



GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY RT

Day 266

April 14, 2022

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1 Thursday, 14 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 continue hearing
 5 evidence from those who were directly involved in the
 6 fire and its aftermath.
 7 Yes, Ms Islam.
 8 MS ISLAM: Good morning, Mr Chairman. Can I call
 9 Mrs El—Ogbani, please.
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.
 11 MRS MOUNA EL—OGBANI (sworn)
 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much. Now, please
 13 sit down, make yourself comfortable.
 14 THE WITNESS: Sure, thank you.
 15 (Pause)
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right?
 17 Yes, Ms Islam.
 18 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY
 19 MS ISLAM: Thank you for attending today to assist
 20 the Inquiry with its investigations.
 21 By way of introduction, please keep your voice up,
 22 so we can all hear you, and so that the transcriber can
 23 hear and capture your answers clearly.
 24 A. Sure.
 25 Q. It also helps not to nod or shake your head, but to say

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1 "yes" or "no", so we can capture that on the transcript.
 2 A. Sure.
 3 Q. If any of my questions are unclear, please tell me and
 4 I will ask them in a different way.
 5 A. Sure.
 6 Q. And I appreciate that this may be a difficult process
 7 for you; if at any point you need a break, please let us
 8 know and we will accommodate that.
 9 A. Okay, sure.
 10 Q. Is that okay?
 11 A. Yeah. Sorry, yeah.
 12 Q. You have made two statements to the Inquiry.
 13 The first statement is dated 15 May 2018, and if we
 14 could please go to {IWS00000844}, and turn to page 11,
 15 please, is that your signature?
 16 A. Yes, it is.
 17 Q. You've made a second statement to the Inquiry dated
 18 29 February 2020. If we could go to that, please, at
 19 {IWS00001746}, and turn to page 22, is that your
 20 signature?
 21 A. Yes, it is.
 22 Q. Have you had the opportunity to read both of these
 23 statements recently?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. And can you confirm that the contents are true to the

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1 best of your knowledge?
 2 A. Yes, they are.
 3 Q. Thank you.
 4 Dealing now with some background matters, at the
 5 time of the fire, you lived at flat 85 on the 11th floor
 6 with your husband and three children; is that right?
 7 A. Yes, it is, yeah.
 8 Q. And you had lived there since 2006; is that correct?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. And you had grown up in the area because your parents
 11 lived in Testerton Walk; is that right?
 12 A. Yeah, I've grown up there, yeah.
 13 Q. Thank you. As such, is it right to say that you've had
 14 strong connections not only with the tower but the wider
 15 community?
 16 A. Yes, because I lived in the area. So I lived there for
 17 about 20 years, 27 years. So I was — I came to the UK
 18 when I was 15, so my childhood, my adolescence, is in
 19 the area, in the community, and I've also worked in the
 20 community as well. So, yeah, it's my home.
 21 Q. Thank you.
 22 A. Thank you.
 23 Q. I'm now going to ask you some questions about the early
 24 hours on 14 June.
 25 A. Yeah.

3

1 Q. Now, we know from CCTV, which showed the times which
 2 residents left the building, that you exited the tower
 3 at about 1.28; is that right?
 4 A. Yes, yes, definitely.
 5 Q. Once you had escaped the tower, how would you describe
 6 the scene?
 7 A. Oh, it was really horrific, very stressful. When I left
 8 the tower, I was with my children and my husband. When
 9 we first opened the door, it was thick black smoke. So
 10 I thought initially when my friend called me and said it
 11 was — you know, the fire was approaching my floor, when
 12 I opened the door and I saw the thick black smoke,
 13 I thought that's it, we're late, we're going to die. So
 14 I'm a person who's very emotional, so I was panicking
 15 and starting to cry, and then my husband looked at me
 16 and he said, "Let's try again, just calm down", so
 17 I don't affect the children as well.
 18 So, yeah, we left the tower — we left the house
 19 that time. I had my neighbours — my Afghani neighbour
 20 was in the corridor, so I presumed — I thought that,
 21 you know, he knew what's happening, that they're going
 22 to follow us. I mean, I did find out later on that he
 23 didn't make it.
 24 So, yeah, when we escaped and when we went
 25 downstairs, when we came out of the tower, we didn't

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1 know where to go, because we're never taught where is
 2 the meeting point when there is an emergency. So we
 3 just went out, and then I turned around to look at the
 4 fire. So it was like -- it's like when you light up
 5 a -- with a candle, it just was zooming up, and I was
 6 like, "Oh my goodness, what is going on?"
 7 Because we had the kids and we didn't know where to
 8 go, and my mum lives in Testerton, which is like just
 9 two minutes away, like just had to take the stairs,
 10 I took my children. So we went to my mum's house. She
 11 wasn't there that evening, she was at my auntie's, in
 12 Orpington, but my brother was there. So when he opened
 13 the door, bless him, his face was white, because he
 14 could see the tower from my mum's balcony, and I think
 15 he was already out there. So when I opened, he was
 16 like, "Thank God you're here". So we rushed to put my
 17 children, and then I came out -- back out again, and
 18 then -- yeah, just to watch with the walkways.
 19 Q. Yes.
 20 A. So, yeah, we didn't know where to go. Luckily I had my
 21 parents, you know, my parents' house was nearby, so
 22 I took the children there, but eventually we did have to
 23 evacuate after as well.
 24 Q. You mentioned your brother; did your brother live with
 25 your mother --

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1 A. Yeah.
 2 Q. -- with his wife and child?
 3 A. Yeah, my brother was born in Testerton, so, yeah, he
 4 lived with my mum after he married as well, and he had
 5 a little baby with him at that time, so yeah.
 6 Q. You have just touched on this, but is it right that you
 7 were evacuated from Testerton Walk after about
 8 20 minutes of you arriving there?
 9 A. Yes, because what happened is when we -- when I went to
 10 Testerton -- when I went to my mum's house and I left --
 11 I went out by the walkways, there is the tower just as
 12 you come out of the doors of Testerton, so I stood there
 13 to watch what's going on, and there were police there as
 14 well and the neighbours, and we could hear our
 15 neighbours, you know, shouting for help. One of them
 16 was pulling the white sheet, so he wanted, you know, to
 17 come down, and we were telling him, "Please don't do
 18 it".
 19 And then the police came, like, say, 15/20 minutes
 20 later, because they thought the building was going to
 21 collapse, so they wanted to evacuate everyone. So that
 22 was another evacuation I had to go through. So I went
 23 to my sister and I said, "Just grab anything and we need
 24 to leave".
 25 So by, like, 1.45, we are by, like, Silchester Road,

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1 if I'm not mistaken. So we're just there with the
 2 neighbours, everyone not knowing where do we need to go,
 3 children and -- you know, the time to stop the eating,
 4 because it was Ramadan, and there was nothing, you know.
 5 It's just chaotic, was really chaotic.
 6 Q. When you were outside, did you see any officials from
 7 the TMO or RBKC or anyone else providing information or
 8 signposting support?
 9 A. You mean as I just came out of the -- being evacuated
 10 from Testerton?
 11 Q. Yes, so you're on the scene outside.
 12 A. No, there was police cars everywhere, there was
 13 fire brigades, and a lot of -- you know, the whole
 14 community. Everybody was out, you know. There was
 15 a lot of cars. There was no one -- you know, even the
 16 police, they were not there to give us evidence -- to
 17 give us help; the police were just there to evacuate
 18 people and get them as much as they can out of the area.
 19 So where are we going to go? We didn't -- or who are
 20 you going to turn up to? So there was no one to -- it
 21 was just basically the community and our neighbours
 22 telling us, "Let's go this way, let's go this way, let's
 23 go this way".
 24 But, you know, I had my friend nearby, so she's the
 25 one I end up going to, because the children wanted the

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1 toilet, they didn't -- where are we going to go? We
 2 don't know. So that was my only, like, place to go for
 3 that time.
 4 Q. You have just touched on this, is it right that you
 5 arrived at your friend's house at about 2.30 in the
 6 morning?
 7 A. Yes. We went -- from Silchester I'd gone through
 8 Latimer Road Station. We saw a little girl, like, she
 9 was covered in aluminium, I think she might have been
 10 burnt, you know, with the Fire Brigade man, and then as
 11 I passed the Latimer Road Station, I can look up the
 12 tower, and that's the side of where my flat is, and I've
 13 counted the floors, and actually I can see that there
 14 was, you know, fire on my sitting room at the time. So
 15 that was really -- you know, I was just, you know,
 16 saying, "Thank God I left, I didn't stay". But even
 17 though it's -- it was really difficult for the children
 18 to see. They didn't -- you know, you think you're
 19 coming out of a horror film. It wasn't -- you didn't
 20 know what to expect. And as you're passing by, some of
 21 my dad's friend gave us water or food for the children,
 22 and then -- yeah, and then end up going to Walmer Road.
 23 That's where my friend lives. So, yeah.
 24 Q. Is it right that you stayed at your friend's house and,
 25 a bit later on in the morning, at around 10 o'clock, you

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1 and your family went to the Rugby Club because you'd
 2 heard that there was support there for people to get
 3 help?
 4 A. Yeah, I stayed at my friend's house, Mrs Amina Ladoul.
 5 She's the one who actually called me on the night and
 6 told me to leave, so, I mean, I'll never forget that.
 7 But, yeah, she opened her house for us that night. The
 8 children were able to stay there. Me and her, we didn't
 9 sleep at all, we just kept watching through her balcony.
 10 And then also one of her neighbours is a Turkish family
 11 who had her sister and brother, Mrs Macit, I think, they
 12 were still stuck in the building, so they hadn't
 13 evacuated that time, so she was more stressed. So
 14 literally we went downstairs by the door and just sat on
 15 the street, like, trying to calm her down and trying to
 16 see if there is anything we help, and that's where we
 17 heard that everybody will be going to the Rugby Club,
 18 which was a club that my children used for their support
 19 for education through their school, so I think that was
 20 the place, like a rest centre for us to go.
 21 So, yeah, I said to my friend we would go there for
 22 10 o'clock, so just to see, yeah.
 23 Q. When you got to the Rugby Club, is it right that you
 24 wrote down your name and the names of your family on
 25 a board that was up on the wall with your flat number?

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1 A. Yes. When we got there, there was a lot of us, a lot of
 2 survivors, a lot of -- some of the bereaved. I saw, you
 3 know, the family of El-Wahabis. They were looking for
 4 their loved ones. They didn't know whether their uncle
 5 has escaped, or, you know, our neighbour, we don't know
 6 what's happening. So we were told -- I mean, we sat
 7 there and then there was a -- like a long white sheet,
 8 that's where we -- you know, you go and put your name
 9 down and the flat, just for people to know who had made
 10 it out, who hasn't. So, yeah, just ...
 11 Q. Did you understand this to be a list organised by the
 12 community rather than an official list by RBKC or the
 13 TMO?
 14 A. Definitely, it was a list by the -- I think it's the
 15 Rugby Club. So, yeah, there was no officials at that
 16 time, no one.
 17 Q. Okay.
 18 In your statement, you say that you and your family
 19 were at the Rugby Club for over 12 hours that day.
 20 A. Yeah.
 21 Q. Why were you there for such a long time on that day?
 22 A. We were there because there was no -- we didn't know
 23 where else to go, so -- and that's the place where all
 24 of us, all of the survivors and bereaved, we were
 25 gathered there. That was -- we were there because we

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1 don't know where to go. So we were there to support
 2 each other, to find out what's going to happen next, or,
 3 you know, what is going to happen to us, where we're
 4 going to be, because we've got no home, nothing, we
 5 don't know what will happen.
 6 I had my children's school -- Mr Sellens, the head
 7 of school, he came and visit us in the afternoon with
 8 the school to console our children, because they were
 9 about three, four, five minutes within his school, so
 10 just to give us the support to the children to say,
 11 you know, they're there for us if we needed anything,
 12 there was no pressure for them to go back. Because they
 13 were in the middle of studying and there were exams that
 14 were coming up, so it just was -- yeah, we didn't know
 15 where else to go. That was our place. So, yeah.
 16 Q. In the 12 hours that you say you were at the Rugby Club,
 17 as far as you were aware, was there anybody from RBKC or
 18 the TMO?
 19 A. I personally haven't seen anyone from RBKC or TMO, I've
 20 only saw the staff of the Rugby Club, and, you know,
 21 there was no one with badges and stuff. There was only
 22 the police. They came, because they just wanted to take
 23 our names down as well.
 24 I remember giving the name of Hashim family, because
 25 my son's best friend was from Hashim family, and he --

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1 we didn't know whether he escaped or not. We heard so
 2 many rumours, maybe he was stuck in a lift or he has --
 3 so I gave the name of the Hashim family and the
 4 telephone to see whether -- is there any -- do we know
 5 anything about them? So, yeah.
 6 Q. Whilst you were at the Rugby Club during the day, how
 7 would you describe the atmosphere there?
 8 A. It was very stressful, very chaotic, a lot of tears,
 9 yeah, a lot of support of the community. We had
 10 people -- the staff were really, you know, really
 11 helpful, cooking us food. People are coming in with
 12 donations. It just -- you know, it was -- they open up
 13 the -- I think it was the -- a big, like, gym area, so
 14 it was massive for all of us to come in, but there was
 15 no one -- you don't know who was a survivor, who was
 16 not. But it was just nice to see -- the more you stayed
 17 there, the more you see who had made it. So, yeah.
 18 Q. Thank you.
 19 I'm now going to turn to the topic of emergency
 20 accommodation and ask you some questions about that.
 21 If I can take you to paragraph 30, please, of your
 22 second witness statement {IWS00001746/6}, you say:
 23 "It was ... the staff at the Rugby Club who gathered
 24 us together, and explained where we would be staying.
 25 There was around four staff members who called people

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1 into an office. They took details of your name and how
2 many were in your family. They would then organise
3 which hotel you were going to and arrange for a taxi to
4 take you to the hotel. I do not know where they were
5 getting their information from to allocate people to
6 hotels."

7 I just want to ask you some questions about this
8 passage.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Were you aware that there were some RBKC staff from the
11 housing team at the Rugby Club to organise
12 accommodation?

13 A. At that time, I wasn't aware, so I presumed the people
14 that took our details were the staff of the Rugby Club.
15 So, yeah, I wasn't aware.

16 Q. Okay.

17 If we could go to paragraph 26, please, within that
18 paragraph, you say:

19 "There may have been people from RBKC at the
20 Rugby Club, but they were not identifiable, they did not
21 have badges on."

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. So might the people you refer to have been RBKC staff
24 rather than Rugby Club staff, do you think?

25 A. I'm not 100% sure, so ...

13

1 Q. Okay. But nobody introduced themselves to you as from
2 RBKC?

3 A. No, they just took our -- you know, they say which --
4 what's your name, which flat you were living, how many
5 in your family, and that's it.

6 Q. Yes, thank you.

7 A. So they know, you know, where they're going to put you.
8 So, yeah.

9 Q. Do you remember roughly how long you had to wait before
10 having that meeting?

11 A. The whole day. So it was done until the evening, like
12 around 6.00 or 7.00, and by the time they allocate --
13 because I had my brother and my mum with me, so
14 I couldn't leave -- go and leave them behind, so I had
15 to wait until I make sure they were allocated -- they
16 were in the same hotel as myself. You know, my mum was
17 elderly. My brother had, you know, a one-year-old baby,
18 not even. So, yeah, I can't just leave them behind.
19 So, yeah.

20 Q. What was your experience of this meeting? Were the
21 people that you spoke to about accommodation helpful and
22 sensitive to your needs?

23 A. I mean, they only took our name and stuff, they didn't
24 take many details, so it was just a very quick meeting.
25 It wasn't, you know, to sit down and discuss your needs

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1 and stuff. So, yeah.

2 Q. Is it right you were told you would be staying in the
3 Premier Inn hotel in Earls Court, and you then had to
4 wait a further three or four hours to be taken to the
5 hotel? Is that right?

6 A. Yes, yes.

7 Q. You say that the staff at the Rugby Club arranged taxis
8 to take you to the hotel and you arrived just before
9 midnight; is that right?

10 A. Yeah, we arrived quite late. So, yeah.

11 Q. So at this point you had been at the Rugby Club for over
12 12 hours. How were you feeling at this point?

13 A. I was very tired, I was very stressful, very emotional.
14 My children were all over the place as well. They're
15 really -- you know, how are you going to accommodate
16 a two-year-old toddler?

17 My son had to go with his friend. It's not
18 something that I allowed, you know, you only allow
19 sleepovers with your family members, but at that point,
20 you know, he didn't -- the Premier Inn was far away from
21 the area and he didn't want to leave, so I had to accept
22 that he can stay with this family that we knew from the
23 community, Bakali family, you know, as well as my
24 friends. I will never forget their support. So,
25 you know, I had to let him stay and only take my

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1 daughters and my mum with me and my brother.

2 So, yeah, it was really tiring. Our feet were
3 hurting. It's really, really -- yeah, really awful.

4 Q. When you arrived at the hotel, were you given any
5 information about how long you would be staying there or
6 what provisions and support were available to you?

7 A. When we arrived there, it was midnight, more or less.
8 We had to ask -- you know, we were fasting the next day.
9 We didn't -- we wanted something, you know, to eat or,
10 you know, to have for suhoor. They provided us with one
11 pizza, I remember, and the next day, when we woke up, we
12 went down, you know, to the breakfast area, and that's
13 where I met with the other Grenfell survivors that's
14 been allocated in the same hotel, and -- yeah.

15 But we didn't know how long we're going to stay
16 there or what will happen next. Usually on that first
17 week or few days you just wake up, make sure the
18 children ate, and then we make our way back down to
19 Latimer Road area, to the Rugby Club, to find out what
20 will happen next. So, yeah.

21 Q. I just want to ask you about the rooms you were
22 allocated.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Is it right that you were given two rooms that were next
25 to each other on the 4th floor, one for your two

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1 children aged 10 and 13, and the other for you and your
 2 husband and your two-year-old daughter?
 3 A. Yes. We were given two small rooms, basically just, you
 4 know, one bed and one small cot, and the other one --
 5 next one was for my two children.
 6 But it wasn't -- you know, for us, the hotel is like
 7 when you go on holiday, it's not you're going to live
 8 your life there, so it was very hard to keep an eye on
 9 my children, to see how they are. If I want to check on
 10 them, I have to wear my scarf and leave the room to go
 11 out, because, you know, there are still other, you know,
 12 guests are staying, and also the staff of the -- the
 13 cleaners and stuff. So it wasn't -- you don't feel
 14 comfortable. You don't feel like you're at -- you know,
 15 you have your privacy. So, you know -- and you have to
 16 check if they had nightmares and stuff, how are you
 17 going to know? You're going to have to -- it was very
 18 hard.
 19 Q. Yes.
 20 I think you say that your mother was given a room on
 21 the floor below yours; is that right?
 22 A. Yes, yes.
 23 Q. Was your brother and his family also placed at the same
 24 hotel?
 25 A. Yeah, they were next to her, yeah.

1 Q. Can I please take you to paragraph 52 of your second
 2 witness statement {IWS00001746/11}, please. Here you
 3 say:
 4 "Living in the hotel was difficult . It was also
 5 a very small hotel, and there was not much space for us
 6 as a family. The bedrooms were very small and not large
 7 enough for us to spend time together as a family. The
 8 only communal areas available to us was the hotel lobby
 9 and the restaurant. There was no playroom or facilities
 10 available for the children. We would either stay in our
 11 rooms or in the reception area. It was claustrophobic
 12 and we had to make sure that our children were quiet and
 13 on their best behaviour. We did not want to upset the
 14 hotel and other guests who may have been on holiday. It
 15 was not a good place for children."
 16 What was it like having to live in this environment?
 17 A. It was very hard because, you know, there was no
 18 facilities -- the hotel was very small and, therefore,
 19 they didn't accommodate for a place for children where
 20 they can stay or play. So I had a two-year-old baby --
 21 well, toddler -- and, you know, we didn't -- there was
 22 nothing for us for her to do, so it was really hard to
 23 keep her busy or, you know, to keep her quiet as well.
 24 And the other two children as well. I mean, as I say,
 25 my son was staying with his friend, but my daughter, who

1 was very young at that time, she, you know -- how --
 2 where she's going to do her homework or where she's
 3 going to, you know, have time for herself? So it was
 4 really very -- I remember it was very small, only had
 5 like the small front door reception area where,
 6 you know, the guests come and go. So it wasn't a good
 7 place for our children.
 8 Q. Did you have any concerns about the location of the
 9 hotel and the distance to the community and the local
 10 area?
 11 A. Definitely. We were placed in Earls Court, so to get
 12 back to Latimer Road, we had to take either a train and
 13 then change in Hammersmith and then take a bus, or take
 14 two buses, so it was a long distance, and to be
 15 travelling there every day back and forward. So
 16 sometimes, you know, you don't go back to the hotel,
 17 because you end up staying in the area to find out
 18 what's happening, and might spend the whole day, and by
 19 the time you come back, you're very tired and you have
 20 to have -- take your children with you. You know, it
 21 wasn't pleasant. It was really far, and I don't
 22 understand why, you know, they placed us as far as that,
 23 where, you know, we were still dealing -- we didn't
 24 know, you know, what was happening. We have to come
 25 back to the area to find out what will happen to us

1 next. Who are we going to ask?
 2 Q. Can I take you to paragraph 49 of your second statement
 3 {IWS00001746/10}, please.
 4 A. Sure.
 5 Q. You say:
 6 "We lost everything in the fire. We needed to
 7 replace everything we had lost including clothes,
 8 identity documents and toys. We were trying to work out
 9 how to provide for ourselves to put the family back
 10 together again. We needed to try and create some kind
 11 of stability in terms of food, clothes, schooling. We
 12 needed to try to survive in this new environment. We
 13 had to start from scratch. To do that, we needed to go
 14 back to the Latimer Road area, where the relief centres
 15 were and where my children's school was. The hotel was
 16 too far away from Latimer Road."
 17 You've already touched on this, but can you tell us
 18 what the impact was for you of being so far from the
 19 Latimer Road area?
 20 A. The impact was -- it was really hard, and it was very
 21 stressful, because every -- I don't know the area in
 22 Earls Court, and we don't know, you know, where to go.
 23 And also, we wanted to come back to Latimer Road because
 24 we needed -- that's where our community is, and that's
 25 where we -- you know, that's where my children have

1 grown and where we know everyone, and we didn't have
 2 anything. So we had -- we didn't have -- we had
 3 nothing. So no bank cards, nothing. So I literally
 4 left with -- empty, just with my keys and my phone,
 5 because I was on the phone with my friend. So we had
 6 nothing to survive on.
 7 We both were working, so it was -- you know, it was
 8 hard to ask for help. We had some, like, charities.
 9 The Zakat Foundation supported us with some money just
 10 to get us going. But we had to go back to Latimer Road
 11 Station, because that's where the Rugby Club, where we
 12 needed to find out the information of what will happen
 13 next, as in in terms of if there is any information
 14 about our housing or how to obtain our ID cards or our
 15 bank cards or anything, yeah. So basically we had to go
 16 back every day, yeah.
 17 Q. Just returning briefly to the arrangements for your
 18 hotel accommodation.
 19 A. Sure.
 20 Q. You say in your statement:
 21 "The reception would tell us how long we were booked
 22 in to stay at the hotel, and we would receive letters
 23 from the hotel under our room doors telling us that our
 24 stay had been extended ..."
 25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Did you ever get any information from RBKC within the
 2 first week following the fire about how long your stay
 3 was going to be?
 4 A. We didn't know at all in the first week how long we're
 5 going to stay. Nothing. I think it was the week or
 6 two weeks later that we started to -- the manager of the
 7 hotel will come and tell us in the morning at the
 8 breakfast time, "This is how long it's going to be", and
 9 then each month you go down and ask, and then they say,
 10 "Oh, it's been extended to this time, to this time".
 11 So, yeah, we didn't ...
 12 Q. How did you feel about this as a method of letting you
 13 know how long you had accommodation for?
 14 A. It was really stressful, make us really angry, because
 15 you don't know how you're going to live in the next day,
 16 so we don't know -- our future was blank. We didn't
 17 know what to expect, how long we're going to be in the
 18 hotel. The children were, you know, getting very
 19 annoyed. There was no place for them to do -- you know,
 20 they used to do homework in the restaurant, especially
 21 for [redacted], who was at primary. [Redacted] was
 22 still little, but still.
 23 You know, the food was not great. As a Muslim
 24 person, we didn't have -- it was not accommodated in the
 25 hotel. We were stuck to either have a pizza or fish and

1 chips. And I remember clearly my daughter used to say
 2 that to her headteacher, bless her, and he used to take
 3 her out just for treats as a way of making her feel
 4 better. But it's just -- we didn't -- it was no -- we
 5 didn't know what was happening, so it was really, really
 6 stressful, make us really agitated, angry. You could
 7 snap up on anything. Anything would make you, you know,
 8 really angry, because there was no -- there is no
 9 stability, you know, you don't feel safe, you don't
 10 feel -- what will happen next?
 11 Q. You have mentioned that the food was not suitable; is
 12 that because it wasn't Halal?
 13 A. Yes, it wasn't Halal, and plus there was very limited
 14 vegetarian options, so there's either fish and chips or
 15 a pizza. So how are you going to survive on that,
 16 especially for the kids and nutrition?
 17 Q. I think you say in your statement that the hotel
 18 provided meals, but at set times.
 19 A. Yeah.
 20 Q. What did that mean for you and your family, who were
 21 observing Ramadan?
 22 A. Well, it was hard, because we didn't -- you know, as we
 23 were fasting, so we missed the breakfast and the lunch,
 24 so there was only dinner available, and that was after
 25 a certain time, like by 10 o'clock would be the latest.

1 And because we spend the whole day outside, so basically
 2 we were having food outside the Rugby Club with the
 3 community, so they provided futoor for us. But at the
 4 hotel, it was just very limited for the -- if you were
 5 late, so that's it, you don't have anything.
 6 And we relied a lot on volunteers. We had
 7 a volunteer lady who used to bring us food to the hotel.
 8 Her husband was catering for us as the people who were
 9 fasting. So she will ring me and say, "Oh, how many
 10 families are in the hotel?", and she would bring food,
 11 and that's how we survived, basically, on the hand of
 12 our community.
 13 Q. Thank you.
 14 You mention in your statement that at some point you
 15 had a key worker who provided you with food vouchers.
 16 A. Yeah.
 17 Q. Was that within the first week following the fire?
 18 A. No, that was two -- I think two weeks later. No, it
 19 wasn't in the first week. First week was just on the
 20 hand of the community and the people who give donations.
 21 Q. Okay.
 22 Turning now to ask you some questions about the
 23 facilities at the hotel very briefly.
 24 How would you describe the facilities available at
 25 the Premier Inn?

1 A. There was no facilities . There was just us, the room,
 2 and there was no laundry, so if I wanted to wash our
 3 kids' -- you know, my clothes or children's clothes, we
 4 had to find a launderette outside, which I didn't know
 5 in the area. So because my mum had access to her house,
 6 they was allowed to go back for a bit, so I would have
 7 to carry all the bags and take them to hers, or
 8 sometimes I wouldn't be able to go because it was too
 9 long, so I would just try to find the nearest
 10 launderette. So you have to, again, rely on the
 11 facilities of the donations of people, so you can,
 12 you know -- until we sort out our accounts and have
 13 access to our money, it was just on the donations of
 14 people, yeah.

15 Q. Whilst you were at the hotel, did anybody from RBKC or
 16 the TMO visit you within the first week following the
 17 fire offering any support?

18 A. Not in the first week, no. I think they came in the
 19 second week or -- yeah, where they had -- we had
 20 a meeting with the social -- they introduced the
 21 social -- the key worker or the social worker.

22 Q. We'll be coming back to key workers and social workers
 23 in due course.

24 A. Sure.

25 Q. Is it right that you were living in this hotel from

25

1 14 June 2017 until the end of July?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And then your husband asked RBKC for your family to move
 4 somewhere a bit closer?

5 A. Yes, we lived there, yeah, until the end of July, and we
 6 approached RBKC because we said we wanted somewhere near
 7 the area because of the children's school, and also for
 8 our -- you know, that's our community, and that's where
 9 we know where to go. So -- and that's where the rest
 10 centres were available at that time. So at the
 11 beginning they said no, there wasn't, so we had to rely
 12 on the volunteers, who actually supported us and
 13 arranged another hotel near Shepherd's Bush, so it was
 14 a bit -- like 15/20 minutes away from Latimer, so it was
 15 near. But it wasn't RBKC. It was after the volunteers
 16 managed to secure a hotel, and then RBKC just said, "Oh,
 17 yeah, actually, we got -- we have found you a place",
 18 and I was like, "It's a bit late now, we've already got
 19 one".

20 So it was like duplication of stuff. They were not
 21 organised at all.

22 Q. Thank you.

23 Now I want to revisit your experiences in the first
 24 week and, in particular, your experiences of visiting
 25 various rest centres.

26

1 A. Sure.

2 Q. You and your family, as you've said, went back to the
 3 Rugby Club on 15 June; is that right?

4 A. Yes, yes, I did.

5 Q. You have explained to us that that was really to get
 6 support and information about what was going on.

7 A. Yeah. So we went back on the 15th, the next day,
 8 because -- to find out -- at that time we were still
 9 looking to see who had made it out of the tower, so that
 10 was our most focus on, is to find out who made it out
 11 and who hasn't, and to ask to see, you know, the people
 12 from the community that's had their family in the tower,
 13 like the El-Wahabis, I knew quite a lot of them, and
 14 yeah, other neighbours. So it was initially just to see
 15 what will happen to us next. So, yeah.

16 Q. How would you describe the atmosphere in the area when
 17 you returned on 15 June?

18 A. It was really chaotic, really very busy, very stressful .
 19 A lot of smoke still, the smell of the burning tower.
 20 The next day we can still see there is still -- the
 21 tower was not -- you know, the fire was still on, was
 22 still on in the middle of the tower, there was still --
 23 you can see still light up. So it was just ... the
 24 police were everywhere, the cars everywhere, it was very
 25 chaotic. It's not easy to get in. Everything was

27

1 cordoned, especially, like, from the beginning of
 2 Lancaster West, so you cannot access through with the
 3 cars, anything, you have to walk. Yeah, it was really,
 4 really hard.

5 People everywhere, people are crying, people are
 6 searching, starting to put out pictures and names around
 7 the walls in the area, especially the wall that is
 8 outside the Rugby. It was filled with pictures. People
 9 are sitting outside and asking and gathering. It was
 10 just -- you know, just to see what will happen next,
 11 what's going on.

12 Q. You have mentioned that people were looking for their
 13 loved ones.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Were you aware of any centralised or official source of
 16 information about those who were missing?

17 A. No. There was nothing at that first week, literally
 18 only the wall paper that we had at the Rugby Club, that
 19 was the only place where we will see who had made it and
 20 who hasn't. Apart from the police, when they came, and
 21 they just wanted to see if there were any people have
 22 taken any pictures or any videos. That was their
 23 main -- and who has made it out, and that's it. That
 24 was them -- the only people that asked. But we didn't
 25 have nothing. And the media was everywhere. It was

28

1 really -- we were really harassed by the media. They
 2 were everywhere.
 3 Q. At this point you have mentioned the police, but was
 4 there anyone from the TMO or RBKC at this point?
 5 A. No, not at all.
 6 Q. Were you surprised by the absence of people from RBKC or
 7 the TMO?
 8 A. Of course I am very surprised because, you know, we
 9 lived -- I lived in the tower for nearly, you know,
 10 20 years, will I say? Yeah. And we always pay our
 11 rent, and if you didn't pay your rent, they will come
 12 and you will get letters, you will get phone calls.
 13 But, you know, on the day of when it happened, no one
 14 has turned up. So where is their duty of care? How --
 15 you know, how are you going to help us? There was no --
 16 nothing. There was no one there. So it was just
 17 absent. No one from the government, no one from the
 18 authority. We didn't know where to go, we didn't know
 19 how to seek help, we didn't know what will happen next.
 20 It was just question mark, question mark, question mark,
 21 because, you know, we don't know nothing.
 22 Q. I now want to ask you some questions about your
 23 experiences of visiting the Westway Centre.
 24 A. Yeah.
 25 Q. Is it right that you found out about the Westway Centre

1 through word of mouth?
 2 A. Of course, yeah.
 3 Q. In your statement you say that in the first week you
 4 spent most of your time between the Westway Centre and
 5 the Rugby Club; is that right?
 6 A. I could be right, because it was -- you know, it was
 7 then, but when I think about it clearly, the first week
 8 I was more or less at the Rugby Club, and then
 9 afterwards we went to the Westway, so yeah.
 10 Q. Okay.
 11 Can I take you, please, to paragraph 39 of your
 12 second witness statement {IWS00001746/8}.
 13 A. Sure.
 14 Q. So you say:
 15 "The 15 June 2017 was the first day we went to the
 16 Westway. There were tables outside and you would have
 17 to queue up and give you details in order to be
 18 permitted entry. The British Red Cross were on the
 19 door, and they would give you a wristband for identity.
 20 They let me in because I was a tower resident even
 21 though I couldn't prove this because I didn't have any
 22 documents on me, but they just believed me. The
 23 wristband would change each time you went. The colour
 24 of the wristband identified me as a survivor."
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I just want to ask you some questions about this
 2 passage.
 3 A. Sure.
 4 Q. Were you aware of people not being let in because they
 5 weren't tower residents?
 6 A. I'm not sure, to be honest, because no one could prove
 7 who they are -- who they were at that time. So you
 8 could say you were from the tower and they would say yes
 9 and you'd get the wristband, you'd go in. But,
 10 you know, as we go inside and you see people, you start
 11 to identify who actually was from the tower, who wasn't,
 12 and you would know people who were actually just from
 13 the community and not actually from the tower itself.
 14 So, yeah.
 15 Q. You go on to say in your statement that there were
 16 Westway staff and other people there, including
 17 volunteers.
 18 A. Yeah.
 19 Q. Who did you understand to be running the centre when you
 20 attended?
 21 A. Maybe the Westway people, and the British Red Cross,
 22 because they were -- I think they had T-shirts, so they
 23 knew -- we knew they were from British Red Cross. But
 24 mainly it's the staff of the Westway.
 25 Q. What was your experience of the British Red Cross at the

1 Westway Centre?
 2 A. I mean, they were very helpful. They were not rude.
 3 So, yeah, they -- because you will go there every day,
 4 they will know that you are from -- you are a survivor.
 5 So, yeah, it was just built on trust, I believe, and --
 6 yeah.
 7 Q. You also say in your statement that there were a number
 8 of official organisations at the Westway, such as the
 9 Department for Work and Pensions, RBKC housing team,
 10 NHS, the police, Transport for London and the
 11 Zakat Foundation. Did you find these services helpful
 12 for your needs in the first week following the fire?
 13 A. Well, they weren't there -- as I say, I don't think they
 14 were there on the first week. So I think the Westway
 15 was in the second week after the incident. So they were
 16 there to take on our details, and you have to queue up,
 17 and then, you know, give your details and see if they
 18 can help.
 19 Yes, definitely I would say, you know, the staff
 20 were very helpful. You know, I managed to do my ID and
 21 sort out my child tax and so on. In terms of housing,
 22 you know, they were there, but there was no -- they
 23 didn't know what will happen next, so there was no
 24 answer. You'd be given the same answer every day when
 25 you go in: wait, we don't know what will happen next.

1 So you're just more stressed as you don't know how long
 2 you're going to be in the hotel, how long you're going
 3 to be able to accommodate your children and, you know,
 4 be in that environment.
 5 Q. Do you remember speaking to anybody from the TMO at the
 6 Westway Centre?
 7 A. I don't remember TMO. I remember people from housing
 8 and RBKC, but yeah.
 9 Q. Okay.
 10 Just very briefly, in terms of other support at the
 11 Westway Centre, is it right that there was a reception
 12 area with food and clothes?
 13 A. Yes, there was a lot of donations from everywhere, from
 14 a lot of people in the community, and the volunteers
 15 there were really supportive, providing us, like, with
 16 toiletries and some toys for the children, some clothes,
 17 clothing, you know. So, yeah, they were very -- and
 18 food for the kids, so yeah, they were very helpful.
 19 Q. Thank you.
 20 Just touching briefly on some of the other relief
 21 centres that you visited.
 22 A. Sure.
 23 Q. Is it right that you visited the Al Manaar Mosque during
 24 the first week following the fire?
 25 A. Yes. I believe so, yeah. I remember -- because the

1 Zakat Foundation were based there, and that's how they
 2 supported us, and also they provided us with iftar,
 3 you know, as it was Ramadan, and it was a place of
 4 worship. So even though it's a mosque, but it's also
 5 a Cultural Heritage Centre, so it was -- you know, it
 6 had other -- there was other support available for the
 7 children. So, yeah.
 8 Q. I think you also visited the Latimer Christian Centre;
 9 is that right?
 10 A. Yes, I did, yeah.
 11 Q. What was your experience like at that centre?
 12 A. They were very helpful as well. They would take your
 13 name and your details, just to clarify who you were,
 14 and, yeah, they supported us with clothing again, and
 15 for the children especially, and they were going back to
 16 school, so, yeah. They didn't -- we didn't feel, just
 17 because we're Muslims or we were -- you know, or we're
 18 not English, that we're not going to be helped.
 19 Grenfell was -- you know, it opened -- it showed us
 20 that, you know, we are one community and one faith, so,
 21 you know, the amount of support that was given to us
 22 during that time and up until now, it's amazing, and
 23 I will -- we will never forget, we will always
 24 appreciate.
 25 Q. Yes.

1 How did your experience at the Westway Centre
 2 compare with your experiences at the Rugby Club,
 3 Al Manaar and the Latimer Christian Centre?
 4 A. They were all very helpful, to be honest. Each centre,
 5 they were there to -- they were very sensitive to our
 6 needs. They were helpful in approaching and supporting
 7 us. You know, they were very polite, and, yeah, just to
 8 accommodate our needs with the food, with prepare -- we
 9 had meals at the Westway, we had meals at the
 10 Rugby Club. During Ramadan, they always, you know,
 11 provided iftar, and it was, you know, all of us sitting,
 12 you know, together just feels, you know, we are
 13 a family, even though at that time, you know, everybody
 14 was really, you know, stressful, weary, felt alone, but
 15 as a community, we felt as one family and they all were
 16 supportive. Yeah, definitely.
 17 Q. How did the community response compare to the official
 18 response from central government, RBKC and the TMO?
 19 A. The community was 100% supportive from the night. They
 20 did all what they could, you know, what they could do to
 21 help us. We had people from all over, all the nations,
 22 from all over the place they were coming, all over the
 23 areas. People not just from, you know, Latimer or from
 24 Ladbroke Grove or -- you know, from everywhere. People
 25 just came down. Everyone wanted to help, everyone

1 wanted to provide support. Even for accommodation,
 2 there were people, you know, telling us, "If you want to
 3 come and stay until you sort out your accommodation" --
 4 they were very supportive, 100%. But no sign of the
 5 government at all, you know, or housing. So, yeah.
 6 Q. Okay.
 7 I'm now going to ask you some questions about
 8 financial assistance.
 9 Can I take you, please, to paragraphs 63 and 64 of
 10 your second witness statement {IWS00001746/13}, please.
 11 So paragraph 63 says:
 12 "For the two of us it is not in our experience to
 13 rely on benefits and handouts. Youssef and I have
 14 always worked and been self-reliant. It was challenging
 15 and difficult to have to rely on the charity of other
 16 people in order to get the basics and to provide for
 17 ourselves and our family. We had no choice because we
 18 didn't have access to our own funds and the council
 19 wasn't stepping forward to provide for us."
 20 Is that right?
 21 A. Yes, it is. I mean, as I say, in the first week and
 22 also first two weeks, we didn't have access to our
 23 account at all, as we lost everything, and we had to
 24 rely on the support of the donations of the charities,
 25 like, as I said, the Zakat Foundation. We had,

1 you know, donations from community members, some family
 2 members as well. So it was really hard because we never
 3 claimed any benefits. I always worked, and so has my
 4 husband, so we always relied on our, you know, own
 5 money. So it was -- I wouldn't say humiliating, but it
 6 was really -- we appreciate the support, because without
 7 their donations, we couldn't be able to, you know,
 8 provide for our children, and, you know, just for the
 9 basics. So, yeah.

10 Q. Did you receive an emergency payment from RBKC within
 11 the first week following the fire?

12 A. Not in the first week, no.

13 Q. Did you receive any information about financial
 14 assistance from RBKC in the first week following the
 15 fire?

16 A. No, not at all, no.

17 Q. Is it right that in July 2017 you were told to go to the
 18 Post Office to receive a one-off payment of £5,000 from
 19 the government?

20 A. Yes, we were told to go to the Post Office in
 21 Golborne Road, and, yeah, to receive this one-off
 22 payment to support us, yeah.

23 Q. Was this the first time you'd received any official
 24 financial assistance?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Who told you about that payment being available?

2 A. Word of mouth again. It's just, you know, survivors,
 3 between us. Whoever finds information, he relay it on
 4 to the other person.

5 Q. Now moving on to the topic of public communication, can
 6 I take you to paragraph 66 of your second statement
 7 {IWS00001746/14}, please. You say:

8 "Grenfell United was set up in the first or second
 9 night after the fire to be the voice of tower residents
 10 and to be a source of information and support. No one
 11 from Government or RBKC was there to support us, we only
 12 had our own community. There was a complete absence of
 13 information in the first few days. We felt abandoned by
 14 the authorities and left to fend for ourselves."

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. In your view, was Grenfell United born as a result of
 17 the complete absence of information that you've just
 18 described?

19 A. Definitely. We were -- on the second day, one of our
 20 members, I mean, Ed and Mahad, they took the initiative
 21 to take names down of people who made it out of the
 22 tower, and also to take down their email if they
 23 wanted -- we wanted to create like a -- not
 24 an organisation, but just organise ourselves to be as
 25 one voice, so -- because there was no one available,

1 who's going to help us? So we decided it's going to be
 2 us who is going to be seeking information and finding
 3 out if we can support each other, you know, as a family.

4 So, yeah. So it was born on the second night, and
 5 people were putting -- volunteering, putting their names
 6 down to see if we can -- you know, how we're going to
 7 start Grenfell United, yeah.

8 Q. Is it right that you became heavily involved in
 9 Grenfell United?

10 A. Yes. I mean, initially, we were supported by Howard at
 11 Clement James to find -- it was Marcus Mumford who
 12 helped us to find someone who could support us, because
 13 at that time everyone was very stressful, everyone was
 14 angry and upset, so it was really hard to put our voices
 15 together, not because we didn't respect each other, just
 16 because of how we were at that time. So we needed
 17 someone from outside to help us to gather. So we --
 18 through Mumford, we found a young man that we didn't --
 19 at that time we didn't think he was able to lead us, and
 20 then we were introduced by Father Oliver McTernan,
 21 a lovely man who supported us all the way, with his
 22 colleague, Jordan, from Respect, and they came and met
 23 a few members of us, like Willie, Shahin, Ed, Turufat,
 24 Tiago, Miguel, Sid and Mahad, and then there wasn't --
 25 there was a lack of, shall we say, female presence on

1 the community, so I was encouraged by Turufat to get
 2 involved, and because I used to work as a domestic
 3 violence outreach worker, so I was initially heavily
 4 involved in the community, so I thought: let me do my
 5 part as well and support our families in order to,
 6 you know, see how we can help each other to rebuild our
 7 lives and to provide any support we can.

8 So, yeah, I was heavily involved from the beginning
 9 with Grenfell United.

10 Q. If we could just go to paragraph 68, please, of your
 11 second statement {IWS00001746/15}.

12 A. Sure, yeah.

13 Q. You say:

14 "Our main focus in GU was to find out what support
 15 was able to survivors. People volunteered to get
 16 involved. At the beginning, people volunteered to find
 17 out the issues tower residents had and who we could
 18 approach for assistance. We wanted to know where they
 19 were going to be staying and what was happening to us.
 20 We wanted to know what support could be offered to
 21 children and those with disabilities in families. We
 22 also needed to find out who the survivors were, to get
 23 a proper list of those who died and who had survived.
 24 We needed to know how many people we had lost. We had
 25 to use the Rugby Club's list of the residents to find

1 out who had made it out of the fire. Aside from the key
2 worker we were allocated, we had to rely on GU to find
3 out information. We had to do all of the running around
4 ourselves. We had to do this, to look after one another
5 because no one else was."

6 Is that correct?

7 A. Yes, it is. GU was, you know, made out of us survivors
8 of the Grenfell Tower, we had some bereaved as well, and
9 basically we wanted to find out, you know, what was the
10 issues that was happening, you know, for everyone that
11 was staying in the hotels, whether they were provided
12 with, you know, the support that they needed, like food
13 or any support for the children. The children were
14 starting to go back slowly to the schools, so to see
15 what else -- and, yeah, we developed like a drop-in
16 session for us. So we used to rely on the support of
17 some people, like people that were staying in the
18 hotels, to provide us with the rooms where we can meet,
19 because we didn't have anywhere.

20 So it was -- basically, all the work was done
21 through the volunteers, the people that put themselves
22 forward. So it would be myself, it would be Ed,
23 Turufat, it would be Shahin, it would be Mahad, it was
24 Miguel that time, and a few others. So each one of us
25 would, you know, get in touch with survivors or

1 bereaved -- more or less survivors at that time, because
2 the bereaved it was really, really hard at that time to
3 approach them as they were dealing with their grief, and
4 they were not aware of what would happen to their loved
5 ones, so a lot of focus at that time was on the
6 survivors, and just to see what support they needed.

7 So, yeah, Grenfell United was -- we wanted it to be
8 a place for survivors to receive help and see whether we
9 can -- who else we can approach to -- for support as one
10 voice instead of individual.

11 Q. Can we take you to paragraph 83 of your second statement
12 {IWS00001746/18}, you say:

13 "RBKC should have been there on the first night.

14 They should have showed us where to go in the aftermath
15 of the fire, and they should have had staff down at the
16 relief centres helping and organising things. We needed
17 support, to know what to do next, where to go, who we
18 needed to speak to, where we were going to live, and
19 what support was available. There was no information
20 from RBKC to help us or signpost us to support. We
21 should not have had to rely on others."

22 Is that correct?

23 A. Yes, it is, because as I said before, when you don't pay
24 your rent, they'll be on you, they'll come in and
25 pressure you. Even like during the refurbishments,

1 where we didn't let people -- we didn't let the
2 contractors in, they will send our -- you know, they
3 would send their staff, they will send our rent
4 officers, you know, to pressure us. So when the
5 incident happened, when the tragedy happened, there was
6 no sign of them, so we didn't know if it was -- we
7 didn't know where to go. Everything was just word of
8 mouth and what the community has offered us, what the
9 rest centres have offered us. There was -- we didn't
10 know where to go, we didn't know who we need to
11 approach, what is going to happen to us, where we're
12 going to be living, how long we're going to be there,
13 what's available for the children, there was nothing.
14 So there was no sign of RBKC to support us.

15 Q. You continue in your statement and you say:

16 "There was no humanity in the way that RBKC dealt
17 with things."

18 What did you mean by that?

19 A. They did not feel -- there was no human contact between,
20 you know, the staff and us, because they were not
21 present, they were not there to give us the support, so
22 there was no understanding or no empathy or sympathy
23 from them, you know, to be there and support us. So,
24 yeah, there was no -- go back as -- there was no --
25 lacking of culture, I guess, yeah.

1 Q. What difference would clear communication from RBKC
2 about the support available have made for you in the
3 immediate aftermath?

4 A. It was -- it would have made a lot of difference,
5 because it would be less stressful for us to know: this
6 is where we need to go since this tragedy happened, this
7 is where -- this is the place to go to get
8 information or get support, to know where you're going
9 to be staying, who you're going to be -- where you're
10 going to get your ID or your stuff. So just to find
11 out, you know, what information is there for us to
12 support us, it would be less stressful for us, less --
13 yeah, less upsetting.

14 Q. Turning now, please, to psychosocial support.

15 It's right, I think, that your first key worker was
16 from Ealing Council.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And you had your first meeting with her two days after
19 the fire; is that right?

20 A. I could say yes, but I'm not sure it was two days after,
21 but yeah.

22 Q. Do you think it was within the first week following the
23 fire?

24 A. I think it was the second week. I don't think it was
25 the first week.

1 Q. Okay. What was your experience with your first
 2 key worker?
 3 A. She was very supportive, the best one I had so far.
 4 Well, apart from now. She was very supportive, very
 5 keen to approach the staff at the council and find out
 6 all the need -- all the information I required or
 7 I needed to help my children or to help like support
 8 with them going to school, to support with them at
 9 school. Yeah. And -- I mean, I never -- you know,
 10 I never had, you know, key workers before in my life.
 11 I used to work with them, but I never had them
 12 initially, so that was the first time to experience
 13 that. But she was really, really helpful, as in finding
 14 out the information for myself and my family and
 15 whatever I need, yeah.
 16 Q. Yes. Is it right that you had four other key workers
 17 after your first key worker?
 18 A. Six.
 19 Q. Six?
 20 A. This is my sixth one. Each one of them was for a very
 21 short time. Like I had one who was actually the chair
 22 of the child protection conference, so I knew she was
 23 not going to stay long. So initially I just met her
 24 once and then spoke to her like twice. And then I had
 25 a really very supportive one called Aisha. She really

1 helped my son and she was very understanding. And then
 2 again they changed. They just keep changing without
 3 giving you notice, and then you have to repeat yourself
 4 and go through everything.
 5 So I wish there could -- you know, I think by the
 6 end, they taught a lesson that, you know, read the file,
 7 find out what's happening, understand the people you're
 8 dealing with, and if you don't have any training, get
 9 the training, because, you know, people are -- it's like
 10 when you're supporting domestic violence, if you don't
 11 have appropriate training, how are you going to provide
 12 her with the right support, the emotional, the
 13 practical?
 14 So, yeah, I think they -- towards -- getting to my
 15 sixth one, I think they understood how it works.
 16 Q. How did the change in key workers affect the information
 17 you were receiving?
 18 A. It makes the information -- you get it very late. But
 19 because, you know, as I worked before and I did this
 20 kind of work, so I didn't really rely on the
 21 key workers, I could do the stuff myself. So it was
 22 basically sometimes just to -- because you get so angry
 23 and so emotional as when you -- you know, when you're
 24 explaining yourself and trying to get the support for
 25 your family and for your children, it's nice to have,

1 you know, someone who can take on that responsibility.
 2 But it's just -- the information, you get it really
 3 slow, not on the right time. So, yeah.
 4 Q. Okay.
 5 I'm now going to ask you about mental health
 6 support.
 7 In your statement you say that you were referred for
 8 counselling by your GP, but do you recall there being
 9 any therapy or counselling services offered or
 10 signposted within the first week following the fire?
 11 A. No, there was nothing. In the first week, it was
 12 basically just us at the Rugby Club and finding out --
 13 trying to find out who made it out of the building, and
 14 there was no authorities, no staff, no -- you know, no
 15 other organisations available. And initially I was
 16 referred to my GP because I had to request a sick note
 17 for my work, because I was unable to go back, and that's
 18 where, you know, she initially referred me to the
 19 Grenfell -- referred me to St Charles, and then later on
 20 they became Grenfell counselling service, yeah.
 21 Q. Just touching briefly on the needs of specific groups,
 22 in your statement you say that:
 23 "The support available for children, the elderly and
 24 disabled was lacking. When you really needed something,
 25 you would have to fight for it."

1 A. Yeah.
 2 Q. What do you mean by having to fight for this?
 3 A. Where --
 4 Q. Sorry, it's in paragraph 88 {IWS00001746/19}.
 5 A. 88. Okay, sorry.
 6 (Pause)
 7 Yes, so there was no -- there was nothing available
 8 for the children or for the elderly people or disabled
 9 at the first week or even the second week, so that was
 10 the reason for us to create Grenfell United, so we can
 11 liaise with whoever, other authorities that could
 12 support us.
 13 So, like, for the children, they were going back to
 14 school. What support would they be given at school?
 15 Would they be given any emotional support, any
 16 counselling, any assessments? There was nothing -- we
 17 didn't know who to approach, so we had to do it
 18 ourselves.
 19 Or even for the elderly, you know, what support is
 20 available for them in terms of their needs at the hotel
 21 or, you know, getting out, you know, reaching to the
 22 community? Because we were all placed all over, I would
 23 say, the area -- London, more or less, you know. So it
 24 wasn't -- we were not put in next to the tower, we were
 25 very far from the tower, so how are we going to be able

1 to access and come? It was very difficult for everyone.
 2 So, yeah.
 3 Q. Turning now to the last section of my questions, I want
 4 to ask you about your observations on the overall
 5 response.
 6 Were you aware of any central government involvement
 7 or support in the first week following the fire?
 8 A. There was zero involvement. There was no involvement at
 9 all from the government. We didn't see anyone. No one
 10 came down to see us, apart from the police that were
 11 gathering information, and not to give support, just to
 12 gather the information. Yeah.
 13 Q. Did you notice any difference in the support or
 14 co-ordination available on 16 June, once the London Gold
 15 Group took over?
 16 A. Not a lot, to be honest, no.
 17 Q. Okay.
 18 A. They just started, so it was initially getting
 19 information. It's not to support, but it's to find out
 20 what was happening and what was lacking or missing,
 21 yeah.
 22 Q. Towards the end of your second witness statement, in
 23 paragraph 99 {IWS00001746/21}, you say:
 24 "The experience was humiliating. After the horror
 25 of escaping the burning tower we ended up walking around

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1 centres trying to get hold of a change of clothes and
 2 a pair of shoes. It is not a humane experience."
 3 A. Yeah.
 4 Q. Is there anything else you want to add to your evidence
 5 today, Mrs El-Ogbani?
 6 A. Yes. I wanted to add, we don't want the same thing
 7 happen again, another Grenfell happen again. We want
 8 people to be listened to. We want people that are
 9 living in social housing to be -- when they complain or
 10 when they make -- you know, when they make a request for
 11 something, to be taken seriously, and to be treated with
 12 dignity and respect.
 13 We want it to be a centre that is, you know, out of
 14 all what's happened, all this chaotic -- all this chaos
 15 and all this stress and anxiety that happened, not just
 16 survivors, for the bereaved as well, is when -- God
 17 forbid if something happened, that there would be one
 18 centre available where they would have all the
 19 information that every person would require at that
 20 time, whether, you know, for your housing, whether for
 21 your health, whether for your children, for education,
 22 you know, to be one thing. Yeah. That's what I wanted
 23 to say.
 24 We don't want another Grenfell to happen, but the
 25 support to be given, and the government and the RBKC or

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1 any other, you know, landlords to be available for
 2 support and not to be absent. Yeah.
 3 Thank you.
 4 MS ISLAM: Thank you. Those are all the questions I have
 5 for you, Mrs El-Ogbani, but we're going to pause to see
 6 if there are any questions from anybody else.
 7 THE WITNESS: Sure.
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you very much.
 9 Well, you may know this, but we normally have
 10 a short break at this stage to give other people the
 11 chance to suggest questions that perhaps we ought to ask
 12 you to deal with.
 13 It's a convenient point, because I think it's time
 14 we had the morning break in any event.
 15 THE WITNESS: Sure.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So we'll break there. We'll come
 17 back at 11.30, we'll see if there are any more questions
 18 for you, and just to make it clear that if anyone does
 19 wish to send questions in for consideration, now is the
 20 time to do it, and then we will see what comes.
 21 All right? Thank you very much. Would you go with
 22 the usher, then, please.
 23 THE WITNESS: Sure, thank you.
 24 (Pause)
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, Ms Islam. 11.30, then,

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1 please.
 2 MS ISLAM: Thank you.
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.
 4 (11.13 am)
 5 (A short break)
 6 (11.30 am)
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, Mrs El-Ogbani, we'll see if
 8 there are any more questions for you.
 9 THE WITNESS: Sure, thank you.
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.
 11 MS ISLAM: Just one further question, please.
 12 A. Sure.
 13 Q. Were you aware of a shuttle service between the hotels
 14 and the Westway Centre in the first week following the
 15 fire?
 16 A. I cannot remember, to be honest.
 17 Q. Okay.
 18 A. Yeah. I cannot remember.
 19 Q. Thank you.
 20 A. No.
 21 MS ISLAM: That's all from me. Thank you very much for
 22 assisting us today at the Inquiry. We're really
 23 grateful to you.
 24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I would like to thank you very much,

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1 Mrs El-Ogbani, for coming to give evidence, and I say
 2 that on behalf of all three members of the panel, of
 3 course. It's really helpful for us to hear about your
 4 experiences. They sound to have been very unpleasant
 5 and no doubt very distressing as well, and I hope it
 6 hasn't been too difficult for you to come and tell us
 7 about them. We've learned a lot, and we are very
 8 grateful.
 9 THE WITNESS: Thank you, and thank you for giving us the
 10 opportunity to share as well.
 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, thank you for taking it and
 12 coming along.
 13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you. Now, would you like to
 15 go with the usher. You're free to go, of course.
 16 (The witness withdrew)
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now, we have another witness
 18 waiting, but I think we need to rise for a brief moment
 19 while some arrangements are made; is that right?
 20 MS ISLAM: Yes, please, Mr Chairman.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, we'll do that, and would you
 22 ask the usher to come and tell us as soon as you're
 23 ready?
 24 MS ISLAM: I will.
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.

1 (11.34 am)
 2 (A short break)
 3 (11.40 am)
 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Ms Malhotra.
 5 MS MALHOTRA: Sir, the next witness is Ms Boujettiff.
 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.
 7 MS FATIMA BOUJETTIF (sworn)
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. Now, do sit
 9 down and make yourself comfortable, please.
 10 (Pause)
 11 All right?
 12 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.
 14 Yes, when you're ready.
 15 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY
 16 MS MALHOTRA: Ms Boujettiff, can I thank you, firstly, for
 17 coming today to give evidence to this public inquiry and
 18 for your assistance with the Inquiry's investigations so
 19 far.
 20 Just a few words by way of introduction, if I may.
 21 Could I invite you, please, to keep your voice up so
 22 that we can hear you clearly. It also helps not to nod
 23 or shake your head because nods and shakes don't go on
 24 the transcript, but "yes" and "no" do.
 25 If any of my questions are unclear, please say so,

1 and I will happily rephrase them.
 2 Finally, Ms Boujettiff, we recognise that this may
 3 be a difficult process for you. If you would like
 4 a break at any time, please do let me know.
 5 I'm going to turn to your statements next.
 6 You have made two statements to the Inquiry. They
 7 will appear on the screen in front of you.
 8 A. Yeah.
 9 Q. Could I take you to your first statement. That's
 10 {IWS00000469}. We can see on the right-hand side it is
 11 dated 17 May 2018. If we turn to page 12 of this first
 12 statement, we can see a signature there. Is that yours?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Could I take you next to your second statement, please,
 15 that's {IWS00001608}. On the right-hand side of the
 16 statement, we can see it is dated 25 February 2020. On
 17 page 12, we can see there a signature. Is that your
 18 signature?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Have you had an opportunity to read both of your witness
 21 statements recently?
 22 A. Yes, recently, yes.
 23 Q. Can you confirm that the contents are true to the best
 24 of your knowledge?
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Ms Boujettiff, during the course of your evidence,
 2 I will be referring to both of your witness statements
 3 that you've provided to the Inquiry.
 4 The focus of my questions today will be the
 5 following three topics: firstly, your evacuation on
 6 14 June; secondly, your experience of emergency
 7 accommodation; and, thirdly, your experience of the
 8 support provided to you in the following days of the
 9 fire.
 10 Before coming to your evacuation on 14 June 2017,
 11 were you at the time of the fire a resident of
 12 Hurstway Walk?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Have you lived in Hurstway Walk all your life?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. You were born and raised there, were you?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Is it right that you worked, and still do, as a pastoral
 19 support manager at Kensington Aldridge Academy?
 20 A. Correct, yes.
 21 Q. You say in your second statement at paragraph 5
 22 {IWS00001608/2} that the community on the estate has
 23 always formed a big part of your life. You also say in
 24 your first statement at paragraph 28 {IWS00000469/8}
 25 that your role as a pastoral support officer at

1 Kensington Aldridge Academy meant that you worked
 2 closely with pupils. You say:
 3 "My relationship with the pupils was made closer by
 4 the fact that I live in the community and often see them
 5 outside of school."
 6 As a result of those close connections in the area,
 7 and your work with the academy, you knew children and
 8 residents who tragically perished in the fire; is that
 9 right?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: It's all right, just take your time.
 12 There's no rush.
 13 (Pause)
 14 A. You can continue.
 15 MS MALHOTRA: I would like to turn now to the night of the
 16 fire, is that okay?
 17 A. Yes, of course.
 18 Q. If you do need a break at any point, please do let us
 19 know.
 20 A. It's absolutely fine.
 21 Q. How did you first become aware of the fire?
 22 A. A neighbour, but also a colleague, continued to call me
 23 on my phone. Initially I brushed it off. I assumed
 24 that she wasn't coming to work the next day, so I just
 25 didn't answer. And I assume when she saw that I wasn't

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1 going to answer the calls, she sent me a text message
 2 with capital letters that said "Grenfell is on fire".
 3 Q. Can you recall roughly what time this was?
 4 A. Just before 1 o'clock.
 5 Q. Shortly after receiving this call and text message —
 6 A. Yeah.
 7 Q. — you went out and observed the fire from Grenfell Walk
 8 for approximately 45 minutes, until you were ushered
 9 back into the walkways by a policeman; is that right?
 10 A. That's correct, yes.
 11 Q. Is it the case that you remained in Hurstway Walk for
 12 less than an hour before a police officer told you and
 13 others to leave?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. Did you get a chance to gather any belongings of yours
 16 before you left home?
 17 A. That I was able to. I did ask the policeman at the
 18 time, "How long do we have to leave the — to leave
 19 Hurstway Walk?", just so I know if I can pack a bag or
 20 it's actually just: close your front door and leave.
 21 But the panic that he was in, he wasn't really clear and
 22 just kind of was barking that, "You just need to go, you
 23 need to leave". So I went in, grabbed a handbag, and
 24 made sure that the front door was locked.
 25 Q. You say in your second statement at paragraph 25

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1 {IWS00001608/6} that your wallet was left behind in your
 2 coat pocket.
 3 A. Yeah.
 4 Q. Does it follow that you left home without any ID, cash
 5 or bank cards?
 6 A. Yeah, the bag was pretty much useless. The night
 7 before, I had gone to Co-op with just my purse. I had
 8 popped it in my cardigan and just left it on the coat
 9 hanger. But in the panic, I just assumed I had
 10 everything in my handbag. So I had no money, no ID,
 11 anything, not anything that I really needed, and
 12 I wasn't given clear instructions on how soon I had to
 13 evacuate, whether I could pack a bag, whether I could
 14 make sure I had everything, maybe look for my passport,
 15 that was a bit unclear. So I just grabbed the nearest
 16 thing and kind of left.
 17 Q. How would you describe your evacuation?
 18 A. The evacuation completely or the evacuation from the
 19 landing?
 20 Q. From the landing.
 21 A. Rushed, and from my memory there wasn't that many first
 22 responders on the landing. There was one policeman, and
 23 he was just saying, "Go into the walkway". He wasn't
 24 saying to go into your homes, you just had to get off
 25 the landing. So we continued to stay in the walkway and

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1 not go into our flats and try and look out of the
 2 windows, but there was no real instruction. There was
 3 only one policeman, kind of just saying, "Go in, just go
 4 in".
 5 Q. Once you were told to leave and to leave immediately,
 6 and you picked up your bag and left —
 7 A. Yeah.
 8 Q. — were you given any information from any officials
 9 about where to go? Were you directed to go to any
 10 centre, for example?
 11 A. No, it was just, "You need to evacuate your home, you
 12 can't stay in the walkway anymore".
 13 Some residents — if you've ever been to the
 14 walkway, there's loads of different entrances and exits.
 15 For some reason, my mind was — no one told me where to
 16 go, but I went straight down to the walkway towards
 17 Latimer train station. Some neighbours had left and
 18 gone — there's a big garden just underneath
 19 Grenfell Tower. They evacuated there. But there was
 20 no one saying specifically, "This is your evacuation
 21 spot, you need to assemble there"; it was just, "You
 22 just need to leave your house".
 23 Q. You walked to Bramley Road, where other residents of the
 24 walkways and members of the community had gathered. Did
 25 there come a time later when you were joined by

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1 colleagues of yours from work?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. I believe this was about 4.00 or 4.30; is that right?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. What were you and your colleagues doing at that time?
 6 A. The vice principal of the academy lives opposite
 7 Grenfell Tower. She was able to go and get her laptop,
 8 and the colleagues that were there are not able to use
 9 the systems, I was the only one able to log in to the
 10 school's platform, where all the addresses are, so they
 11 asked me if I can log in, pull a list of names and
 12 addresses of students that we know that are in the
 13 tower, so we would have an idea of how many students of
 14 ours are Grenfell Tower residents, and just try to have
 15 a rough idea of — even if it was just rumours of who
 16 has been seen.
 17 Q. Were you aware of any officials from RBKC or TMO or
 18 anyone else for that matter at the scene who were
 19 conducting a similar exercise of trying to account for
 20 who was in the tower, who was safe, or who was sadly
 21 still not accounted for?
 22 A. At 4.30 am, no.
 23 Q. You describe in your first statement at paragraph 26
 24 {IWS0000469/8} seeing a mother who was searching for
 25 her missing daughter.

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. A former pupil, who you knew. You say although you
 3 tried to comfort her, you felt helpless, as there was no
 4 information on where the loved ones of those missing
 5 could get help. Is that right?
 6 A. That's correct. It was Jessica's mother.
 7 Q. Later in the morning, did it become clear to you that
 8 you would not be able to return to your home?
 9 A. Yes. But that was just out of seeing the tower, that it
 10 was still on fire, and that my entrance was cordoned
 11 off. There was no official — it was just me making
 12 that assumption that I wouldn't be able to go home.
 13 Q. Had you received any information from anyone official
 14 about where evacuated residents could go for information
 15 or support?
 16 A. No, I did not.
 17 Q. Did you hear from other residents where you could go?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. What did you hear?
 20 A. That there was Westway and the Latimer Christian Centre.
 21 Q. Did you at that stage go to the Westway or the
 22 Latimer Road Christian Centre?
 23 A. I went later on on that day. I first went — when —
 24 around 8 o'clock, when I was no longer able to work, and
 25 it was clear that I wasn't going home, a friend of mine

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1 lent me her keys. So I walked from Latimer Road to
 2 Stamford Brook and tried to get some sleep there. And
 3 then that's when the messages started to come in to say,
 4 "Go to Westway, there's also help in Latimer Christian
 5 Centre", and that's when I made my way down, maybe at
 6 like 2 o'clock.
 7 Q. So you returned later that afternoon, and you were told
 8 by others and your friends that people were congregating
 9 at the Westway.
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. I would like to focus now on this occasion when you went
 12 to the Westway, this first occasion when you went there
 13 on 14 June.
 14 The Inquiry has heard some evidence from others that
 15 they were unable to get into the Westway. What was your
 16 experience?
 17 A. I was able to get into Westway. If I remember
 18 correctly, there were stewards outside. I think they
 19 were from Christian Aid, and you just gave your address,
 20 and then they let you in.
 21 Q. The Inquiry has heard of wristbands. Were you given
 22 a wristband to wear?
 23 A. Yes, I was.
 24 Q. Were you asked to provide any ID before you could enter?
 25 A. I can't remember if I was asked to provide any ID, but

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1 even if I was, I wouldn't have been able to provide
 2 anything.
 3 MS MALHOTRA: At paragraph 23 of your second statement, you
 4 say this —
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Would you like it on the screen?
 6 MS MALHOTRA: Yes, please. It's page 5 {IWS00001608/5},
 7 paragraph 23. You say there:
 8 "The atmosphere at the Westway was quite
 9 overwhelming. It did not seem well organised; there
 10 were lots of people there, and so much noise and
 11 movement."
 12 You say that you saw some stewards outside who you
 13 believe may have been from Christian Aid. Once inside
 14 the Westway, did you see any officials inside?
 15 A. I saw an official inside, yes.
 16 Q. Do you know where they were from?
 17 A. RBKC.
 18 Q. Were they wearing any identification or did they
 19 introduce themselves as from RBKC?
 20 A. No, they were sat on just a normal desk. He was in
 21 casual clothes, but he had an RBKC lanyard.
 22 Q. Did you speak to them?
 23 A. Yes, I did.
 24 Q. Could you tell us how many there were?
 25 A. It was — I only spoke to one person. I'm not sure if

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1 there were others in Westway, but I was directed to him.
 2 Q. What did you speak about?
 3 A. I just wanted to know what was happening with the
 4 walkways and to try and confirm whether we were
 5 definitely not allowed back in or if we were going to be
 6 allowed back in, and any timeframes.
 7 Q. Did you receive any information about when you could
 8 return home?
 9 A. No. The conversation didn't go very well. There was
 10 a lot of back and forth. He was very, very rude, very
 11 condescending. He would -- he had advised me if
 12 I wanted an update, I would need to look at the news for
 13 an update on when I would be allowed back home.
 14 Q. How did you feel following this interaction?
 15 A. Quite disheartened. I got very angry and frustrated,
 16 which then he thought it would be appropriate for him to
 17 say to me that people have died, and so he made me feel
 18 that I was last -- finding out whether I could go back
 19 home was least of anyone's priority, which, coming from
 20 an RBKC representative, is pretty much normal, having
 21 that feeling of: you're not priority. Very abrupt, very
 22 condescending, is the common theme that's -- it felt
 23 worse because of the moment, but it wasn't a new
 24 experience.
 25 Q. Is it right that you left the Westway Centre that day,

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1 then, having received no information about when you
 2 could return home or what alternative accommodation
 3 there was for you?
 4 A. He suggested that I could stay in St Charles Sixth Form,
 5 and also there would hopefully be space in Westway.
 6 Q. Is it right that you made your own arrangements to stay
 7 with family?
 8 A. I stayed at my friend's house.
 9 Q. If I could take you to your second statement at
 10 paragraph 27 {IWS00001608/6}, you say:
 11 "For the next few days I borrowed cash from friends
 12 and was given money here and there by my family. I was
 13 not aware of any alternative."
 14 Is that right?
 15 A. Yes. I had to borrow money because I forgot my purse at
 16 home.
 17 Q. Ms Boujettiff, we've spoken about your evacuation on the
 18 day of the fire and your experience of the
 19 Westway Centre that same day. The focus of my questions
 20 next moves to a few days later, when you returned back
 21 to the estate.
 22 A. Yeah.
 23 Q. You say in your statement that it was around 19 or
 24 20 June.
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Are you able to recall which day it was now?
 2 A. I'm leaning towards the 19th, but I'm not sure.
 3 Q. Had you by this point been contacted by anyone official
 4 notifying you of when you could return home or if there
 5 was any emergency accommodation or support available to
 6 you?
 7 A. My sister received a text message from TMO saying that
 8 we were allowed back home, but there will be no gas and
 9 no heating, and she sent me the picture of the text
 10 message, which, considering everything that was
 11 happening, I was so happy to be able to just go home.
 12 But I arrived at the entrance by Latimer train
 13 station, showed the policeman, and he completely denied
 14 any access to go in. So I left quite disheartened, and
 15 I messaged my friend to say, "Actually, I need to stay
 16 a little bit longer". And as I was walking, I saw
 17 a neighbour who lives downstairs, and he said, "Try the
 18 back way, through the garden". So I did. I went
 19 through, went over to the garden entrance, and there was
 20 a policeman standing there. He wasn't sure why TMO
 21 would have sent that message. He was under instructions
 22 that no one from the 300s was allowed back in.
 23 I pleaded to say that I have no purse, no money, no
 24 clothes, so he was able to call, I think, a superior,
 25 who said I can go in with a police escort. So that's

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1 when I was able to first go in and grab some clothes and
 2 my purse.
 3 Q. After having the opportunity then to get some items from
 4 your home, did there come a time when you went to the
 5 Westway for a second time?
 6 A. No, I just did not go back to Westway until much later.
 7 Q. So you went back to the Westway after -- was it after
 8 the 19th or 20th?
 9 A. Yes. After the first experience, I didn't feel that
 10 Westway was the place to go for any information or for
 11 any direction or help.
 12 Q. So you didn't attend on the 19th or 20th to the Westway?
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. Did there come a time when you went back to your home
 15 address, having received a text message, and where you
 16 telephoned an RBKC telephone number in order to try and
 17 secure some accommodation?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Perhaps I could help you in this way: if I could ask you
 20 to have a look at your second witness statement at
 21 paragraph 29 {IWS00001608/7}. You say here:
 22 "I called RBKC. I was waiting on the phone for
 23 about 30 minutes before somebody answered. The first
 24 person I spoke to said that they were under the
 25 assumption that I could go back in, but that I needed to

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1 call the emergency accommodation line. I spoke to
 2 someone there who asked if I could stay at the Westway
 3 or with family or friends. I explained we were staying
 4 with family but that we could not stay for a long time.
 5 The police officer with me could tell that I was feeling
 6 overwhelmed and exasperated; he then spoke to the person
 7 from RBKC and they then agreed that I could stay at the
 8 Holiday Inn in West Kensington for one night. I was to
 9 call back the next day.”
 10 I just wonder if you could help us with the
 11 timeframe of when this interaction took place?
 12 A. This interaction took place the day I went to try and —
 13 no, two days after when I tried to go back into the
 14 flat.
 15 Q. So two days after the 19th or 20th, around that time?
 16 A. Yeah.
 17 Q. Can you recall, was it an RBKC housing line, a helpline,
 18 what sort of — or the RBKC offices that you telephoned?
 19 A. I googled the number, so it was their emergency
 20 accommodation line.
 21 Q. Had it not been for the police officer’s intervention,
 22 do you believe that you would have been offered
 23 emergency accommodation that day?
 24 A. No, I don’t believe so.
 25 Q. Did you get accommodation for that night, then?

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1 A. I did, yes.
 2 Q. In your second statement at paragraph 30
 3 {IWS00001608/7}, just a little bit further down, you
 4 tell us that you went the next day to the St Clement
 5 James Centre, where a lawyer from North Kensington Law
 6 Centre phoned RBKC on your behalf.
 7 Could I ask you, firstly, why did you go to the
 8 St Clement James Centre?
 9 A. There was loads of messages about being able to go to
 10 St Clement James Centre for some support, and everyone
 11 was gathering there, so if you needed any information
 12 from residents, and any support, everyone was pretty
 13 much there, if they weren’t at Westway.
 14 I gravitated towards St Clement James. I went there
 15 as — I went to homework club as a young girl, and it
 16 just felt right. It just felt that, yeah, if it was to
 17 go anywhere, it would be to St Clement James.
 18 Q. How did you know to go there? Was it through word of
 19 mouth?
 20 A. Word of mouth, through messaging, yeah.
 21 Q. Had it not been for members of your community, would you
 22 have known where to go for help?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. As a result of going to the St Clement James Centre and
 25 the assistance that you received there, what happened?

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1 A. I was able to get accommodation closer, so it was in
 2 Hammersmith, with a longer end date, so it didn’t
 3 require me calling up the temporary accommodation line
 4 every day to find out where I would be going, as
 5 I wanted to go back to work, as work needed a lot of
 6 support, but I wouldn’t be able to if I have to call up
 7 every day and kind of be moved to different hotels with
 8 a suitcase.
 9 Q. How would you describe the support you received from
 10 those at the St Clement James Centre?
 11 A. Wonderful, as always. It was nice to see familiar
 12 faces. There was a sense of community that Westway was
 13 lacking, a warmth that Westway was definitely lacking,
 14 and familiar faces.
 15 Q. You were given accommodation, a room with a double bed,
 16 which you and your mother shared. At that stage, did
 17 you mind sharing a bed with your mother?
 18 A. No, at that stage it was at least we have somewhere to
 19 sleep every day and not having to rely on — me relying
 20 on my friends or family that had no space.
 21 Q. Can you assist us with when you eventually did return
 22 home?
 23 A. It was wintertime. It was around maybe December. They
 24 had finally put a temporary gas canister, because our
 25 gas and heating came from underneath the tower, so gas

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1 and heating was somewhat put back into the flats, and as
 2 soon as that happened we were able to go back in.
 3 Q. Ms Boujettiff, I would like to ask you briefly about
 4 your experience whilst in the emergency accommodation.
 5 In your second statement at paragraph 35
 6 {IWS00001608/8}, you say:
 7 “Once we were settled into the hotel, we were drip
 8 fed information about how we could get our meals and
 9 financial support.”
 10 Is that right?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. Does it follow, therefore, that it was unclear to you
 13 about what support was available to you and how you
 14 could access it?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. You mention in this paragraph, 35, that there was
 17 a disparity in how provisions for food were dealt with.
 18 Was it your experience that there was a lack of
 19 consistency in the treatment received by those affected
 20 by the fire?
 21 A. Yes, there was inconsistencies. We weren’t made any
 22 information available to us about what food could be
 23 provided or what money could be provided to buy any
 24 food, and I think at that point of the headache of
 25 trying to get accommodation, it was — we felt that it

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1 was — you know, as long as we have somewhere to stay,
 2 we will just survive on what we can pay out from our own
 3 pocket. So we didn't actively look for any information
 4 on what food could be provided. The hotel did let us
 5 finally know that breakfast and dinner was provided by
 6 the hotel.

7 Q. Did anyone from RBKC or the TMO visit the hotel to meet
 8 with residents and provide any information?

9 A. Initially, no, and then I was given a Hammersmith and
 10 City housing officer who would be my key worker, but
 11 that was after the initial seven days.

12 Q. Can you recall how long after the fire that was?

13 A. I would say two weeks, ten days to two weeks. But her
 14 being a Hammersmith and Fulham housing officer, she said
 15 that she was taken out of her job post, and she was
 16 completely honest and said, "I have no real information
 17 to give you", as she is not part of the borough. She
 18 did refer me to St Charles therapy.

19 Q. Could I just ask, your key worker that you have
 20 mentioned, how often did you speak to your key worker?

21 A. I met her once, and then it was maybe two or three text
 22 messages. When I met with her, she was — not because
 23 she didn't want to be, but she just couldn't help, she
 24 was unhelpful. She was from Hammersmith and Fulham, she
 25 didn't have the connections with RBKC. She couldn't

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1 really answer any of my questions. And it just, again,
 2 felt like I am on my own and I just need to find out the
 3 information myself.

4 Q. You mentioned that she referred you or gave you some
 5 information about where you could go; was that for
 6 counselling support?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Finally, Ms Boujettiff, I wanted to ask you if there was
 9 anything further that you would like to say to conclude
 10 your evidence regarding the impact of the fire or the
 11 treatment that you received in its immediate aftermath?

12 A. The sense of confusion is the one thing that kind of ...
 13 I don't remember details and I don't remember dates, but
 14 I remember feelings, and it felt like when I'm looked at
 15 or when I go to ask for help, I am made to feel that:
 16 you can do it by yourself. At the time I didn't have
 17 a vulnerability, I spoke English, and I'm thankfully
 18 healthy, so it felt like — I was made to feel that it
 19 was my responsibility to go and find accommodation, to
 20 find the information, and just sit there quietly until
 21 the information is given to you.

22 This was all happening whilst or after having seen
 23 the tower on fire, so I don't think mental or emotional
 24 feelings were taken into consideration when you're faced
 25 with an RBKC representative, and they're saying to you,

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1 "You need to look at the news to find out what's going
 2 to happen to where you live". And being a walkway
 3 resident, it felt like we were always pushed to the
 4 side, for many reasons. And I wasn't allowed back in,
 5 but some of the residents were, so it gave a huge
 6 confusion, not only to the residents, but to the
 7 officials, to the police officers, that some were
 8 allowed back in and some weren't. So that created kind
 9 of a push aside, where "You're a walkway resident".

10 So the aftermath and how it was dealt with for —
 11 I can speak for a resident of the walkways, was very
 12 confusing and shambolic, and emotions and what was —
 13 what we experienced, what I experienced, will stay with
 14 me forever.

15 That's all I have to say.

16 MS MALHOTRA: Those are all the questions I wanted to ask
 17 you. We're going to have a pause, I believe, to see if
 18 there are any questions from anyone else.

19 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, Ms Boujettiff. Well, at this
 20 stage we have a short break to give people who are
 21 following the proceedings from other places
 22 an opportunity to suggest questions that perhaps we
 23 ought to put to you. So we'll break now.

24 I would have thought just over five minutes is long
 25 enough, wouldn't you?

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1 MS MALHOTRA: Yes.

2 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: We will come back at 12.25 to see if
 3 there are any more questions. While you're out of the
 4 room, I don't think you will have a chance to talk to
 5 anyone about your evidence, but if you do, please avoid
 6 doing it.

7 THE WITNESS: Okay.

8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much. Would you go
 9 with the usher, then, please.

10 (Pause)

11 We'll come back at 12.25, but if for any reason you
 12 need more time, then just ask the usher to come and tell
 13 us. All right?

14 Thank you very much.

15 (12.17 pm)

16 (A short break)

17 (12.25 pm)

18 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right. Well, we'll see if there
 19 are any more questions for you.

20 Yes, Ms Malhotra.

21 MS MALHOTRA: Ms Boujettiff, there was one question arising.
 22 It's in regards to your emergency accommodation. You
 23 described being in hotel accommodation. What was your
 24 experience — what would happen at the end of each day?

25 A. In — with the long-term hotel or ...?

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1 Q. Was there a situation where you had to check out of
2 a hotel?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. Was that in the first few days after the fire?
5 A. Yes, when I would have to call up every day for — to
6 see where I'd be the next day.
7 Q. And what was the process? Would you have to change
8 hotels or would you just have to confirm a room for the
9 next night?
10 A. No, I would have to come out completely, give in the
11 key, because I wasn't guaranteed that hotel.
12 Q. Can you assist with how many days that went on for?
13 A. Three days.
14 MS MALHOTRA: Thank you, Ms Boujettiff.
15 I think the only thing left for me to say is thank
16 you very much for coming to give your evidence today.
17 We appreciate that it may have been a difficult process
18 for you, and we're grateful for your assistance.
19 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: It's right that, before you go,
20 I should thank you very much on behalf of the panel for
21 coming to tell us about your experiences. It was
22 obviously a difficult thing for you to do in some
23 respects, and I'm sorry about that, but it's been very
24 helpful to us to hear what you have to tell us, and we
25 are very grateful.

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1 Thank you very much indeed, and you're now free to
2 go.
3 THE WITNESS: Perfect, thank you very much.
4 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.
5 (The witness withdrew)
6 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Malhotra.
7 Now, we have another witness.
8 MS MALHOTRA: We do.
9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: But we need to rise for a short
10 time, just to enable the usual arrangements to be made;
11 is that right?
12 MS MALHOTRA: Yes.
13 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: We'll do that, and you can ask the
14 usher to come and find us as soon as you're ready.
15 Thank you very much.
16 (12.29 pm)
17 (A short break)
18 (12.34 pm)
19 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, Ms Islam. Now, you have
20 another witness for us, I think.
21 MS ISLAM: Yes. Can I please call Mrs Hanan Cherbika.
22 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.
23 MRS HANAN CHERBIKA (sworn)
24 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much. Do sit down,
25 please, make yourself comfortable.

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1 (Pause)
2 Yes, Ms Islam, when you're ready. Thank you.
3 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY
4 MS ISLAM: Mrs Cherbika, thank you for attending today to
5 give evidence to assist the Inquiry with its
6 investigations.
7 A. Thank you.
8 Q. By way of introduction, please try and keep your voice
9 up when you're giving your answers so that the
10 transcriber over there can hear what you're saying. It
11 also helps to say "yes" or "no" rather than nod so we
12 can capture it on the transcript.
13 If any of my questions are unclear, let me know and
14 I will rephrase it.
15 If at any point you need to break, we will
16 accommodate that, just let us know.
17 Is that okay?
18 A. Yes, fine, thank you.
19 Q. You have made two statements to the Inquiry.
20 The first is dated 4 April 2018, and if we could go
21 to that, please, it's {IWS0000016}. If we could please
22 turn to page 20 of that statement, can you confirm that
23 that is your signature?
24 A. Yes, it is.
25 Q. Thank you.

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1 You also made a second statement to the Inquiry
2 dated 12 February 2020. Can we please turn to that at
3 {IWS00001286}. If we could please go to page 24 of that
4 statement, can you confirm that is your signature?
5 A. Yes, it is.
6 Q. Have you had the opportunity to read those statements
7 recently?
8 A. I have, yeah.
9 Q. Can you confirm that the contents are true to the best
10 of your knowledge?
11 A. They are.
12 Q. Thank you.
13 I'm going to ask you some background questions
14 first.
15 You were a resident of 208 Grenfell Walk at the time
16 of the fire, where you lived with your husband and three
17 children; is that right?
18 A. That's correct, yeah.
19 Q. Is it right that you moved there in 2006 but in fact
20 you'd lived in the area since 1993?
21 A. That's correct, yeah.
22 Q. In your statement, you explain that your family life was
23 very centred around the estate; is that right?
24 A. That's correct.
25 Q. As a result of how long you'd lived in the area, is it

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1 right to say that you knew a number of people that sadly
 2 passed away in the fire?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. And, in particular, you were good friends with
 5 Faouzia El-Wahabi and her family; is that right?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Okay, just take a moment.
 8 A. It's okay.
 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right?
 10 MS ISLAM: Are you okay for me to continue?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. I'm going to ask you some questions about the early
 13 hours of 14 June.
 14 Is it right that you first became aware of the fire
 15 at around 00.50 in the morning, when your husband came
 16 home?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. And when you became aware that the fire was serious, is
 19 it right that you decided to leave with your children
 20 and take them to your mother's house, who lives about
 21 ten minutes away?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Once you left your home, how would you describe the
 24 scene?
 25 A. Chaotic. Panic.

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1 Q. All right.
 2 If it helps, in paragraph 39 of your first statement
 3 {IWS00000016/11}, you say:
 4 "Grenfell Walk was just packed. Everybody was
 5 screaming hysterically."
 6 Is that right?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. At this point, what was going through your mind?
 9 A. Are my children's friends still inside? I can remember.
 10 Q. Is it right that after dropping your children off, you
 11 returned to the area?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Did you go back to your flat to try and pick up some
 14 things?
 15 A. I did, yes.
 16 Q. And did you then leave your flat?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Once you were outside, did you notice anyone from RBKC
 19 or the TMO or any other official presence providing any
 20 information or support?
 21 A. No.
 22 Q. I'm going to turn to ask you about some of the rest
 23 centres that you visited in your search for people that
 24 were missing.
 25 A. Okay.

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1 Q. Is it right to say that you stayed at the scene because
 2 you wanted to try and find your friend Faouzia El-Wahabi
 3 and her family?
 4 A. That's correct, yes.
 5 Q. You became aware that local centres and mosques were
 6 opening.
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Is it right that the first place you went to was the
 9 Harrow Club?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. At the Harrow Club, you spoke to a youth worker about
 12 your friends, and is it right that he put the names down
 13 on a list?
 14 A. That's correct.
 15 Q. Do you remember what that list was?
 16 A. It was a plain white piece of paper with columns, with
 17 name, address, what floor they lived on, and had we seen
 18 them, and then they were just filling it out as everyone
 19 was giving information to them.
 20 Q. Did you understand that to be a list being pulled
 21 together by the community or an official list?
 22 A. No, from the community.
 23 Q. Thank you.
 24 I think you mention in your statement that there was
 25 somebody from the British Red Cross at the Harrow Club.

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1 Do you remember speaking to anybody from the
 2 British Red Cross?
 3 A. Not at the Harrow Club, no, I don't remember. It may
 4 have been.
 5 Q. Do you remember seeing anybody from RBKC or the TMO at
 6 the Harrow Club?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. How would you describe the atmosphere whilst you were at
 9 the Harrow Club?
 10 A. A lot of confusion, not knowing where people were going,
 11 why they were there. Yeah.
 12 Q. Okay.
 13 You say in your statement that after the Harrow Club
 14 you went to the St Clement's Church; is that right?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. In terms of the time, would you say that that was still
 17 in the early hours, at about 4 o'clock in the morning?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. As you were going from the Harrow Club to the
 20 St Clement's Church, how would you describe what was
 21 going on in the streets?
 22 A. I remember the roads packed with ambulances, fire
 23 services, local residents. I also remember media.
 24 Yeah.
 25 Q. Okay.

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1 When you arrived at the St Clement's Church, what
 2 was going on there?
 3 A. When I walked in, two people came towards myself and my
 4 husband and they asked if I was from the tower, and
 5 I said no, I was from Grenfell Walk. Then they said,
 6 "Would you like a cup of tea?", and offered
 7 refreshments. We -- they offered us a seat, and I don't
 8 remember after that.
 9 Q. It might help if I take you to paragraph 56 of your
 10 first witness statement {IWS0000016/17}, please. It
 11 will appear on your screen in just a second.
 12 So towards the bottom of that paragraph, it says:
 13 "We went into the Church and the events of the night
 14 must have shown on my face because the Vicar or Priest
 15 ... offered to make me a hot drink and offered me a
 16 blanket. I told him that I was looking for my friend.
 17 He checked the list and Faouzia's family name was
 18 already on it."
 19 Just asking you about that list --
 20 A. I'm sorry, I can't see where I'm reading it from.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is it on your screen now?
 22 A. There is -- yeah.
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Shall we just pick it up at the
 24 bottom of the previous page so we can read into the
 25 paragraph.

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1 MS ISLAM: Yes, please.
 2 So if we're looking at the last sentence on
 3 paragraph 56, which starts with, "We went into"; can you
 4 see that?
 5 A. Yeah.
 6 Q. "We went into the Church and the events of the night
 7 must have shown on my face because the Vicar or Priest
 8 (he was wearing a dog collar) offered to make me a hot
 9 drink and offered me a blanket. I told him that I was
 10 looking for my friend. He checked the list and
 11 Faouzia's family name was already on it."
 12 Can you see that?
 13 A. Yes, yeah.
 14 Q. So just to ask you about that list, did you understand
 15 that to be a list of safe and missing residents?
 16 A. To be honest with you, I can't remember that list.
 17 Q. Okay.
 18 A. But I've said it here, then it probably was on it, but
 19 at this moment I can't remember.
 20 Q. That's fine, thank you.
 21 Do you remember seeing anyone from the TMO at
 22 St Clement's Church recording details of people coming
 23 into the centre?
 24 A. Never. No.
 25 Q. Do you remember seeing anybody from RBKC at St Clement's

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1 Church?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. Is it right that you then tried to go to the Rugby Club
 4 after the St Clement's Church?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. And what did you want to do when you got to the
 7 Rugby Club?
 8 A. The same as I wanted to do when I went to Harrow Club,
 9 to see if they'd found anything, anybody, if they'd
 10 heard anything, and give information if I had
 11 anything -- if I heard anything on the way.
 12 Q. Is it right that you weren't allowed into the Rugby Club
 13 because you weren't a tower resident?
 14 A. That's correct.
 15 Q. How did that make you feel, not being allowed in at that
 16 time?
 17 A. I was quite disappointed with them, to be honest with
 18 you, because the person that I was speaking to knows --
 19 my son used to play football with them for many years,
 20 and they know where I live, and I kind of felt like,
 21 I understand I'm not a survivor that come out of the
 22 tower, but you know me, you know where I live, you know
 23 that I am homeless, and you've closed the door on my
 24 face, and it was really hard to take that. I didn't
 25 want to go in and say I'm a survivor, because I'm not,

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1 but I just didn't know what to do. I didn't know what
 2 I was doing at that time, and I just felt really
 3 rejected by somebody that knew me and my family
 4 personally.
 5 Q. Thank you.
 6 You later went on to other rest centres, including
 7 the Westway Centre and the Latimer Christian Centre; is
 8 that right?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Can you tell us what your experience was of the support
 11 at the Latimer Christian Centre, please?
 12 A. The Latimer Christian Centre, I didn't go inside, I was
 13 only outside, I think, at this moment I can recall, so
 14 I just went there to go and look for one of my
 15 neighbours I knew had gone there for shelter.
 16 Q. Thank you.
 17 If I could take you to paragraph 130 of your second
 18 witness statement {IWS00001286/17}, please, and it will
 19 appear on your screen again.
 20 Just starting with paragraph 130, you say:
 21 "130. On the night of the fire, I had to physically
 22 go around youth clubs and churches to try and find out
 23 if my friends and kids' friends that were in the Tower
 24 and managed to get out.
 25 "131. I tried to find out about where they were by

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1 ringing up friends, asking around my mum's neighbours.
 2 "132. It felt like there was no place to obtain
 3 information about missing people and, if there was, it
 4 was not easily accessible to me.
 5 "133. It felt like a warzone."
 6 Is that right?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. In all of the rest centres that you attended, were you
 9 able to find any information about your friends?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Were you aware of some sort of centralised system of
 12 official information about those that were missing?
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. I'm going to ask you now about your experience at the
 15 Westway Centre.
 16 If I can take you, please, to paragraph 47 of your
 17 second witness statement {IWS00001286/7}, you say:
 18 "I knew by word of mouth that the Westway was open,
 19 so we went there, but they were stopping us from
 20 entering because we were not from the Tower."
 21 You continue to say:
 22 "I remember the people from the Red Cross asked us
 23 for our ID, to make sure we were living in the Tower.
 24 I could not believe it. They told us that we could not
 25 go in, unless we were from the Tower. I was there

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1 wearing my mum's clothes, because I had left everything
 2 in Grenfell Walk. I had lost my house, I had lost
 3 everything, and they were telling me that living on
 4 Grenfell Walk was not enough to receive help."
 5 Is that right?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. I just want to ask you a few questions about this
 8 passage, if that's okay.
 9 Do you remember what time it was that you visited
 10 the Westway Centre?
 11 A. I don't, I just remember it being in daylight. I don't
 12 remember what time.
 13 Q. Okay.
 14 In this passage, you say "they"; when you "they
 15 stopped us entering", who are you referring to?
 16 A. There was a table set up outside the Westway and there
 17 was about three or four people standing there. So when
 18 I'm saying "they", I'm assuming I'm talking about the
 19 people behind the desk.
 20 Q. Do you know whether those people were from the RBKC?
 21 A. No, I believe they were from the Red Cross. They had
 22 badges or lanyards on them, I'm not sure which one, but
 23 I remember seeing the Red Cross there.
 24 Q. Okay.
 25 Once you were denied entry, how did you feel at that

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1 point?
 2 A. Again, rejected. Just dead end, all the time. It was
 3 quite tiring to have to repeat yourself and stress to
 4 them that Grenfell Walk had been evacuated. Yeah.
 5 Q. Yes.
 6 Now, you've told us that the people at the desk were
 7 from the British Red Cross, but do you remember seeing,
 8 even in the area that you were in, anybody from the TMO
 9 or RBKC at the Westway Centre?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Okay.
 12 Were there other evacuated residents from properties
 13 surrounding the tower also trying to gain access to the
 14 Westway Centre when you were there?
 15 A. I remember seeing people around outside the Westway,
 16 I don't remember seeing anybody at the desk. So I'm
 17 assuming they probably wanted to get in as well, but
 18 I don't know, I'm just assuming.
 19 Q. In your statement at paragraph 49 {IWS00001286/7}, we
 20 can go to it if you want to, but you say you were
 21 eventually let into the Westway Centre; do you remember
 22 that?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. What changed? How were you able to get into the centre?
 25 A. I believe at this point it was another day, or later on

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1 in the day. I don't know what changed. I don't know.
 2 Q. Okay.
 3 Do you remember being given a wristband to identify
 4 you to get into the Westway Centre?
 5 A. I do, yes.
 6 Q. How did you feel about having to wear a wristband to get
 7 into the centre?
 8 A. It was quite -- I don't know if "degrading" is the right
 9 word to use, but it was embarrassing, because it kind of
 10 singled you out.
 11 Q. Yes, all right.
 12 If we could go to paragraph 51, please, of your
 13 second statement {IWS00001286/7}, you say:
 14 "The Westway was literally an emergency shelter,
 15 with a line of beds. Hicham ..."
 16 Who is your husband; is that right?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. "... was there during the day, looking after ... our
 19 youngest child, trying to get him asleep, and took
 20 pictures."
 21 I would like to take you to one of those pictures,
 22 please. It's exhibit HC/29, available at {IWS00000060},
 23 please.
 24 Is that the picture as far as -- are you okay?
 25 A. Yes, I'm fine, sorry.

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1 Q. Take a moment. There's absolutely no pressure of time,
2 okay?
3 A. Go ahead.
4 Q. Are you okay for me to continue?
5 A. Yes, yes, fine.
6 Q. Okay.
7 Is this a picture of the Westway Centre?
8 A. It is, yes.
9 Q. As someone who had been evacuated from your home, what
10 was your experience of the Westway Centre as somewhere
11 that was supposed to offer support and relief?
12 A. I couldn't believe that this was happening. I remember
13 walking in thinking it looks -- sorry. It looks like
14 something that you see on TV. Nothing's ever
15 happened -- like nothing -- this doesn't happen here.
16 I don't know. I don't know.
17 Q. Thank you.
18 Do you remember what services were available at the
19 Westway Centre?
20 We can take the image off the screen now, thank you.
21 A. At that point?
22 Q. Yes.
23 A. I don't remember there being any services, I just
24 remember them having beds there, and having -- like,
25 there was loads of donations on the floor, clothes, food

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1 on the tables, but that's it. Nothing official.
2 Q. Yes.
3 If I can take you, please, to paragraph 52 of your
4 second witness statement {IWS00001286/7}. You say:
5 "I felt like I was fighting to let them understand
6 who I was, I felt like it was a constant battle with
7 them, to explain to them where I was from and why I had
8 the right to be there."
9 Again, when you say "them", who are you referring
10 to?
11 A. The same people.
12 Q. British Red Cross?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. Did you feel like you were being treated differently
15 because you were a walkway resident?
16 A. I did, yes.
17 Q. In what way did you feel you were treated differently?
18 A. I don't want this to sound like I'm disrespecting
19 survivors or the bereaved, but to them I just felt like
20 we didn't matter, because we didn't come out of the
21 tower and we didn't lose anybody, family. So ...
22 Q. Thank you.
23 Did you receive any support or information from RBKC
24 or the TMO whilst at the Westway Centre?
25 A. No.

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1 Q. Were you told at any point at the Westway Centre that,
2 as an evacuated resident, you were able to stay there?
3 A. On this day?
4 Q. On the 14th.
5 A. No.
6 Q. Were you later told that in the first week?
7 A. Probably, but I can't recall. Probably, yeah.
8 Q. Did anyone advise you that because you had young
9 children you were entitled to emergency hotel
10 accommodation?
11 A. No.
12 Q. Did you return to the Westway Centre in the days that
13 followed, in that first week?
14 A. I did, yes.
15 Q. And do you feel that the services improved over the
16 course of that week?
17 A. Eventually, but I don't know if it was in the same week.
18 I don't know if it was within that week, but the
19 services improved because they started bringing people
20 from housing and all the other information that you
21 needed. But on the week, I don't know. I don't
22 remember.
23 MS ISLAM: Okay.
24 Mr Chairman, I'm about to move on to a new topic.
25 I'm happy to continue, but there is five minutes to the

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1 lunch break.
2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You have a little way to go, still,
3 haven't you?
4 MS ISLAM: I do, yes.
5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, I am in your hands.
6 Would you rather start that new topic after lunch?
7 MS ISLAM: Yes, please.
8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. Well, that's what we'll
9 do then.
10 Ms Cherbika, we need to break soon, about now, so
11 that we can all get some lunch, at least those of us who
12 are able to have lunch. I'm afraid there's a little bit
13 further to go with your evidence, so we will have to ask
14 you to come back this afternoon.
15 THE WITNESS: That's okay.
16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We will break now. We will resume,
17 please, at 2 o'clock. As I've said to all the other
18 witnesses who have started giving evidence and then had
19 to break off, please don't talk to anyone about your
20 evidence while you're out of the room.
21 THE WITNESS: Okay.
22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?
23 THE WITNESS: Yeah.
24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. Would you go
25 with the usher, then, please.

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1 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 2 (Pause)
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you very much.
 4 2 o'clock, then, please.
 5 MS ISLAM: Thank you.
 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you.
 7 (12.57 pm)
 8 (The short adjournment)
 9 (2.00 pm)
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: All right, are you ready to carry
 11 on?
 12 THE WITNESS: I am, yeah, thank you.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you very much.
 14 Yes, Ms Islam.
 15 MS ISLAM: Mrs Cherbika, I'm now going to ask you some
 16 questions about your emergency accommodation.
 17 Is it right that you initially stayed with your
 18 parents at their home until 16 June?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Did you try and get any emergency accommodation between
 21 14 and 16 June?
 22 A. No, I didn't. I didn't know there was anything out
 23 there for us. I wasn't really concentrating on the
 24 accommodation.
 25 Q. Okay.

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1 Did you receive any communication from the TMO or
 2 RBKC between those dates offering you any emergency
 3 accommodation?
 4 A. No, I -- the only phone call I got from them regarding
 5 accommodation was to ask if I wanted to swap -- have
 6 a house swap. So basically, before the fire, I applied
 7 for a three bedroom, because I had a girl and two boys,
 8 and I thought I'd put myself forward for a home swap,
 9 and then I got a phone call from TMO asking me if
 10 I wanted to swap. Initially I thought it was a prank
 11 call or something, but it turned out it actually was
 12 a genuine call from them. I said to them, like, "I'm
 13 from Grenfell Walk".
 14 Q. Do you remember when that call was?
 15 A. That was -- it was within the week of the fire. I can't
 16 be exact on what date it was or day, but it was within
 17 the week, because I remember coming out of my mum's
 18 house, and I was in a car as it happened, so ...
 19 Q. Did they offer you any support in relation to what had
 20 happened with you being evacuated on that call?
 21 A. During that call, the lady didn't know anything about
 22 the Grenfell Tower fire. This is what she'd told me.
 23 She'd been on holiday, so, "I don't know what you're
 24 talking about", and I said to her, "Is this a joke?"
 25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. Yeah. I was in disbelief. I was angry. I just
 2 couldn't believe that I was getting asked this question.
 3 Q. Thank you.
 4 Just returning briefly to hotel accommodation, is it
 5 right that it was your father that told you that hotel
 6 accommodation might be available for you?
 7 A. He was in the local coffee shop, and his friends were
 8 saying that people from the area were getting
 9 accommodation now in the hotels, and he came back and he
 10 said to me, you know, this is what they're saying in the
 11 coffee, and I was like -- in the coffee shop. I didn't
 12 know what he was talking about.
 13 Q. You say in paragraph 58 of your second statement
 14 {IWS00001286/8} that you called the council yourself to
 15 ask about hotel accommodation. Do you remember that?
 16 I'll just wait for you to get to it.
 17 A. Yeah.
 18 (Pause)
 19 Q. Can you see that there?
 20 A. I can, yeah.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: I think it will be blown up in
 22 a minute for you.
 23 A. No, I've read it. It's 58. Yeah.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Oh, have you?
 25 A. Yeah, it's fine.

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE–BICK: Thank you.
 2 A. So after my dad telling me -- having that conversation
 3 with me, I think it was the following morning, me and my
 4 husband went down to the Westway and we enquired there,
 5 and they gave me a phone number to call, which is the
 6 town hall -- I don't know if it was town hall or TMO
 7 office, I can't remember at the time, and they told me
 8 to call them back, they'll be looking for accommodation
 9 for me and my family. In that time we had gone up to
 10 Kensington Town Hall because there was a protest there.
 11 MS ISLAM: Okay.
 12 Is it right that you were eventually offered a place
 13 at Copthorne Tara Hotel?
 14 A. I was, yeah.
 15 Q. And that was on 16 June?
 16 A. It was the Friday, yeah, yeah.
 17 Q. Okay.
 18 When you asked for the hotel accommodation, did you
 19 have any issues with the council, in terms of were they
 20 happy to make the offer of accommodation to you?
 21 A. Yeah, I don't think there was an issue with them.
 22 I think they just said -- I recall the conversation just
 23 saying, "We found you a place, it's in the
 24 Copthorne Tara, it's in Kensington", and they gave me
 25 the address, and that was quite -- that's it. I didn't

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1 get anything else out of them.
 2 Q. Thank you.
 3 I'm now going to ask you some questions about your
 4 hotel accommodation more specifically.
 5 What were your first impressions of the
 6 accommodation that you'd been provided?
 7 A. I just looked around and I just thought to myself: how
 8 are we going to stay in this — in these two rooms?
 9 They gave us two rooms. They were adjoining rooms, they
 10 were next to each other. I had an 11-month baby at that
 11 time, I had a 9-year-old boy who was very, very active,
 12 and I had a 12-year-old girl that had just started
 13 secondary school, and me and my husband, and I just
 14 remember thinking to myself: this is tiny.
 15 Then I went to the window, and they'd placed me on
 16 the 9th floor, and I just remember thinking: this must
 17 be how the survivors — this must have been the view of
 18 the survivors on the night of the fire. So I was
 19 scared. I didn't feel safe. I didn't know if this was
 20 going to be a trap for them to do something to us.
 21 As — it sounds crazy. At the time I remember thinking:
 22 maybe they're going to do something to this hotel and
 23 that's why they've deliberately put us up on the
 24 9th floor and we won't be able to escape. At the time,
 25 I remember everything going through my head.

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1 I didn't like that hotel. It sounds ungrateful, but
 2 I didn't like where we was, but I knew that we just had
 3 to deal with it.
 4 Q. How long did you and your family stay in that hotel?
 5 A. We stayed there for nearly a year, or just over a year.
 6 Q. If I can turn you to paragraph 70 of your second witness
 7 statement {IWS00001286/9}, please, you say:
 8 "I tried not to spend much time at the hotel, I felt
 9 in a cage. I could not even sleep there."
 10 Is that right?
 11 A. That's correct.
 12 Q. Just turning to paragraph 78 of the same statement,
 13 {IWS00001286/11}, please, in this paragraph you're
 14 talking about your youngest child, and you say:
 15 "He took his first steps in the hallway of the
 16 hotel; his first Eid was in a hotel. He had been
 17 through a lot, without even realising it. I will never
 18 forgive the Council for this."
 19 What was your experience of being at the hotel with
 20 young children?
 21 A. It was horrible. It wasn't nice. As I said, my child
 22 was 11 months. His main stages of development, he
 23 wasn't meeting anything, because he was in the tiny
 24 room. My daughter was going — she started secondary
 25 school. The ridiculous amount of homework she got from

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1 secondary school, she couldn't complete her homework
 2 because there was no space for her to do it. There
 3 wasn't even a table — there was a table and chairs
 4 there, but it had our stuff on top of it, so she had no
 5 access to any rooms to do her homework. My son was
 6 9 years old. As I said before, he played football, he
 7 was very active. The room — it just wasn't suitable
 8 for any of us and the children.
 9 It was cruel. It wasn't — that's not how you're
 10 supposed to treat children, just putting them into
 11 little rooms and then expecting them to just deal with
 12 it. They're children.
 13 Q. Thank you.
 14 Just briefly touching on your experience of food and
 15 drink in the hotel, what was your experience of the food
 16 provision?
 17 A. So I didn't know if we was allowed to have food in the
 18 hotel, not till maybe a few days down the line, I had
 19 asked reception what was included in our hotel package,
 20 if you say it like that — it sounds like I'm on
 21 holiday, but you understand what I'm saying.
 22 Q. Yes.
 23 A. And they said you can have food throughout the day, you
 24 can have room service or you can go down to the
 25 restaurant. I said, "Okay, thank you". When we went

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1 down to the restaurant, asked for the menu, basically
 2 there was — same as like what Mouna was saying earlier
 3 on, it was either fish and chips or pizza, because they
 4 didn't have Halal food. I did ask the restaurant chef
 5 if he did Halal. He asked me, "What's Halal?" That
 6 answered my question.
 7 Q. Thank you.
 8 I'm now going to ask you some questions about
 9 financial assistance and basic provisions.
 10 Do you recall getting any financial assistance from
 11 RBKC in the first week following the fire?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. Can I take you to paragraph 89 of your second statement
 14 {IWS00001286/12}, please. You say:
 15 "At the time, I did not have anything. I remember
 16 looking for ready milk cartons I needed, with a baby
 17 formula and access to hot water. I had a kettle in the
 18 hotel, but I did not have a flask and I was always out,
 19 running around, so I did not have anything I could bring
 20 with me and I could not go shopping."
 21 You continue:
 22 "We needed everything, even things as simple as
 23 water."
 24 Did anybody from RBKC get in touch with you to
 25 ensure that these needs were met?

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1 A. No. It's correct as well, there was water -- it was the
 2 bathroom water. If I wanted to fill the kettle up,
 3 I had to go to the bathroom. I've got an 11-month baby
 4 that doesn't take, you know, cows' milk. At that time,
 5 he was still on formula. I couldn't even -- it's the
 6 simplest of things -- make a bottle of milk for my son,
 7 because I wasn't going to put, you know, bathroom water
 8 into a kettle. It's just not -- you shouldn't do that.
 9 Q. I think you say in your statement -- we can go to it if
 10 we need to, it's paragraph 87 {IWS00001286/12} -- that
 11 the first person who offered you money was from
 12 an Islamic charity. Was that within the first week
 13 following the fire, do you remember?
 14 A. That was -- yes, that was when we first arrived. We got
 15 out of our car, we unpacked a few bags, a volunteer came
 16 over, and said, "Oh, can you put the donations in the
 17 room over on the mezzanine floor", I think it was.
 18 I said, "This is not donations, this is my family's
 19 stuff and we're coming to the hotel because this is
 20 where we've been placed", and then that -- my husband
 21 parked the car up, we walked through the lobby, and then
 22 we saw the man that offered us help, and that was the
 23 first kind of financial help that we got was from that
 24 charity.
 25 Q. Thank you.

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1 Turning now, please, to psychosocial support, did
 2 you receive any psychological support from the council
 3 in the first week following the fire?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Do you recall there being any such support available
 6 when you had attended the Westway Centre?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. Was any such support available at your hotel in the
 9 first week following the fire?
 10 A. Not that I knew of.
 11 Q. Okay.
 12 Can I take you, please, to paragraph 99 of your
 13 second statement {IWS00001286/13}. You say:
 14 "I think the Council should have organised
 15 psychological support at that stage: I remember seeing
 16 my people, my community, like zombies, completely blank
 17 or crying their eyes out."
 18 What specific support would you and your family have
 19 benefitted from in the first week following the fire?
 20 A. Just someone to come and check up on us, just to sit --
 21 just to even offer some sort of support, psychological
 22 support. But there was nothing. No one came up to us
 23 and ...
 24 Q. Okay.
 25 Later on in your statement -- it's at paragraph 103

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1 {IWS00001286/13} if we need to go to it -- but you say
 2 that someone from Hestia told you that letters were
 3 being put under survivors' doors advising them of
 4 psychological support, but that you never received those
 5 letters; is that right?
 6 A. That's correct. That was after seven days. This lady
 7 was at the lobby of the hotel, and I was always seeing
 8 her there with a group of people, and some being
 9 survivors that she was talking to, and I just assumed
 10 that she was a survivor. I mean, it wasn't until later
 11 on me and my husband were sitting downstairs and she
 12 said, "Oh, I'm" -- am I allowed to say her name?
 13 Q. If you would like to.
 14 A. "I'm Sanya and I'm from Hestia, how are you guys?", and
 15 I said, "Oh, what is Hestia?", and she said, "Hestia is
 16 a therapy company" -- I don't know what you call it --
 17 "and we're here if you need any help, we have been
 18 giving letters", and that's when she told me about the
 19 letter, and I said to her, "I haven't received any
 20 letter", and she said, "Well, we have been posting it",
 21 and I said, "Well, I have changed rooms since
 22 I originally got there", and I'm assuming they didn't
 23 update anybody about moving our rooms inside, because
 24 never ever once did I get a letter from Hestia or
 25 the council.

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1 Q. Had you known about the service, would you have used it?
 2 A. At that time, when I was speaking to Sanya, yes, I would
 3 have used it for my children, my daughter especially, so
 4 yeah.
 5 Q. If I could take you, please, to paragraph 129 of your
 6 second statement {IWS00001286/17}, you say:
 7 "But, in general, the response in respect of
 8 psychiatric therapy was inappropriate, majorly lacking
 9 and unempathetic, so we decided to pursue private
 10 rehabilitation through Corpore."
 11 Is that right?
 12 A. Yes, but again, that was way after the seven days. That
 13 was probably September. It wasn't like instantly after
 14 the fire.
 15 Q. Okay.
 16 If I can take you, please, back to paragraph 110 of
 17 your second statement {IWS00001286/14}, you say:
 18 "I was offered a social worker. Then Social workers
 19 changed over to keyworkers. They kept on changing all
 20 the time. I probably went through 8 or 9 keyworkers,
 21 support workers, whatever workers. It was hard to start
 22 again every time, I felt like I was constantly repeating
 23 myself. I felt that when I clicked with somebody, every
 24 time I liked someone, the Council would take that person
 25 away from me."

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1 Is that right?
 2 A. That's correct, yes.
 3 Q. Do you remember whether you were allocated a social
 4 worker or a key worker within the first week following
 5 the fire or did it come afterwards?
 6 A. After, it wasn't the first week.
 7 Q. What was the impact of the repeated changes in that
 8 support?
 9 A. It was just traumatising. Every single time you have to
 10 repeat what you have been through. And bear in mind
 11 I wasn't only speaking for myself, I was speaking for my
 12 husband, I was speaking for my three children, so I had
 13 to constantly go through it all the time. It was
 14 draining, upsetting and really disappointing, because
 15 these are strangers to me, and I have to repeat myself
 16 constantly all the time, when really they should have
 17 had, you know, notes written down and known my
 18 situation, rather than having to ask me from scratch
 19 what had happened. It was just — it was horrible.
 20 Q. Did you find any of the social workers or key workers
 21 that you did have helpful to you and your family?
 22 A. Yes, I did. There was a couple of them, maybe two, that
 23 were really good. But the problem was they were either
 24 getting promoted, so being like the team leader or
 25 something, or they would leave, and I just felt it was

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1 constant, like as soon as you finally found somebody
 2 that could not understand but sympathise with what
 3 you're going through and help you on the stuff that you
 4 really need help with, next thing I'd get a phone call,
 5 "Okay, well, I've left my position and I'm going to
 6 bring somebody — I'll get you in contact with
 7 so—and—so", so the next worker. It was constantly —
 8 I say eight or nine workers, key workers, but even up
 9 until this day, it is way over 15 workers.
 10 Q. Thank you.
 11 I'm going to ask you now some questions about public
 12 communication of support services available.
 13 You have touched on this already, but were you aware
 14 of any efforts by RBKC or the TMO to communicate with
 15 residents in the first week following the fire?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. Can I take you, please, to paragraph 145 of your second
 18 statement {IWS00001286/19}. I'm just going to read
 19 through some of these paragraphs. You say:
 20 "145. They never give us any information; they would
 21 not communicate with us. You had to actively try and
 22 find out. It was always me looking for information, not
 23 knowing what I was looking for.
 24 "146. I knew about services offered via word of
 25 mouth or by attending meetings. I knew about the

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1 meetings because I was sitting in the lobby and people
 2 would ask me to attend.
 3 "147. The Council could have organised text
 4 messages, WhatsApp broadcasts, but they never did. The
 5 Council had my number, but they would never contact me.
 6 "148. Some survivors and I created a WhatsApp group
 7 to communicate with our neighbours and residents, to let
 8 everyone know what was going on.
 9 "149. The Council were not helpful to me, but I was
 10 helpful to them: I was helping them to do their job.
 11 Because I was so active in the community, I was telling
 12 them what people needed and facilitating communication
 13 between the Council and the people."
 14 Is that right?
 15 A. That's correct, yes.
 16 Q. Again, you've touched on this, but what was the impact
 17 of not having clear communication of the support and
 18 services that were available?
 19 A. It was — it just made my life hell because, like I said
 20 there, I didn't know what I was looking for, I didn't
 21 know if I was coming or going, and then when I finally
 22 did find somebody and they spoke to me, I would be
 23 telling them that, "Actually, no, this is how it is",
 24 and it was just — I was — I felt — like here, I felt
 25 like I was doing their job for them, because I felt like

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1 I was more knowledgeable than the actual official
 2 people, and it was really frustrating.
 3 Q. Okay.
 4 Now, you mentioned earlier that you got a call from
 5 somebody from the TMO who did not know what had
 6 happened.
 7 I want to take you to paragraph 173, please, of your
 8 statement {IWS00001286/22}. It says here:
 9 "On Wednesday morning [so you're talking about
 10 14 June here], I had a phone call from the TMO. I had
 11 a conversation with my housing officer, she sounded
 12 quite relieved when she heard my voice. She said: 'Oh,
 13 Hanan, are you all right, are you and your family okay?'
 14 I said 'Yeah, we are.' 'Okay, bye, okay, I just wanted
 15 to know that you are safe.'"
 16 Do you remember this call?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Was it on 14 June?
 19 A. Yeah, yeah.
 20 Q. And was somebody from the TMO, as you say?
 21 A. That was a lady called Dionne and I think she was my
 22 housing officer.
 23 Q. Did she ask you where you were staying or where you were
 24 going?
 25 A. No, literally that was our conversation that I can

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1 remember. I don't remember her asking me where I was
 2 staying. She just wanted to know if I was fine and my
 3 family were.
 4 Q. It's right to say, then, that you weren't given any
 5 information about where to get emergency accommodation
 6 or any other support?
 7 A. No, I just remember stupidly asking her, "Do I need to
 8 pay my rent this week?" It sounds so silly at the time,
 9 but she said, "No, of course you don't", and that's it.
 10 That's the only part of the conversation I had with her,
 11 and that was nothing. She didn't tell me where to go or
 12 what I should do.
 13 Q. Turning, please, to ask you about the community
 14 response.
 15 What was your experience of the voluntary and
 16 community response in the immediate aftermath of the
 17 fire?
 18 A. They were amazing. The community, people from outside
 19 our community, just came in, volunteered, and just got
 20 on with it, and they -- I still say to this day, if it
 21 wasn't for them, I don't know where any of us lot would
 22 be, because they held us. They kept us going.
 23 Q. In your view, how did the voluntary response compare to
 24 the official response?
 25 A. I felt like I could talk more to the people that were

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1 volunteering than the actual people that were official,
 2 and there would be times when I would go to a volunteer
 3 and ask them, "Please could you contact the council and
 4 find this out for me", because I was just tired of
 5 repeating myself over and over again. And bless them,
 6 they did. They did. They'd come back and me and they'd
 7 say to me, you know, "I found this out for you, do this,
 8 do that, go here", and they did everything, you know, as
 9 much as in their power they could do.
 10 With the council, I just wasn't comfortable going to
 11 them, because, again, I just felt it useless. I would
 12 go to them and then they would tell me something and I'd
 13 be like, "Well, that's not correct", and then they'd go
 14 off and be like, "Oh, actually, Hanan, yeah, you're
 15 right, it's not correct". So I just thought it
 16 pointless going to them, and I just asked volunteers,
 17 "Please, can you just help me, I'm just tired". And
 18 they understood and they did it, and, you know, I can't
 19 praise them enough, and I'm always grateful for what
 20 they've done for us. And when I say "us", I'm referring
 21 to my family, also on behalf of everybody else,
 22 you know. Speaking to neighbours and everything, they
 23 appreciate what they did for them.
 24 Q. I'm going to turn now to the last section of my
 25 questions, and I want to ask you about your experience

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1 of the overall response.
 2 I want to take you, please, to paragraph 184 of your
 3 statement {IWS00001286/23}, and I'm going to read a few
 4 of your passages, if that's okay.
 5 A. Yeah.
 6 Q. So you say:
 7 "184. The response was inadequate and lacking.
 8 "185. As Grenfell Walk residents, we were being
 9 pushed away. We felt like we were nobody.
 10 "186. The Council should also have reassured us that
 11 there was some support in place for us.
 12 "187. Victims were driving the response. I was
 13 doing their job, disseminating the information for them,
 14 because they would never communicate with us, giving us
 15 information.
 16 "188. I knew how important it was to disseminate
 17 legitimate information, so I had to step into that:
 18 Aziza and I founded the Grenfell Walk Residents'
 19 Association, because we knew how important it was to
 20 communicate with everyone.
 21 "189. We did it because we had to: We were doing
 22 their job for them."
 23 I'm just going to ask you a couple of questions
 24 about that passage.
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Do you feel -- and again, I've touched on this before --
 2 that you were treated differently because you were
 3 a walkway resident rather than a tower resident?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Did you notice any difference in the provision of
 6 support on 16 June, when something called the
 7 London Gold Group took over? Were you aware of that?
 8 A. No. Was it Gold -- was it called something else?
 9 I remember "Gold" being in the name, but I don't
 10 remember what you just said.
 11 Q. Okay.
 12 Did you notice any difference in things getting
 13 better on the 16th onwards?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. Okay.
 16 In paragraph 191 {IWS00001286/24} -- and we can go
 17 to it if you want to -- you say:
 18 "The Council should have taken action, after having
 19 listened to our concerns. Instead, they would listen,
 20 but they never took in what we said. They were
 21 constantly repeating the same mistakes."
 22 Is that right?
 23 A. So I think when I'm talking about this, I think I'm
 24 talking about Grenfell Walk. I don't know how much you
 25 know of Grenfell Walk, I'm assuming a lot, but

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1 Grenfell Walk, we were evacuated from our properties and
 2 from this day never been able to go back. The walkways
 3 were able to go back. We wasn't able to go back.
 4 So the council were aware of this, but me and
 5 Aziza and my husband sometimes, and maybe a couple of
 6 other people from Grenfell Walk, had to go in there and
 7 explain our case and our situation, and it was
 8 a constant -- they would be sympathetic to you, but then
 9 nothing would come out of it. You'd have to repeat
 10 yourself again and again and again, and it was then that
 11 me and Aziza took it upon ourselves to open -- do
 12 a residents' association, to be taken seriously, because
 13 I don't feel like we was, I feel like we just -- they
 14 probably thought, "Oh, they're just trying to milk it",
 15 or, "They're just trying to get us to give them stuff",
 16 and it wasn't like that at all. We needed help
 17 desperately, and every door we kept on going to was
 18 closed because we wasn't a bereaved or we wasn't
 19 a survivor, so we was in between. We didn't come out of
 20 the tower, but we also couldn't go back to our
 21 properties, so we were homeless, but nobody was helping,
 22 so we had to do this, and we're still doing it to this
 23 day.
 24 Q. Is there anything further you would like to add to your
 25 evidence today?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 I, like everybody else, pray to God that nobody ever
 3 has to deal with what we've dealt with, and people learn
 4 from their mistakes, people -- when I say "people",
 5 I mean local authority, government -- have a plan in
 6 action, God forbid if anything did happen like this
 7 again, because it's not fair that anybody has to deal
 8 with this.
 9 I would like people to take responsibility for what
 10 they have done, be it the government, local authority.
 11 It just can't happen again. And God forbid if it does,
 12 they need to know what to do and act, and don't let
 13 anybody else go through the heartbreak that we have been
 14 through as a community, bereaved, survivors.
 15 Also I think it's really important that people
 16 understand that the adults were treated bad, with
 17 disrespect, completely, but a big thing is that I feel
 18 that nobody's taken into consideration the children or
 19 what they have been through. Nobody looked at their
 20 needs.
 21 Sorry.
 22 Q. It's okay.
 23 A. Nobody looked at their needs. These kids were trying to
 24 deal with witnessing the biggest tragedy ever, they're
 25 probably ever going to witness in their life. They were

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1 trying to cope with death of friends and family, and
 2 these are children, they can't process that, they can't
 3 understand what they've just witnessed and what death
 4 is, whereas adults, we can kind of understand.
 5 Children, they can't. They were thrown back and
 6 forward. They had no choice. They just had to follow
 7 their parents or their carers. They just -- they had to
 8 go with whatever was happening.
 9 Like I say with my situation, I had a baby. There
 10 was no nursery, playrooms, anything offered, nothing at
 11 all during that stay in the hotel. Study for children,
 12 there was nothing. There was just -- they were just
 13 completely ignored. And I don't know how damaging
 14 that's going to be to any children, especially my own.
 15 So I just need somebody to open their eyes and
 16 consider this, if it was to ever happen again, because
 17 these children didn't deserve that, as much as the
 18 adults. These children have voices, but they're too
 19 young to speak, and it's us, as adults, have to be their
 20 voice.
 21 You know, I just can't stress enough that: don't let
 22 this happen again, and take responsibility for what
 23 you've done. Stop blaming it on each other. Step up.
 24 MS ISLAM: Those are all the questions that I want to ask
 25 you. We're going to pause to see if there are any

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1 questions from anyone else.
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, as you know, we have a short
 3 break at this point to see if there are questions that
 4 are going to be suggested from other sources. So we'll
 5 come back in just under ten minutes, 2.40, and then
 6 we'll see if there are any more questions for you.
 7 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?
 9 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. Would you go
 11 with the usher, please.
 12 (Pause)
 13 Thank you, Ms Islam. 2.40.
 14 If you want more time, of course we'll consider it,
 15 but I think it's unlikely.
 16 MS ISLAM: I think so.
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. Thank you very much.
 18 (2.32 pm)
 19 (A short break)
 20 (2.40 pm)
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, all right? We'll see if there
 22 are any more questions.
 23 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.
 25 Yes, Ms Islam.

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1 MS ISLAM: There's no further questions, so just to say
 2 thank you very much for coming today and giving your
 3 evidence.
 4 THE WITNESS: You're welcome. Thank you for having me.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Let me thank you as well, because
 6 I think all three members of the panel have found it
 7 really interesting and helpful to hear what you have to
 8 tell us. You obviously had a very difficult time of it,
 9 and I'm sorry it may have distressed you to be reminded
 10 of it or at least to tell us all about it, but it has
 11 been very helpful.
 12 THE WITNESS: Thanks.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: And we're very grateful to you. So
 14 thank you very much indeed.
 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now you're free to go.
 17 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Thank you.
 19 (The witness withdrew)
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Islam.
 21 Now, I don't think we have any more witnesses to
 22 call today, do we?
 23 MS ISLAM: We don't.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So at that point, then, we shall
 25 close for the day, and we shall resume on Monday,

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1 25 April, after we've had a short break for Easter.
 2 So we look forward to seeing everybody then, and, as
 3 I say, it will be 10 o'clock on 25 April.
 4 MS ISLAM: Thank you.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much indeed.
 6 (2.45 pm)
 7 (The hearing adjourned until 10 am
 8 on Monday, 25 April 2022)
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