fire ... So many people were struggling after the  
 20 horrific fire and didn't know how to deal with it.  
 21 I didn't know where to get help with my mental health,  
 22 but I desperately needed it. I didn't know how to deal  
 23 with my problems on my own."  
 24 He continues:  
 25 "Ultimately, when I was my most vulnerable, there

168

1 was no emergency mental health support available to me.  
 2 If there was, I didn't know about it."  
 3 Some witnesses outline their experiences of the  
 4 support that was available in rest centres and hotels.  
 5 Rawda Said says {IWS00001729/18-19}:  
 6 "There were staff from the NHS at the Westway Centre  
 7 including trained psychologists to provide support.  
 8 There were also priests and imams to provide support.  
 9 The NHS staff also visited the hotels to see families in  
 10 the aftermath of the fire ."  
 11 However, she says:  
 12 "I did not have counselling for one year as I was  
 13 outside of the borough and could not travel as we had  
 14 been housed so far away from the community and where  
 15 lots of the services were being provided."  
 16 Sharon Laci lived in flat 65 on the 9th floor of the  
 17 tower with her daughter. She was aware of the  
 18 counselling available at the Westway Centre but chose  
 19 not to use it . She says {IWS00001831/6}:  
 20 "I knew there was counselling available at the  
 21 Westway, but I did not engage. I was more focused on  
 22 the practicalities of trying to rebuild mine and my  
 23 daughter's life and finding a home. Also the  
 24 counselling services never felt very private at the  
 25 Westway with everyone there."

169

1 Antonio Roncolato, who lived in flat 72 on the  
 2 10th floor with his son and former sister-in-law, was  
 3 placed in the Holiday Inn in Kensington on 16 June, and  
 4 he says {IWS00001774/15}:  
 5 "Most days, there were letters put under the door of  
 6 our hotel room about support and counselling services  
 7 available from the NHS. Psychologists or counsellors  
 8 were also available in the hotel lobby at certain times  
 9 of day."  
 10 Jose Vieiro says {IWS00001798/10}:  
 11 "... as far as I was aware, psychological support  
 12 was always available if you needed it. A lot of people  
 13 came to the hotel to see if we needed any support ... I  
 14 did not seek out support of that type, so I cannot  
 15 comment on quality, but it seemed available."  
 16 Walkway residents also experienced issues in  
 17 relation to psychological support.  
 18 Halima Diejomaoh was a resident of Grenfell Walk.  
 19 She says {IWS00001303/5-6}:  
 20 "I was not offered any psychological support and  
 21 no one from the council visited or contacted me. I felt  
 22 that I had to support myself and just try to cope even  
 23 though I felt so unwell and overwhelmed ... I was at the  
 24 Hilton hotel for six months before I was able to access  
 25 any psychological support ..."

170

1 Jevon Moses says {IWS00001276/17}:  
 2 "I never received any treatment despite signing up  
 3 for it . I gave my room number and contact details.  
 4 I was left waiting for a very long time. This made me  
 5 feel ignored because nothing was happening. I wish  
 6 I had counselling much sooner. I really would have  
 7 benefitted from it."  
 8 Some walkway residents said they experienced issues  
 9 with counselling due to language barriers.  
 10 Zohra Al-Assad says {IWS00001267/5}:  
 11 "I did not receive any counselling from anybody, not  
 12 in the hotel or not elsewhere. I have not received any  
 13 psychological support especially because we do not know  
 14 the language and we are illiterate so even if we see  
 15 something in writing we would not be able to recognise  
 16 if it was helpful to us."  
 17 Amina Kabouh lived in Testerton Walk. She says  
 18 {IWS00001942/7}:  
 19 "At some point, I cannot remember when, we were  
 20 appointed a Key Worker, she told us that we could  
 21 request counselling. I was really struggling at the  
 22 time so decided to start counselling . As I don't speak  
 23 English they provided an interpreter , but it was very  
 24 difficult for me to fully benefit from the process when  
 25 everything had to go through a third person, so

171

1 I stopped attending after 2 months."  
 2 Contrastingly, some were more positive about the  
 3 availability of psychological support.  
 4 Jessica Gomez says {IWS00001264/11-12}:  
 5 "There was quite a lot of psychological support  
 6 available , it was all at the Red Cross and Westway ...  
 7 you would get a lot of psychological support, if you  
 8 needed to speak to somebody; I was not ready to do so,  
 9 but I knew that it was available to me."  
 10 A number of witnesses who lost loved ones in the  
 11 fire describe their experiences of the provision of  
 12 psychological support in the immediate aftermath. A key  
 13 issue was the absence of support available.  
 14 Asia Ghamhi, who has sadly passed away since giving  
 15 her witness statement to the Inquiry, lost her brother,  
 16 Abdulaziz El-Wahabi, and his family. She said  
 17 {IWS00001706/4-5}:  
 18 "I didn't see any psychological support or services  
 19 being offered in the first days and weeks after the  
 20 fire ."  
 21 She continues:  
 22 "I didn't have a key worker until around six months  
 23 after the fire . We are quite a large family and  
 24 I wasn't expecting all of us to be supported, but I was  
 25 shocked that no one from RBKC had contacted my Mum. She

172

1 had lost her son, daughter—in-law and three  
 2 grandchildren, and no one checked on her ... I googled  
 3 Grenfell support and spoke to someone ... I was really  
 4 upset and cried on the phone and told her that my Mum  
 5 wasn't getting any support."  
 6 Sadik Jemal Kelbeto lost his sister , Nura Jemal, her  
 7 husband, Hashim Kedir, and their three children, Yaqub,  
 8 Firdaws and Yahya, who lived in flat 192 of the tower.  
 9 He says {IWS00001577/4-5}:  
 10 "I received no offers of emotional or psychological  
 11 support from RBKC ... The first offer of support of any  
 12 kind was when we were attending the hearings, and met an  
 13 Amharic speaking counsellor working with Hestia ... who  
 14 identified our need for emotional support and arranged  
 15 for this. This was in mid-2018, about a year after the  
 16 fire."  
 17 Some witnesses felt that they received timely  
 18 support.  
 19 Zainu Deen lost his daughter, Zainab Dean, and his  
 20 grandchild, Jeremiah, who lived in flat 115 of the  
 21 tower. He says {IWS00002301/5}:  
 22 "I was offered mental health support from the Red  
 23 Cross in the form of counselling services. This help  
 24 was provided straight away and I was initially put in  
 25 touch with the Red Cross by RBKC who gave me a contact

173

1 number for them."  
 2 Turning now to the topic of key workers.  
 3 A number of witnesses share their experiences of the  
 4 key worker system. Key issues include the timeliness of  
 5 allocation , inconsistent quality in the service provided  
 6 and the high turnover of key workers.  
 7 Survivors were assigned key workers at different  
 8 times.  
 9 Corinne Simone Jones was assigned a key worker  
 10 within the first 24 hours of the fire . She says  
 11 {IWS00001548/14}:  
 12 "In the first 24 hours after the fire , there were  
 13 a number of key workers who called me or texted me  
 14 saying they were my key worker and asked me what we  
 15 needed right now. [They] were all telling me different  
 16 things."  
 17 However, others had to wait much longer for  
 18 a key worker.  
 19 Mahboubeh Jamalvatan who lived in flat 10 of the  
 20 tower, says {IWS00001724/7}:  
 21 "For the first three or four months there was no  
 22 key worker allocated to me ..."  
 23 David Andrew Benjamin, a survivor of the fire, says  
 24 {IWS00001764/12}:  
 25 "I was not assigned a key worker immediately after

174

1 the fire as I was not a resident of the Tower. This  
 2 means that I did not receive information about services  
 3 such as counselling , which would have helped me after  
 4 the fire ... I was not offered any support by RBKC until  
 5 2018, when I was allocated the same key worker as Zoe  
 6 and her family, but this was only after I requested this  
 7 as I was struggling."  
 8 Walkway residents also experienced delays in being  
 9 assigned key workers.  
 10 Cesar Ranito says {IWS00001249/9}:  
 11 "We were told we could have a Key Worker but it was  
 12 difficult for us to get one. It seemed like the Council  
 13 were short of staff . We got a Key Worker in around  
 14 September or October 2017."  
 15 Some walkway residents were not assigned  
 16 a key worker at all .  
 17 Glenn Young, who lived with his wife in  
 18 Hurstway Walk, says {IWS00001261/10}:  
 19 "We did not hear from RBKC following the night of  
 20 the fire and we were not allocated a key worker.  
 21 Although we had heard of others who had key workers, we  
 22 were not assigned one and did not get any information  
 23 about key workers. It was as if we had been missed  
 24 out."  
 25 Agnes Murray lived in Barandon Walk with her

175

1 daughter. She says {IWS00001639/8}:  
 2 "I was told I would not be given a key worker as  
 3 they were only for Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk  
 4 residents. At some point later I was told that I would  
 5 be given some kind of support worker. They did not make  
 6 it clear to me that this policy had changed. I was  
 7 assigned one. The worker met with me, listened and gave  
 8 some advice but I was not sure what powers they had to  
 9 help."  
 10 Some bereaved individuals were assigned key workers  
 11 some time after the fire .  
 12 Ana Pumar, the former partner of Gary Maunders who  
 13 lived in flat 161 of the tower but perished, says  
 14 {IWS00002346/5}:  
 15 "Around a month after the disaster, I was contacted  
 16 by a key support worker who has again provided us with  
 17 any support and assistance that we have needed,  
 18 including being signposted to psychological support  
 19 which we have accessed without issue."  
 20 Farah Jniah, a bereaved relative of  
 21 Faouzia El-Wahabi and her family, says {IWS00001600/16}:  
 22 "I read a message on the Grenfell WhatsApp group  
 23 that RBKC were providing a key worker to families as  
 24 a point of contact. We did not have a key worker and we  
 25 had not been contacted by RBKC about this. We were

176

1 allocated a key worker around 16 August 2017 after our  
 2 [family liaison officer] contacted RBKC to ask about  
 3 this."  
 4 Experiences of key workers varied, with some  
 5 witnesses finding them a helpful point of contact,  
 6 whilst others found them unhelpful.  
 7 Zoe Dainton says that her family was assigned  
 8 a key worker within the first week following the fire .  
 9 She says {IWS00001975/35}:  
 10 "At the time, I did not think she was very good, but  
 11 I have now reflected and think she was overwhelmed ...  
 12 She failed to pass on important information. For  
 13 example, my family was not told that we were entitled to  
 14 a £30 per day food allowance whilst staying at the  
 15 hotel."  
 16 She continues:  
 17 "My impression having spoken to other Grenfell Tower  
 18 residents was that people had mixed experiences with  
 19 their key workers. Some key workers were clearly more  
 20 engaged than others. It became obvious when speaking to  
 21 other residents that often different and sometimes  
 22 contradictory information was provided on what support  
 23 and assistance was available to us."  
 24 Mesrob Kasemdjian lived in flat 141 on the  
 25 17th floor of the tower with his aunt, and he says

177

1 {IWS00001784/15}:  
 2 "The key workers we have had have all been very  
 3 nice, but they have been unprepared, which meant that  
 4 the support they were supposed to provide has been  
 5 non-existent. We always received information before  
 6 they did ... as we were receiving our information from  
 7 the community, we didn't need a key worker. They may  
 8 have been more effective if they were fully informed,  
 9 and gave us some information about what to expect, but  
 10 there has been absolutely no structure, which simply  
 11 increased stress and uncertainty."  
 12 Sharon Laci says {IWS00001831/8}:  
 13 "At first there was little communication from RBKC,  
 14 but this improved after I was assigned a key worker  
 15 around seven days after the fire . The first key worker  
 16 was brought in from another Local Authority for the  
 17 first couple of weeks. I found it helpful to have a  
 18 single point of contact. The three key workers assigned  
 19 to me were helpful and informative. They regularly kept  
 20 me updated by telephone and email about what support and  
 21 services were available. However, I know other people  
 22 had very different experiences with their key workers."  
 23 Chiraag Patel says {IWS00001610/15}:  
 24 "Our first key worker was not very good. In fact,  
 25 he was very unhelpful. Often he would not respond to

178

1 our queries and when he did he usually did not know the  
 2 answer. For that reason we eventually stopped asking  
 3 him for help. We did have one key worker that was very  
 4 good ... but he had to step down after about two weeks  
 5 as he had been assigned too many people to look after.  
 6 As a result we mostly organised anything we needed  
 7 ourselves rather than relying on key workers ... At one  
 8 point everything had to be done through our key worker,  
 9 which made things more difficult as they were not always  
 10 responsive."  
 11 Hime Haymanot Gashaw lived in flat 131 with her  
 12 husband, Richard Fletcher, and their daughter. She says  
 13 {IWS00001738/24}:  
 14 "Even when people were appointed Key Workers, the  
 15 Key Workers were ill informed and were not able to give  
 16 the help that they were meant to. It was complete  
 17 confusion."  
 18 Aziza Raihani describes her first key worker as  
 19 {IWS00001300/5}:  
 20 "... unfamiliar with the area, as he was not  
 21 previously based in RBKC and seemed unable to provide  
 22 information about my entitlements and where I was  
 23 supposed to attend. I also found my second key worker  
 24 extremely unhelpful and at times she was very  
 25 argumentative, which I found very upsetting ... it would

179

1 have been helpful if RBKC had provided me with an Arabic  
 2 key worker from the outset."  
 3 Walkway residents also experienced issues with the  
 4 key worker system.  
 5 Jacqueline Haynes says {IWS00001809/9}:  
 6 "Initially , Key Workers lacked the authority or  
 7 position to make decisions or authorise any real  
 8 actions. They were basically support workers, just  
 9 there to be there. If they wanted to do anything that  
 10 cost money they would have needed approval – it was  
 11 a support placebo and not very useful. They had  
 12 volunteer workers which worried me as we did not know  
 13 who they were – there was no safeguarding. After  
 14 concerns were expressed the plan was changed and  
 15 properly trained workers were used instead, however, no  
 16 one I knew got anything helpful from them at this time."  
 17 Jevon Moses says {IWS00001276/20}:  
 18 "RBKC simply did not communicate with us ... I think  
 19 key workers were get-out clauses for the council. They  
 20 were the scapegoats and RBKC put them in front of us so  
 21 they didn't have to deal with us themselves."  
 22 A number of witnesses experienced a high turnover of  
 23 key workers which caused issues.  
 24 Omar Alhajali says in relation to his first  
 25 key worker {IWS00001533/26}:

180

1 "She was very helpful and became like a friend to  
 2 me. I felt she supported me, not just because it was  
 3 her job but because she wanted to ... she would tell me  
 4 what I could apply for ... "

5 However, she stopped working for RBKC for  
 6 three months, and thereafter he says:

7 "I then had a period with no key workers before  
 8 being allocated a string of different key workers ...  
 9 I would have to explain the situation all over again.  
 10 I remember one key worker would not contact me and  
 11 I would contact her and she would not answer. Some key  
 12 workers did not seem to know the answers to my question  
 13 and I do not feel they understood the situation ... "

14 Rashida Ali says {IWS00001617/15}:  
 15 "I was overwhelmed from how many people I had to  
 16 meet and keep telling each person my story again and  
 17 again. Each new key worker had no idea of my history  
 18 and I had to keep repeating it all. Even when they  
 19 wrote something down they lost the paperwork and would  
 20 ask me again for the same information. It was not  
 21 professional, and they didn't know what they were doing.  
 22 They had no experience of dealing with us who were  
 23 facing such trauma. It felt like they were just hiring  
 24 people, anyone."

25 Michael Sobieszczak, who lived in flat 43, says

181

1 {IWS00001562/13}:  
 2 "We had a large number of key workers in the end.  
 3 I would phone up and ask to speak to the key worker and  
 4 they would say that it had changed to someone else, and  
 5 that would be the first that we had heard of it ...  
 6 I tried not to contact the key workers too often as they  
 7 didn't seem to know too much ... I lost faith in them  
 8 being able to help us ... "

9 Lorraine Beadle, who was a resident in flat 13 of  
 10 the tower but was abroad at the time of the fire, says  
 11 {IWS00001872/15-16}:  
 12 "I had so many key workers, I have lost count. Most  
 13 of them were very difficult to contact, and the whole  
 14 system was a nightmare. I had one lovely key worker ...  
 15 she was helpful with everything I asked of her ... after  
 16 her, however, I had a further 8 or 9 key workers. Some  
 17 of these I have met only once or twice. Some I tried to  
 18 contact, but had no luck as I called them and they never  
 19 answered. I never met these ones at all."

20 Farhad Neda says {IWS00001302/4}:  
 21 "RBKC continually changed our key workers, which was  
 22 very difficult. Each time we were given a new  
 23 key worker I had to explain everything again. Sometimes  
 24 I called to speak to my key worker only to find out they  
 25 had left. In total, I have had 4 key workers and the

182

1 first and the last one were very good and helpful."  
 2 Some walkway residents this positive experiences  
 3 with their initial key workers who were later changed.  
 4 Tomassina Hessel says {IWS00001645/13}:  
 5 "I had a fantastic keyworker at the start, who had  
 6 been working with me from before the fire ... she went  
 7 way above and beyond to reassure me ... unfortunately  
 8 she left a few months after the fire because she was  
 9 traumatised as a result of her work. I didn't like her  
 10 replacement, as she gave me blanket advice rather than  
 11 this being tailored to me and my specific needs. It  
 12 felt like textbook advice and so I found her approach  
 13 not very helpful."

14 Otmane Benkhaoula, a resident of Grenfell Walk, says  
 15 {IWS00001269/7}:  
 16 "My Key Worker was very helpful, and she offered  
 17 emotional support ... I was very sad to hear that [she]  
 18 was not offered a permanent position with RBKC as a key  
 19 worker ... in the circumstances she was unable to  
 20 continue working with me."

21 Ibtisam Alfawaz says {IWS00001274/11-12}:  
 22 "I got my first key worker around 10 days after the  
 23 fire ... she was a nice lady, she would help me and tell  
 24 me what I need ... I had a big argument with RBKC  
 25 because they took her away around 19th December 2017 ...

183

1 me and my kids cried, we were very attached to her and  
 2 it was a very sad day. Later on, we got a different key  
 3 worker and I did not like her at all because she did not  
 4 do her job properly ... since the fire I have had 5 key  
 5 workers."

6 Michael Sobieszczak says {IWS00001562/11}:  
 7 "I knew this was an unprecedented circumstance for  
 8 RBKC and I tried to be patient for that reason. I had  
 9 tried to build a rapport with people, and ask to speak  
 10 with the people that had visited the hotel, or the  
 11 person allocated as our Key Worker, but I don't think  
 12 I ever spoke to anyone I knew, or even the same person  
 13 twice. It just made the whole ordeal even more  
 14 unbearable."

15 Turning now to section 5 on information for those  
 16 looking for those missing.  
 17 Witnesses share their experiences of searching for  
 18 loved ones in hospitals and rest centres, calling the  
 19 Casualty Bureau and being assigned family liaison  
 20 officers. A key issue is the absence of a clear and  
 21 centralised system of information about those who were  
 22 missing.  
 23 A number of people looking for their families and  
 24 loved ones searched in rest centres.  
 25 Marlene Anderson was looking for her father,

184

1 Raymond Bernard, who lived in flat 201 on the 23rd floor  
 2 of the tower. She attended the Westway Centre on  
 3 19 June and says {IWS00001561/4}:  
 4 " ... I walked into the Westway Centre and registered  
 5 my name with reception. The atmosphere in there was  
 6 chaotic. There were lots of different desks for all  
 7 sorts of different things, none of which really helped  
 8 me. Everything seemed aimed at providing help for  
 9 survivors ... Of course all of this was incredibly  
 10 important, but as a family member who had a missing  
 11 relative, I felt nothing in the centre was relevant or  
 12 helpful to me. It did not really seem like it was for  
 13 those who were looking for loved ones, so once again  
 14 I was left feeling lost with no direction of what to do  
 15 or where to go next."  
 16 Mohamed Ragab lost his nephew, Hesham Rahman, who  
 17 lived in flat 204 on the 23rd floor of the tower. He  
 18 told staff at the entrance of the Westway that he was  
 19 looking for his nephew and he was allowed in. He says  
 20 {IWS00001536/6-7}:  
 21 "I was really shocked at what I saw inside. It was  
 22 like a refugee camp – there were people on the floor who  
 23 had escaped the Tower, with no place to sleep. I saw  
 24 ... RBKC inside ... I think I also saw TMO staff ...  
 25 There were lots of people there, it was hectic. It was

185

1 not organised at all. I was not given any information  
 2 about Hesham whilst I was there or what to do next."  
 3 Others were not allowed entry into the  
 4 Westway Centre when looking for their loved ones.  
 5 Rajaa Chellat lost her uncle, Abdulaziz El-Wahabi,  
 6 and his family. She says {IWS00001284/1}:  
 7 "When I arrived at The Westway Centre, the  
 8 volunteers would not allow me entry, as they told me  
 9 I needed a wristband to identify me as a relative of the  
 10 deceased ... I had no idea how to obtain one, which was  
 11 very frustrating ..."  
 12 Noha El Baghdady, the bereaved cousin of  
 13 Hesham Rahman, says {IWS00001535/8}:  
 14 "I went to all of the relief centres and shelters  
 15 set up in the local area that I knew of (including  
 16 St Clement and St James Church, the Methodist Church,  
 17 the Al Manaar mosque, the Westway Centre and the Rugby  
 18 Club ... I went to each one asking if people had seen  
 19 Hesham or knew any information about him. The  
 20 atmosphere in these shelters was horrible – everything  
 21 was hectic. There were people everywhere ... It was the  
 22 community who were trying to help and were trying to  
 23 provide answers about what to do and where to go."  
 24 Farah Jniah went to various rest centres in search  
 25 of her missing family, including the Rugby Club,

186

1 St Clement's Church, Notting Hill Church, Latimer Church  
 2 and the Westway Centre. She says {IWS00001600/9}:  
 3 "I felt so frustrated that there were a number of  
 4 rest centres which had opened up for survivors but when  
 5 I went in they were just full of volunteers and  
 6 donations. I was so confused as to where any of the  
 7 survivors were ... I wanted to speak to them to find out  
 8 if they knew the family or had seen them. There seemed  
 9 to be a real lack of organisation or a plan in place for  
 10 where everyone should go to get help. The different  
 11 centres were handing out food and water and I didn't  
 12 take any donations as all I was looking for was guidance  
 13 on where else I should go to find out what happened to  
 14 my family."  
 15 Amina Chaer–Yemlahi lost her brother,  
 16 Abdulaziz El-Wahabi, and his family. She says  
 17 {IWS00001644/3}:  
 18 "At some point we were asked to leave  
 19 Rugby Portobello. I think this was a horrible thing to  
 20 do to us. We were told that Rugby Portobello was only  
 21 for people who had lost their homes and had nowhere to  
 22 go. We didn't know what to do ... It was  
 23 unbearable ..."  
 24 A number of witnesses describe their efforts in  
 25 trying to find their family members and loved ones in

187

1 the absence of any clear and centralised information.  
 2 Sabah Abdullah lived in flat 143 of the tower with  
 3 his wife, Khadija Khalloufi, who perished in the fire.  
 4 He was placed in a hotel on 14 June. He says  
 5 {IWS00001279/4}:  
 6 "I was still so worried about my wife. I remember  
 7 speaking to members of the press in case they could help  
 8 me find her. I remember going to the hospitals to look  
 9 for my wife. I didn't know how to get support from  
 10 anyone official or where to go to find out about my  
 11 wife. I would not wish this situation on my worst  
 12 enemy. I could not think about anything other than  
 13 finding my wife."  
 14 He continues:  
 15 "I found it hard to access information after the  
 16 fire. At this time I was out of my mind with sorrow.  
 17 My wife had gone and I wanted to join her. I did not  
 18 know where to turn for help."  
 19 Channel Spence host her uncle, Gary Maunders. She  
 20 says {IWS00001657/3}:  
 21 "I carried on looking in the area desperately trying  
 22 to find information about my uncle Gary. The days that  
 23 followed would consist of full hours from day to night  
 24 for many days and so it is difficult for me to be  
 25 precise about timeline. We just went through it non

188



1 stop. It was chaos, it was all a blur ...”  
 2 Miriam Lamprell lost her daughter, Deborah Lamprell,  
 3 who lived in flat 161 of the tower. She says  
 4 {IWS00001673/7}:  
 5 “There was no system in place for people like me,  
 6 who were desperate to hear information about their loved  
 7 ones but who could not make themselves easily visible to  
 8 the authorities ... Had I not had the help of Debbie’s  
 9 colleagues, or my relatives ... I am concerned I might  
 10 have been completely forgotten or overlooked. The  
 11 Authorities relied too much on the assumption that  
 12 people looking for information about their loved ones  
 13 would know where to go or who to call.”  
 14 She continues:  
 15 “My daughter was taken from me and nothing will make  
 16 up for that. But my anguish in that first week would  
 17 have been much easier to cope with if I had been given  
 18 clear and regular updates from those who were in charge  
 19 of the recovery effort .”  
 20 Marlene Anderson says about 14 June {IWS00001561/3}:  
 21 “I then called around a collection of different  
 22 hospitals asking about my dad and whether he had been  
 23 admitted. None of them could tell me anything ... I did  
 24 not know who to call or where to get information, which  
 25 was incredibly frustrating ... It was such an awful

189

1 feeling, I felt like I was just batted around, literally  
 2 going around in circles with no clear direction or  
 3 answers on what I could do.”  
 4 She continues:  
 5 “Looking back now, it was the lack of information in  
 6 the first week or so that was really crippling ... It  
 7 was chaotic, I still did not know where to go or who to  
 8 ask for information ... I felt totally lost ...”  
 9 Jadwiga Nowak, a bereaved relative of Hesham Rahman,  
 10 says {IWS00001559/10}:  
 11 “There was no information centre or central point  
 12 where residents and the bereaved could go and leave  
 13 their details, and find out what had been established so  
 14 far ... There should have been a designated place for  
 15 people to approach to raise their concerns, or leave  
 16 information.”  
 17 Relatives of the El–Wahabi family experienced issues  
 18 with the lack of communication. Ahmed Chellat says  
 19 {IWS0001306/2–3}:  
 20 “I did not receive any information about any  
 21 services regarding those who were missing or deceased,  
 22 from the council or the casualty bureau ... Any  
 23 information released by the police seemed to be on  
 24 an ad hoc basis and there did not appear to be  
 25 a coordinated effort to relay information. I was so

190

1 frustrated ...”  
 2 Abdulhamed El–Wahabi says {IWS00001697/5}:  
 3 “I was lost; nobody contacted me ... I felt that  
 4 I had no support and that myself and my family did not  
 5 matter.”  
 6 Amina Chaer–Yemlahi says {IWS00001306/2–3}:  
 7 “At some point on 14 June 2017 before we came home  
 8 I remember speaking with a woman who told me she was  
 9 from the TMO, she took the names of my brother and his  
 10 family. She said that she would be back in touch but  
 11 she was never back in touch. She didn’t ever ask us if  
 12 we were okay. No one from the TMO ever got in touch  
 13 with us. I am appalled by this.”  
 14 She continues:  
 15 “After the fire no one from RBKC or the TMO got in  
 16 touch with me, my husband, my son or my daughter. We  
 17 were struggling with everything. We had no key workers  
 18 and no support from anyone. Nothing at all. It was my  
 19 son, Billal, who found out that we were entitled to  
 20 support. This was in September 2017.”  
 21 A number of witnesses share their observations on  
 22 the absence of a list of residents and how this impacted  
 23 the search for those who were missing.  
 24 Joseph Kyle John says {IWS00001685/8}:  
 25 “There was no way to find people after the fire;

191

1 there were people everywhere and I could not tell who  
 2 was who. RBKC did not have a proper list to identify  
 3 people ... There was a lot of confusion in trying to  
 4 identify people. I think RBKC failed to do their job as  
 5 they should have ... help make a list of people that had  
 6 survived the fire and those that were missing. RBKC did  
 7 not even know who was missing after the fire, it was  
 8 only through the work of community volunteers that a  
 9 list of missing people was put together.”  
 10 Nicholas Burton says {IWS00001661/29}:  
 11 “I remember that at Rugby Portobello there was a big  
 12 piece of cardboard on which someone had made a grid of  
 13 the Tower. As people came through the centre, they  
 14 could add their own details to their flat, or add  
 15 information about any residents or survivors they had  
 16 seen alive since the fire. This meant that we were able  
 17 to piece together our own picture of what had happened  
 18 to our friends and neighbours, which people could add to  
 19 if and when they saw someone they knew or recognised ...  
 20 we were not getting information from the authorities  
 21 about our friends and neighbours so this provided us  
 22 with a way of piecing together what had happened to  
 23 people ourselves.”  
 24 Jenny Dainton says {IWS00001804/19}:  
 25 “I do not remember when RBKC finally arrived at the

192

1 Rugby Club to organise emergency accommodation for  
 2 residents. They were placed in a separate room from the  
 3 main hall ... I was shocked that RBKC did not turn up  
 4 with a list of residents' names from Grenfell Tower,  
 5 instead they were asking residents who we were and what  
 6 flat we lived in. It was clear that they had no idea."

7 Some witnesses raise concern about how the absence  
 8 of clear and centralised information led to  
 9 misinformation.

10 Michele Chiapetto says {IWS00001780/1}:

11 "On the night of the fire I had no idea what had  
 12 happened to Birkti and Biruk. I was desperate to find  
 13 them and was anxiously searching for them. I visited  
 14 the pub on Latimer Road where some survivors had been  
 15 taken; went to the leisure centre and started going to  
 16 hospitals from around 7am. I went to 5 hospitals all  
 17 over London, visiting more than once. Each time I was  
 18 told that Birkti and Biruk was not on the list. At one  
 19 point, I was told someone had seen Biruk in an  
 20 ambulance, and [Birkti] on the stairs. My heart would  
 21 leap and I would have hope but misinformation seemed  
 22 everywhere and there was just no source of reliable  
 23 information. In the afternoon I went to HM Coroner's  
 24 office in Westminster and was told that they had not  
 25 heard of Birkti or Biruk. It was desperate."

1 Farah Jniah says {IWS00001600/4}:  
 2 "I did not know whether Faouzia and her family were  
 3 dead or alive. I kept hearing contradictory things from  
 4 people on the street about the El-Wahabis ... There was  
 5 a lot of information about survivors being spread by  
 6 word of mouth and it was difficult to know what was true  
 7 or not. I saw no one near the Tower who was an official  
 8 who could help me ... This made it even more  
 9 overwhelming."

10 Samuel Daniels says {IWS00002065/11}:

11 "We spent all day looking for my father in case  
 12 somehow he had got out. We called all the hospitals we  
 13 were told Grenfell Tower victims had gone to ... I was  
 14 told by my rent officer to go to the Salvation Army in  
 15 Portobello where they have a family reunion centre; and  
 16 that my father was there and marked as safe. I told  
 17 them that he was not there and that he cannot be safe.  
 18 I went and my father was not there."

19 Anne Murphy lost her brother, Denis Murphy, who  
 20 lived in flat 111 on the 14th floor of the tower. She  
 21 says {IWS00001709/3}:

22 "I remember that my two daughters came back from the  
 23 Rugby Club with information that Denis was alive ...  
 24 they were told by someone with a badge that Denis was  
 25 rescued ... Even my brother ... phoned me on the

1 afternoon of the 14th June, to say that Denis was alive,  
 2 as he had just been told at one of the centres that he  
 3 [Denis] was in one of the hospitals. We all cheered at  
 4 this news, but we were just being given completely false  
 5 information from all different sources."

6 A number of witnesses share their experiences of  
 7 calling the Casualty Bureau.

8 Miriam Lamprell says about 14 June {IWS00001673/8}:

9 "I remember we called that number what felt like  
 10 hundreds of times that day."

11 She continues:

12 "... I would say that the communication between the  
 13 authorities and relatives of those missing should have  
 14 been much better. Had I not contacted the  
 15 Casualty Bureau myself, I am not sure anyone would have  
 16 thought to contact me at all. When I called the  
 17 Casualty Bureau number, I was only ever told to call  
 18 back another time for more information."

19 Anne Murphy says {IWS00001709/3}:

20 "As soon as the emergency number did appear,  
 21 I called immediately and got a recorded message that  
 22 there were no people to answer calls as they were  
 23 waiting for call handlers. I eventually did get through  
 24 to the emergency number, I cannot remember exactly what  
 25 I said but their response was that someone would come

1 round or someone would call me. However we did not hear  
 2 anything back from this emergency number. It was of no  
 3 practical use to us at all."

4 Boushra El-Gourja, a bereaved relative of the  
 5 El-Wahabi family, says {IWS00001700/5}:

6 "I also called the helpline ... that too was  
 7 disappointing. The person on the line asked me the  
 8 names of my missing family, flat and floor number. That  
 9 is all the information they requested. It was a one way  
 10 conversation and they did not even take my number. It  
 11 was not a 'help' line but purely a way for the  
 12 authorities to gather information. It was not devised  
 13 to help keep loved ones informed and I think this should  
 14 be considered in future. The only suggestion they gave  
 15 me was to call hospitals for information."

16 Sheramin Bernadette Bernard lost her brother,  
 17 Raymond Moses, who lived in flat 201 on the 23rd floor  
 18 of the tower. She says {IWS00002337/7}:

19 "On the morning of the Fire, I contacted the  
 20 Helpline which I saw on the TV. I was given a reference  
 21 of M110 and on the second call, M1802 ... to use when  
 22 calling back however, often when I tried to call back  
 23 I couldn't get through as the line was constantly  
 24 engaged. This could be due to lack of organisation and  
 25 coordination or an indication of the large numbers of

1 people seeking to utilise the helpline service."  
 2 Senate Jones says {IWS00001691/4}:  
 3 "On the news there was a telephone helpline to call  
 4 to report missing people from the fire. I called the  
 5 number on the day of the fire, 14th June 2017. The  
 6 phone operator asked for names of my family members,  
 7 their dates of birth, flat door number, and the last  
 8 contact we had with them, and said that I should call  
 9 back if I had any updates. They didn't give me any  
 10 information — they were just taking down the details.  
 11 They gave me a reference number to quote for the call.  
 12 I called the number again three or four times that day,  
 13 but didn't receive any information. They never called  
 14 me back ... It seemed like their role was solely to take  
 15 information from me. I remember pleading with them 'Is  
 16 there anything you can tell me, please' and they said  
 17 "We can't, I'm sorry'."  
 18 Some individuals who lost loved ones were based  
 19 abroad and had concerns about the absence of official  
 20 information.  
 21 Rasha Ibrahim was abroad at the time of the fire.  
 22 She lost her sister, Rania Ibrahim, and her daughters,  
 23 Fethia and Hania, who lived in flat 203 of the tower.  
 24 She says {IWS00001650/3}:  
 25 "I was desperate for official information. I really

197

1 wish that some official had made contact with me  
 2 directly to update me, even if the content of the update  
 3 was that there was no confirmation and that they were  
 4 still missing. This would have helped immensely in  
 5 terms of understanding what was known and what was not  
 6 known."  
 7 Some witnesses share their experiences of how they  
 8 found out that their loved ones had perished in the  
 9 fire.  
 10 Omar Alhajali says {IWS00001533/10}:  
 11 "I find it very upsetting to know that photographs  
 12 had been taken of my brother lying on the ground and put  
 13 up on the internet. However, what upset me the most was  
 14 knowing that Mohammed had been left lying on the ground  
 15 outside Testerton Walk. I didn't know how long he had  
 16 been left there, but he must have been left unattended  
 17 otherwise someone could not have taken a picture of him.  
 18 I found this very distressing. I think my brother  
 19 should have been treated with more dignity and respect."  
 20 Peter John Murphy lost his father, Denis Murphy, in  
 21 the fire. He says {IWS00001722/4}:  
 22 "I was never officially told that my father had  
 23 died ... I heard from the news that they confirmed my  
 24 Dad had died, but I thought they had misspoken about it  
 25 and would apologise about it later."

198

1 Genet Grebreamiam Shawo says {IWS00001290/5}:  
 2 "I had just lost my son and I felt like no one  
 3 cared. No one, except friends and family, approached us  
 4 to help; instead we were left in the dark and felt  
 5 alone. We only even found out that Isaac had died on  
 6 the news. I am very angry and upset about how we were  
 7 treated by the authorities, no one had information and  
 8 we found out that I had lost my son in an extremely  
 9 insensitive way. I feel like things should have been  
 10 handled better."  
 11 Witnesses share their experiences of being assigned  
 12 family liaison officers.  
 13 Some share their positive experiences.  
 14 Marlene Anderson was assigned a family liaison  
 15 officer around a week after the fire. She says  
 16 {IWS00001561/5}:  
 17 "I felt like I finally had a source of information  
 18 and had someone to contact with questions. He did not  
 19 have any news for me at first, but just having him call  
 20 me, offering to support me and assure me that he would  
 21 let me know as soon as any more information was out  
 22 there, was so much more reassuring. Before speaking to  
 23 [my family liaison officer], it was horrible. I felt  
 24 totally lost and did not know who to ask for  
 25 information. Anybody I did ask, did not really help

199

1 me."  
 2 Others share more negative experiences.  
 3 Omar Alhajali says {IWS00001533/10}:  
 4 "A police officer introduced himself to me in the  
 5 hospital and said he was a Family Liaison Officer ... he  
 6 did not want to tell me a lot of information about  
 7 Mohammad ... I did not feel like talking to police at  
 8 that time. He looked serious and difficult to talk to.  
 9 He looked like a very formal official who would only  
 10 give me information when he had to."  
 11 Farah Jniah says {IWS00001600/12–15}:  
 12 "I was not aware that families were allocated  
 13 a police Family Liaison Officer ... dedicated to  
 14 them ... my mum had called the police several times and  
 15 had told them that we were Faouzia's family ... so we  
 16 were sure that the police knew to contact us with any  
 17 information they had about the El-Wahabi family."  
 18 She continues to say:  
 19 "I received an email from two detectives from the  
 20 Metropolitan Police Service ... their email explained  
 21 that they had been in contact with the family of  
 22 Abdelaziz ... and they were under the impression that  
 23 they were the only family of the El-Wahabis in the UK  
 24 ... I felt really angry about this. I had also done my  
 25 best in writing down our contact details on the lists

200

1 that centres had been collating. This now seemed a  
 2 waste of time and effort. What happened to this  
 3 information? Did the police and RBKC receive it but  
 4 disregard it?"

5 Some were not assigned a family liaison officer at  
 6 all.

7 Hayat Elsanosi, who lived in Sudan, lost their  
 8 sister, Fathia Elsanosi, niece, Isra Ibrahim, and  
 9 nephew, Abufras Ibrahim. They say:

10 "Despite being a bereaved family member I have not  
 11 been provided with a police family liaison officer ...  
 12 The fact that I have not been given a family liaison  
 13 officer has made me feel marginalised and unimportant in  
 14 the eyes of the police."

15 Sir, I note the time. I am about to start  
 16 section 6.

17 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes.

18 MS ISLAM: I'm happy to continue.

19 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: You have three sections still to go,  
 20 is that right?

21 MS ISLAM: Yes, I do.

22 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Can you give us any indication of  
 23 how long you think you may need to complete it?

24 MS ISLAM: I think it's going to be about 45 minutes at  
 25 least.

201

1 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: My preference would have been to  
 2 finish it this evening, but I'm a little concerned that  
 3 everyone's had quite a long day, and I have the  
 4 stenographer particularly in mind, so I'm rather  
 5 reluctant to continue for another 45 minutes.

6 Just give me a moment.

7 (Pause)

8 MS ISLAM: Sir, can I suggest that I carry on with section 6  
 9 and complete that now. Section 7 and section 8 we can  
 10 complete at some point during the BSR evidence over the  
 11 next few weeks.

12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: They're relatively self-contained,  
 13 aren't they?

14 MS ISLAM: They are.

15 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, all right. Well, let's do  
 16 that. Section 6 will take you, what, 10 minutes,  
 17 15 minutes?

18 MS ISLAM: About that, yes. Thank you.

19 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, all right, let's continue. We  
 20 will do section 6 and then we'll decide where we put in  
 21 sections 7 and 8 in due course. All right?

22 MS ISLAM: Thank you.

23 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, thank you.

24 MS ISLAM: Turning now to section 6 on public communication.  
 25 A number of witnesses describe poor communication

202

1 about what support was available and that there was  
 2 a need to be proactive in order to receive assistance.

3 Abdulwahab Abdulhamid says {IWS00001919/5–6}:  
 4 "There was a complete lack of information from  
 5 anyone telling us what support was available and as  
 6 a result of this confusion, there was an unequal  
 7 distribution of support as those who found out  
 8 information first were able to receive assistance,  
 9 whilst others, like my family, knew nothing of the  
 10 services were left behind. This particularly affected  
 11 vulnerable people, including myself and my wife who had  
 12 mobility issues and was heavily pregnant. This also  
 13 affected anyone who did not speak English ..."

14 Jenny Fei Quang, who lived in flat 76, says  
 15 {IWS00001552/20}:  
 16 "In the week following the fire, I do not remember  
 17 having any communication with someone from RBKC about  
 18 what services they were providing and where to go for  
 19 help. I received no text messages, calls or emails from  
 20 RBKC. They and the TMO should have had my contact  
 21 details from our records. In the aftermath of the fire,  
 22 I would regularly check RBKC's website to see if they  
 23 had uploaded any news or information but I didn't see  
 24 that they were using this to communicate with survivors  
 25 and residents. Their website wasn't helpful to me."

203

1 Hime Haymanot Gashaw says {IWS00001738/18}:  
 2 "... the only way to try and get the help and  
 3 services was by me contacting the various bodies,  
 4 including RBKC via email and telephone. However, it was  
 5 a nightmare and the last thing that I needed on top of  
 6 all the other stress. They would not action any of our  
 7 pleas for help."

8 Jose Vieiro says {IWS00001798/12}:  
 9 "If my English was not as good, if I did not have  
 10 the support of my friends and family around me, I would  
 11 not have received the amount or quality of the help and  
 12 support that I received. In order to receive  
 13 information about services and support you had to be  
 14 proactive; it was all received through the grapevine and  
 15 by word of mouth. You did not want to feel left out and  
 16 miss something, so within the chaos you had to try."

17 Leanne Mya Jackson Le-Blanc says {IWS00001271/26}:  
 18 "I started to use social media to stay locked in and  
 19 attend meetings. I started to contact people i.e.  
 20 groups of people who were survivors, which seemed to be  
 21 the best way to keep informed. There was so much  
 22 information flying around. It was chaotic. It seemed  
 23 that you had to get out there and obtain information  
 24 yourself, you received little otherwise."  
 25 Contrastingly, some had more positive experiences in

204

1 terms of receiving information.  
 2 Daniel Brendan Griffin, who lived in flat 31 of the  
 3 tower, says {IWS00001573/8}:  
 4 "Generally speaking information was communicated to  
 5 me by phone and email. I think I was generally kept  
 6 informed and if I needed anything the key worker  
 7 helped."  
 8 Mustafa Abdu did not think there was an absence of  
 9 information, but that people were not in a position to  
 10 engage. He says {IWS00001956/14}:  
 11 "I think that there was a lot of information out  
 12 there for residents of the Lancaster West Estate but the  
 13 issue was that because of what had happened and because  
 14 it was so traumatic, people were not in the right frame  
 15 of mind to be able to engage with the information out  
 16 there."  
 17 A number of survivors and residents did not speak  
 18 English as a first language. As a result, they faced  
 19 challenges in accessing support and services.  
 20 Mahboubeh Jamalvatan says {IWS00001724/6-8}:  
 21 "From my point of view other survivors of the fire  
 22 received lots more help than we did, both of a financial  
 23 kind and other support like clothes and food ... I do  
 24 not know how they received more support than we did, was  
 25 it because I did not speak English."

205

1 She continues:  
 2 "I have had significant difficulty in accessing  
 3 things because I do not read English well and the  
 4 facilities for interpreting information into Farsi have  
 5 been very poor. I feel disadvantaged by this. I have  
 6 always had to chase information, rather than it being  
 7 provided to me. I feel that this may mean that I have  
 8 missed out on donations that were given out by other  
 9 charities because of my language problems. I feel it  
 10 has not been fair or equal."  
 11 Hoang Khanh Quang says {IWS00001821/15}:  
 12 "The first time that I recall direct contact from  
 13 them was when I received a letter at the hotel from RBKC  
 14 which was about a week after the fire. This was written  
 15 in English and my daughter had to translate it for me  
 16 ... Even when letters were sent to me in the hotel they  
 17 were written in English and I couldn't read them. When  
 18 there were meetings for residents I didn't have an  
 19 interpreter so I couldn't understand what was being  
 20 said. I would have felt more supported if RBKC had  
 21 arranged an interpreter for me for meetings or had  
 22 letters translated for me. It would have meant I could  
 23 get information directly and not rely on my family and  
 24 friends."  
 25 Maria Jafari says {IWS00001815/16}:

206

1 "Nobody official took steps to understand our  
 2 cultural needs. They also did not understand that not  
 3 all Afghans speak Farsi, so when they bought  
 4 interpreters who spoke Farsi to communicate with my  
 5 mother, they couldn't understand her because she spoke  
 6 Dari."  
 7 A number of walkway residents also experienced  
 8 issues with the language barrier.  
 9 Loubna Belfassi, who lived in Testerton Walk with  
 10 her young daughter and newborn baby, says  
 11 {IWS00001802/11}:  
 12 "My first language is Arabic, although I speak  
 13 a little English. Initially, I found it very difficult  
 14 to get information and help. I would often rely on my  
 15 friends or neighbour to either update or interpret for  
 16 me. Sometimes I was not always comfortable with this,  
 17 especially if I was discussing private and confidential  
 18 information about my personal circumstances. The  
 19 language barrier also meant I found out about support  
 20 and services much later than everyone else, which was  
 21 frustrating. It also meant I did not have the same  
 22 access and support as others because I simply did not  
 23 know what was available. It often felt that I did not  
 24 have a voice and I was not being listened to."  
 25 Zakaria El-Sawy lived in Barandon Walk with his

207

1 wife. Their first language is Arabic. He says  
 2 {IWS00001822/10}:  
 3 "Official communications would always be in English.  
 4 We had to ask constantly for [our daughter] to translate  
 5 the letters into Arabic for us. [She] along with many  
 6 other residents constantly complained to Gold command  
 7 and RBKC about the availability of material in different  
 8 languages as this affected the resident's access to  
 9 vital information. Eventually this began happening but  
 10 it took at least three months for RBKC to reach this  
 11 stage."  
 12 Nadia Elbouti says {IWS00001605/13-14}:  
 13 "No arrangements were made by the council or  
 14 government in the immediate aftermath of the fire to  
 15 accommodate people with special needs ... There were  
 16 also a lot of people like me, who spoke very little or  
 17 no English and had to rely on the assistance of  
 18 volunteers who spoke our languages, just to communicate  
 19 our basic needs to the Council and other organisations.  
 20 I'm not sure what I would have done if the volunteers  
 21 were not there to help, especially as my daughter, in  
 22 her shock, stopped speaking for days after the fire."  
 23 Witnesses share their experiences of how information  
 24 was shared and how support services were communicated to  
 25 them whilst staying in hotels.

208

1 Sener Macit says {IWS00001563/14}:  
 2 "We were not told about a plan for survivors and  
 3 were just left in a hotel room."  
 4 Corinne Simone Jones says {IWS00001548/9}:  
 5 "There was nobody in the hotel that was responsible  
 6 for looking after us; there was no agreed point of  
 7 contact at the hotel. We went to the manager as we  
 8 assume this would be the point of contact. He did not  
 9 know what was going on. It felt like we had nothing,  
 10 that the Council provided us with a hotel room and  
 11 expected us to get on with it."  
 12 Michael Sobieszczak says {IWS00001562/13}:  
 13 "Representatives from RBKC were sometimes [in the  
 14 hotel] in the beginning as I remember, but this was  
 15 a bit hit and miss and they didn't always have the  
 16 information that you really needed, so frequently  
 17 couldn't answer our questions. After a time we stopped  
 18 engaging with them because of this and because of the  
 19 issues that we had experienced with the hotel room."  
 20 Wintom Temesgen lived in flat 26 of the tower with  
 21 his partner. He says {IWS00001800/21}:  
 22 "Initially we did not receive anything but later we  
 23 would get a leaflet posted through our hotel door giving  
 24 an update (weekly). However, as there were only three  
 25 [or] four families in our hotel from the tower, I think

209

1 we were forgotten, and we did not receive anything for  
 2 some time."  
 3 Gitiara Pahlavani says {IWS00001244/14}:  
 4 "We moved to the Crowne Plaza on Cromwell Road. It  
 5 was quieter there ... it was very quiet in terms of the  
 6 support that was available at the hotel. No one came to  
 7 the hotel to let us know what was going on, and I found  
 8 I knew less and less what was going on. I felt like  
 9 I fell off everyone's radar. I was lonely and found  
 10 myself a bit 'out of the loop' as a result."  
 11 Tiago Alves lived in flat 105 with his family. He  
 12 says {IWS00001749/13}:  
 13 "My dad and I went to the meeting [at  
 14 Rugby Portobello] ... we discussed what steps we should  
 15 take to ensure that survivors were being properly  
 16 supported, given the failings of provision and  
 17 communication that we had already experienced. We  
 18 started talking about how little was being done for  
 19 people. It was all so muddled up and everything was so  
 20 confusing. There were rumours and confusion and  
 21 uncertainty when what we needed was clarity ... There  
 22 was already a large paper list of former Tower residents  
 23 and bereaved people at the Rugby Portobello ... someone  
 24 suggested that we should build on this list ... This was  
 25 the beginning of the formation of the Grenfell United

210

1 WhatsApp group."  
 2 Antonio Roncolato says {IWS00001774/22}:  
 3 "There was no leadership or co-ordination from  
 4 either RBKC or Central Government, which led to the  
 5 bereaved and residents establishing Grenfell United  
 6 (GU). GU was about supporting one another and ensuring  
 7 that we all had the same information and were kept up to  
 8 date. I found the GU newsletters really helpful. It  
 9 was also about us having a united voice and ensuring  
 10 that we were listened to."  
 11 Sharon Laci says {IWS00001831/9}:  
 12 "Grenfell United gave us a voice and was an  
 13 important source of information, especially through  
 14 their newsletters, which kept us updated about what  
 15 support was available. I felt Grenfell United worked  
 16 really hard to support us all."  
 17 Ahmed Elgwahry lost his mother, Mariem Elgwahry, and  
 18 his sister Eslah Elgwahry, who lived in flat 196 of the  
 19 tower. He says {IWS00001757/11}:  
 20 "... I wanted answers in quiet and for the bereaved  
 21 to be spoken to. There seemed no clear way for this to  
 22 happen and so after discussions with other affected  
 23 bereaved families, I started a WhatsApp group of  
 24 bereaved people. The aim was for the bereaved to speak  
 25 to one another and share information ... the group

211

1 continues to this day and provides a chance for us to  
 2 share information and experiences."  
 3 Walkway residents did not receive information about  
 4 whether they could return to their homes.  
 5 Agnes Murray says {IWS00001639/8}:  
 6 "I found it hard to access information about  
 7 services and support ... I feel it would have been  
 8 easier to access information if we had been in a hotel.  
 9 For people that were back in the Walkways there was not  
 10 much information. I went to various centres that had  
 11 opened to try and find out information. I had to go  
 12 looking for it myself."  
 13 Hélène Hartley says {IWS00001257/13}:  
 14 "After the first 24 hours and within the next weeks,  
 15 there was still nothing from the Council. There was no  
 16 information on their website ... I did expect to find  
 17 information about whether my building was reopened ...  
 18 It was a question of walking around and seeing if  
 19 I could get in one door or another."  
 20 Effi Stergiopoulou, a resident of Hurstway Walk,  
 21 says {IWS00001586/11}:  
 22 "... I tried to ring RBKC for an update as to  
 23 whether it was safe to return home, and to establish the  
 24 situation with evacuation. I got through to someone who  
 25 was obviously just manning the phone. I was told that

212

1 they were not able to give me any of this information  
 2 because the Council were due to do a press release ...  
 3 I could not believe that the council seemed more  
 4 concerned with the press release than actually helping  
 5 and guiding those that had been impacted."  
 6 Maria Gil says {IWS00001679/13}:  
 7 "The Council would not come to tell us about the  
 8 services and support available. They would not  
 9 communicate with us at all. They left us on our own to  
 10 find information ... If you did not get there on time,  
 11 then that was it, they would say they ran out of funds.  
 12 I felt that it was like a little rat race."  
 13 Sir, that concludes section 6.  
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right. Would that be a good  
 15 point at which to call a halt for the day?  
 16 MS ISLAM: It would, thank you.  
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: And we'll find a suitable moment to  
 18 complete this exercise where we can.  
 19 MS ISLAM: Yes, sir. Thank you very much.  
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right. Thank you very much  
 21 indeed.  
 22 All right. Well, I think it's time we called a halt  
 23 for today. We'll break there. We'll resume, please, at  
 24 10 o'clock tomorrow, when we shall hear further evidence  
 25 from --

213

1 MS ISLAM: Mr Hisam Choucair.  
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Yes -- those who were directly  
 3 affected by the fire.  
 4 Yes, thank you very much. 10 o'clock tomorrow,  
 5 then. Thank you.  
 6 (4.40 pm)  
 7 (The hearing adjourned until 10 am  
 8 on Wednesday, 13 April 2022)

214

1 INDEX  
 2 MR KARIM MUSSILHY (sworn) .....9  
 3 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY .....9  
 4 Thematic Summary of BSR Evidence .....108

215

216

















158:4,7,13,14 201:18,21,24 202:8,14,18,22,24 213:16,19,214:1 <b>much (60)</b> 8:7,24 9:2,14,16,24 13:5,10,20 20:11 23:22 26:17 35:17 41:13 46:18 49:13 57:7,12,21 63:14 65:14 68:9 71:2 78:13 79:25 83:11 101:4 104:18 105:20 106:1,24 107:3,11,14,17,20,24 108:10,15,16 116:1 154:5 158:8 160:15 163:7 164:6 168:3 171:6 174:17 182:7 189:11,17 195:14 199:22 204:21 207:20 212:10 213:19,20 214:4 <b>muddled (1)</b> 210:19 <b>multiple (1)</b> 144:12 <b>mum (12)</b> 12:7 13:4 46:19 58:5 111:22 118:13 136:1 137:3,5 172:25 173:4 200:14 <b>nums (1)</b> 150:15 <b>murphy (5)</b> 194:19,19 195:19 198:20,20 <b>murray (2)</b> 175:25 212:5 <b>muslim (4)</b> 6:10 128:3 143:3,24 <b>musilhy (12)</b> 9:12,15,24 57:1,18,25 102:2 104:19 106:5,11,25 215:2 <b>musilhy (1)</b> 105:4 <b>must (8)</b> 25:11 67:17,18 87:20 97:8 107:12 167:14 198:16 <b>mustafa (2)</b> 137:25 205:8 <b>mya (3)</b> 117:18 167:8 204:17 <b>myself (19)</b> 29:3 31:14 38:22 52:1 66:5,8 67:17 85:9,10 89:20 119:8 131:19 155:17 170:22 191:4 195:15 203:11 210:10 212:12	103:13,14 105:24 107:9 110:22 126:16 143:11 163:8 173:14 178:7 183:24 201:23 203:2 <b>needed (46)</b> 24:9 35:12,13 63:17 64:2,2 68:16 73:1 96:10 98:9,18 116:6 119:11,12 122:10 124:25 128:18 132:2,12,16 134:10 137:7 142:17 155:13 157:14,15 160:19 162:5 163:21 164:5,6 167:12 168:4,22 170:12,13 172:8 174:15 176:17 179:6 180:10 186:9 204:5 205:6 209:16 210:21 <b>needing (1)</b> 160:11 <b>needs (15)</b> 121:3 128:24 138:22 141:14,15,21 142:23 143:24 144:2 151:13 153:10 183:11 207:2 208:15,19 <b>negative (2)</b> 124:5 200:2 <b>neighbour (3)</b> 18:8 53:6 207:15 <b>neighbours (7)</b> 69:9 100:22 151:1 152:21 157:1 192:18,21 <b>nephew (4)</b> 137:21 185:16,19 201:9 <b>never (50)</b> 14:22 17:11 22:16 26:15,16 27:6 31:18 34:7 48:2,3 53:1 54:14,14 55:6 56:21 61:22 62:9 64:3,3 65:3 71:24 74:19 78:15 81:3 90:15,23 91:3,4 93:1,1 102:14,15 104:8,14,15 106:15,20 133:25 147:3 153:14 154:24 166:9 168:10 169:24 171:2 182:18,19 191:11 197:13 198:22 <b>newborn (1)</b> 207:10 <b>news (19)</b> 49:20,25 50:9,10 53:23 54:3 62:23 63:20 64:5 65:6 74:1 82:16,18 195:4 197:3 198:23 199:6,19 203:23 <b>newsletters (2)</b> 211:8,14 <b>next (34)</b> 4:25 8:25 14:7 30:1 42:1 43:24 47:5,5,19 53:8 58:1 60:23 67:25 73:15 77:15,15 92:14 95:13 99:17,17 97:12 108:3 113:24 119:10 126:16 127:10 130:5 131:25 133:7 148:11 185:15 186:2 202:11 212:14 <b>nextdoor (1)</b> 152:21 <b>nhs (4)</b> 122:5 169:6,9 170:7 <b>nice (3)</b> 140:18 178:3 183:23 <b>nicholas (2)</b> 139:4 192:10 <b>niece (1)</b> 201:8 <b>night (28)</b> 14:7,10 15:9 52:2 70:2 72:15 73:14 80:8 81:18 87:12 111:6 115:12 118:1 125:15 128:14 129:8 132:11,15,24 133:6 136:2 148:3,10 150:16 154:4 175:19 188:23 193:11 <b>nightmare (3)</b> 143:2 182:14 204:5 <b>nights (3)</b> 127:17 144:16 157:2 <b>nina (1)</b> 118:5 <b>nobody (24)</b> 22:10 26:9 30:17,20 32:12 35:15 36:17 39:7 41:14 66:15 73:12 75:10,10 78:6 95:2 101:14 112:24 126:5 147:16 153:7 167:6 191:3 207:1 209:5 <b>nod (1)</b> 10:9 <b>noha (4)</b> 12:7 49:18 94:21 186:12 <b>non (1)</b> 188:25	<b>none (6)</b> 36:17,18 40:17 78:8 185:7 189:23 <b>nonexistence (1)</b> 73:19 <b>nonexistent (4)</b> 74:10 83:24 102:10 178:5 <b>nongrenfell (1)</b> 156:13 <b>nontower (1)</b> 156:24 <b>norbert (1)</b> 155:8 <b>normally (1)</b> 105:1 <b>north (2)</b> 132:19 146:24 <b>northeast (1)</b> 44:4 <b>note (3)</b> 134:2,7 201:15 <b>notes (2)</b> 69:19 153:5 <b>nothing (29)</b> 30:22 34:24 36:12 39:7 41:18 59:7 65:20 73:16 77:18 80:20 81:15,16,18 83:13 91:25 98:13 121:1 122:7 124:12 125:18 154:12 163:5 171:5 185:11 189:15 191:18 203:9 209:9 212:15 <b>notice (2)</b> 134:6,9 <b>noticed (1)</b> 117:8 <b>notices (1)</b> 120:23 <b>notting (3)</b> 6:8 113:12 187:1 <b>novell (1)</b> 152:2 <b>november (2)</b> 101:22,23 <b>nowak (1)</b> 190:9 <b>nowhere (6)</b> 26:2 69:10 72:16 131:20 150:18 187:21 <b>number (67)</b> 2:17 3:11 4:4,8,11 5:2 6:5 12:2,9 24:25 29:11,19,20 33:22 40:6,16,16 48:6 53:25 54:4 55:23 56:13,16 63:14,15 68:19 85:5 108:6,25 113:6 128:20 136:19 137:11 140:21 142:25 150:17 153:11,21 154:19 166:13 167:21 171:3 172:10 174:1,3,13 180:22 182:2 184:23 187:3,24 191:21 195:6,9,17,20,24 196:2,8,10 197:5,7,11,12 202:25 205:17 207:7 <b>numbers (4)</b> 7:22 51:8 103:22 196:25 <b>nur (1)</b> 124:19 <b>nura (1)</b> 173:6 <b>nursery (1)</b> 75:8	<b>offers (3)</b> 166:17 167:24 173:10 <b>office (3)</b> 123:12 136:18 193:24 <b>officer (23)</b> 33:3,7 39:15,18,21 40:4 54:2 75:21 93:24 134:17,20 151:24 154:8 177:2 194:14 199:15,23 200:4,5,13 201:5,11,13 <b>officers (13)</b> 8:21 81:1,22 83:12 95:11,19 96:3,22 147:8 148:19 152:23 184:20 199:12 <b>offices (1)</b> 145:10 <b>official (21)</b> 4:20 5:20,22 19:12 24:11 26:1,9 30:18 62:2 69:25 118:21 120:7 165:3 188:10 194:7 197:19,25 198:1 200:9 207:1 208:3 <b>officially (2)</b> 27:15 198:22 <b>officials (4)</b> 41:22 88:22 89:8 119:15 <b>often (7)</b> 139:20 177:21 178:25 182:6 196:22 207:14,23 <b>oh (3)</b> 16:22 41:8 54:20 <b>okay (19)</b> 10:11,11 26:13,14 34:9 35:22 57:6,9 61:16,17 78:20 90:22 97:11 98:7 105:17 106:7 117:15 167:16 191:12 <b>old (4)</b> 13:8 154:16,17,17 <b>oldest (1)</b> 38:23 <b>oluwaseun (1)</b> 159:11 <b>olwa (1)</b> 165:3 <b>omar (4)</b> 119:1 180:24 198:10 200:3 <b>once (9)</b> 19:2 24:24 26:20 72:23 106:15 121:7 182:17 185:13 193:17 <b>ones (26)</b> 41:24 47:8 49:7 59:4 65:15 80:4 90:14 100:7 103:7,8 111:9,15 114:5 117:7 172:10 182:19 184:18,24 185:13 186:4 187:25 189:7,12 196:13 197:18 198:8 <b>onto (1)</b> 135:9 <b>open (4)</b> 46:7 116:3,23 117:1 <b>opened (16)</b> 4:8,9 5:3,9,18 19:3 41:2,21 112:1 113:19 115:17,21 116:7 118:20 187:4 212:11 <b>opening (1)</b> 6:1 <b>operating (5)</b> 24:14 25:8 76:20,23 77:10 <b>operator (2)</b> 54:5 197:6 <b>opportunity (1)</b> 11:18 <b>oppressive (1)</b> 113:24 <b>option (3)</b> 147:6 155:7,16 <b>oral (1)</b> 9:11 <b>orchestrate (1)</b> 79:22 <b>ordeal (1)</b> 184:13 <b>order (10)</b> 14:9 25:19 75:20 88:5 101:1 121:3 140:3,17 203:2 204:12 <b>ordered (1)</b> 140:5 <b>organic (1)</b> 100:22 <b>organically (2)</b> 100:10 101:19 <b>organisation (5)</b> 59:25 125:7,24 187:9 196:24 <b>organisations (4)</b> 89:8 123:11 164:25 208:19 <b>organise (8)</b> 21:12 30:20 68:8 73:11 79:22 124:24 153:6 193:1 <b>organised (4)</b> 99:15 153:3 179:6 186:1 <b>organising (6)</b> 23:21 43:16 72:20 100:4 101:9 125:2 <b>ortiz (2)</b> 140:12 160:22 <b>others (18)</b> 68:14 88:15 99:21 104:22 110:24 115:6	124:15 139:22 147:10 152:6 174:17 175:21 177:6,20 186:3 200:2 203:9 207:22 <b>otherwise (2)</b> 198:17 204:24 <b>otmane (1)</b> 183:14 <b>ounce (1)</b> 51:9 <b>ourselves (3)</b> 2:14 179:7 192:23 <b>outline (1)</b> 169:3 <b>outlines (1)</b> 142:16 <b>outset (1)</b> 180:2 <b>outside (27)</b> 20:20 21:15 22:1 23:7 42:6,9,14 43:13 45:2 60:13 62:7 75:7 77:1 79:9 93:21 104:22 112:11,14 115:20 125:18,25 129:5 130:5,7 148:19 169:13 198:15 <b>over (23)</b> 7:13 17:14 20:6 23:1 39:10 40:6 52:24,24 54:17 59:2 65:3 78:4,4 101:18 107:13 138:7 148:24 151:21 155:1 159:7 181:9 193:17 202:10 <b>overlay (1)</b> 2:21 <b>overlooked (1)</b> 189:10 <b>overnight (2)</b> 128:14 148:17 <b>overwhelmed (4)</b> 79:2 170:23 177:11 181:15 <b>overwhelming (2)</b> 20:12 194:9 <b>own (16)</b> 13:18 38:6 40:1 62:3 67:21 68:2 69:10 140:8 143:15,18 150:12 159:4 168:23 192:14,17 213:9 <b>owned (1)</b> 121:22 <b>oyster (2)</b> 130:9,11	<b>parts (4)</b> 18:4 48:8 60:15 128:4 <b>pass (3)</b> 76:23 77:11 177:12 <b>passed (4)</b> 14:5 80:21 96:20 172:14 <b>passing (1)</b> 6:22 <b>passport (2)</b> 73:9 122:9 <b>passports (1)</b> 124:11 <b>past (4)</b> 15:10 32:14 38:10 63:12 <b>patel (1)</b> 178:23 <b>patels (1)</b> 130:25 <b>path (1)</b> 101:20 <b>patient (1)</b> 184:8 <b>patronising (1)</b> 162:12 <b>paul (1)</b> 155:8 <b>paolos (1)</b> 139:14 <b>pause (20)</b> 2:1,13 3:7,8,25 4:1 7:17,24 8:11,18 9:3,19 11:7,12 57:11 105:22 111:2 158:17,18 202:7 <b>pausing (1)</b> 2:24 <b>pay (4)</b> 103:25 140:3 141:12 163:19 <b>paying (2)</b> 133:19 140:4 <b>payments (3)</b> 140:25 160:2,4 pen (1) 29:5 <b>people (284)</b> 3:1 4:10 5:5 8:4 16:6,7,23 17:3,5,6 18:3,5,17 19:18 20:6,12,17,18,23,23,25 21:1,4,10,11,14 22:1,3,16,17,19 23:7,13,15,23 24:6,15,17,22 25:5,17,22 26:4,5,22 28:7,11,22 29:15,17 30:15,19 31:11,20 32:2,3,12,14,14,15 33:14 34:8 36:2,10,11,16 37:4,21 40:20,25 41:1,3,4,6,9,9,11,22 42:7,9,14,18 43:15,18,20 44:24 45:2,11,12 46:23 47:4,15 48:5,6,8,16 49:10 51:2,23,24 52:6 58:15,17,25 60:3,9,15,16,21 61:9 62:4,6,6,14 63:7,11 64:8,19,25 65:10,18 68:15,19,20,22 69:1 71:11 72:14,19,22 73:3,4,17,19,23,24 74:7 75:9,10 76:1,17 77:1,2,7 79:2,13,16,21 80:2,20 83:13 87:11,13,22 89:12,23,25 90:3,13 92:6 93:14 94:5,12,15,17,19,19,20,20 96:15 97:3 98:20 99:3,20 100:10 101:18 102:11,12,13,13 103:13,14,20,24 105:9 106:18,22 111:8,14,17,18 113:20,25 114:3,16,20,22 115:6,6 116:2,5,13,18 117:6,9,12,12,13 118:10,11 119:16,20 120:1,23 121:2,14 123:16 124:13,25 125:2 126:1,24 127:15,20 128:8,13 132:3 134:6,8 135:7 138:8 145:20 148:15 149:1 153:22 157:14 160:12,15 162:19 163:7 164:14 168:19 170:12 177:18 178:21 179:5,14 181:15,24 184:9,10,23 185:22,25 186:18,21 187:21 189:5,12 190:15 191:25 192:1,3,4,5,9,13,18,23 194:4 195:22 197:1,4 203:11 204:19,20 205:9,14 208:15,16 210:19,23 211:24 212:9 <b>peoples (2)</b> 51:22 88:5	<b>per (1)</b> 177:14 <b>perfect (1)</b> 84:5 <b>perhaps (18)</b> 2:2 3:10 4:5,15 5:6,16,25 7:22,25 8:3,6,7,9,12 22:6 26:10 41:22 145:18 <b>period (7)</b> 12:8,10 95:25 96:6 133:21 155:24 181:7 <b>perished (9)</b> 114:9 119:3 133:24 136:25 139:14 162:22 176:13 188:3 198:8 <b>permanent (2)</b> 139:18 183:18 <b>person (24)</b> 10:5 24:18 38:23 40:17 45:3 54:2 56:8 59:6 62:23 63:24 69:4 92:6 109:24 121:4 122:6,8 130:21 134:3 153:5 171:25 181:16 184:11,12 196:7 <b>personal (4)</b> 38:7 40:1 62:12 207:18 <b>personally (3)</b> 20:21 27:25 102:8 <b>persons (1)</b> 166:1 <b>pertinent (2)</b> 8:8 110:11 <b>peter (1)</b> 198:20 <b>petrified (1)</b> 112:14 <b>pets (1)</b> 151:23 <b>phase (3)</b> 2:10 9:12 110:4 <b>phone (18)</b> 15:3,7 24:2 48:4,10 49:18 52:6 73:9 80:14 81:6 95:6 149:7 154:19 173:4 182:3 197:6 205:5 212:25 <b>phoned (1)</b> 194:25 <b>phones (1)</b> 60:18 <b>photo (1)</b> 58:20 <b>photograph (1)</b> 58:12 <b>photographs (5)</b> 84:19,21,22 85:17 198:11 <b>photos (4)</b> 85:5,6,7 <b>physical (2)</b> 64:15 156:16 <b>physically (2)</b> 31:14 85:8 <b>pick (2)</b> 58:10 97:21 <b>picking (1)</b> 60:18 <b>picture (6)</b> 15:1 37:10 59:6 86:13 192:17 198:17 <b>pictures (3)</b> 63:12 85:11,14 <b>piece (9)</b> 29:5 33:22 54:18 69:8 73:21 75:3 162:4 192:12,17 <b>pieces (3)</b> 28:19 72:25 73:7 <b>piecing (1)</b> 192:22 <b>pillar (1)</b> 139:5 <b>piled (1)</b> 79:9 <b>piles (1)</b> 117:11 <b>pily (1)</b> 139:5 <b>itches (1)</b> 12:16 <b>place (46)</b> 1:18 17:22 19:8,15,24 20:4,5,6 29:8 31:21 32:8,9 42:13 44:22 45:8 60:14 61:2,17 62:9,10 65:21 77:10,13 78:14,19 84:2 89:22 90:12 99:4,21 102:12 103:24 106:22 108:19 118:16 121:10 122:1 127:19 145:21 146:2 155:1 157:21 185:23 187:9 189:5 190:14 <b>placebo (1)</b> 180:11 <b>placed (15)</b> 69:18 131:15 132:8 138:1 141:18 144:5 146:16,23 149:18 154:5,22 155:4 170:3 188:4 193:2 <b>places (16)</b> 16:7 19:5 20:14 26:21 27:2 34:18 37:25 40:15 43:6 45:7 51:1 77:9 78:20 106:21 146:20 <b>placing (1)</b> 139:2 <b>plan (8)</b> 48:13,18 58:19 150:14 153:1 180:14 187:9 209:2 <b>planned (1)</b> 102:16 <b>planning (1)</b> 91:4 <b>plans (1)</b> 47:19
---	---	---	--	--	--	--











30 (4) 31:24 39:12 130:8  
 177:14  
 300 (2) 141:3 163:11  
 308 (1) 158:10  
 31 (1) 205:2  
 32 (1) 40:23  
 325 (3) 158:6,9,12  
 33 (1) 47:21  
 34 (1) 48:11  
 35 (1) 49:17  
 37 (3) 53:17,18 94:17  
 38 (1) 53:22  
 3pm (2) 148:14 157:8  
 3rd (3) 121:16 135:16 139:25

9

9 (7) 53:16 59:15 139:25  
 164:16 182:16 215:2,3  
 900 (1) 19:24  
 94 (1) 145:8  
 9am (2) 112:14 157:3  
 9th (4) 74:12 129:10 141:25  
 169:16

4

4 (10) 5:13 6:4 109:10  
 110:4,9 115:20 129:1  
 151:24 166:10 182:25  
 42 (2) 58:9 60:24  
 43 (4) 61:25 113:14 167:17  
 181:25  
 430am (1) 113:4  
 44 (2) 114:24 123:18  
 440 (1) 214:6  
 45 (5) 65:8 67:20,24 201:24  
 202:5  
 46 (1) 122:17  
 48 (2) 69:15,15  
 49 (1) 71:16  
 4pm (1) 148:14  
 4th (3) 74:11 111:11 130:14

5

5 (5) 109:11 138:15 184:4,15  
 193:16  
 50 (1) 164:4  
 500 (4) 141:8 162:13,23  
 163:18  
 5000 (1) 161:1  
 51 (2) 78:25 137:20  
 52 (1) 112:16  
 56 (2) 81:19 130:25  
 57 (1) 88:19  
 59 (1) 91:7  
 5pm (1) 151:24  
 5th (1) 117:2

6

6 (15) 5:7 12:25 14:14,18  
 21:22 28:3 109:13 117:17  
 167:8 201:16  
 202:8,16,20,24 213:13  
 60 (1) 92:1  
 62 (1) 141:24  
 63 (1) 82:10  
 64 (2) 84:19 129:10  
 65 (2) 95:15 169:16  
 6pm (1) 148:14  
 6yr (1) 154:17

7

7 (6) 5:7 109:14 118:6  
 121:16 202:9,21  
 70 (1) 97:22  
 71 (3) 99:6 164:23 165:4  
 715 (1) 15:25  
 72 (2) 89:25 170:1  
 720 (2) 15:24 16:1  
 76 (2) 133:1 203:14  
 79 (1) 94:15  
 7am (1) 193:16  
 7pm (1) 136:18  
 7th (3) 113:15 114:24 122:17

8

8 (6) 59:15 109:15 118:6  
 182:16 202:9,21  
 83 (1) 159:19  
 84 (1) 127:6  
 86 (1) 127:22  
 8th (3) 74:12 131:1 137:20