

Coroner's Inquests into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005

Hearing transcripts - 16 February 2011 - Morning session

1 Wednesday, 16 February 2011

2 (10.00 am)

3 (Proceedings delayed)

4 (10.13 am)

5 MR KEITH: My Lady, the first witness joins us by way of  
6 videolink from a conference suite in the Midlands.

7 Good morning. Mr Fazal, can you hear me?

8 THE WITNESS: Yes, I can indeed, yes.

9 MR KEITH: Good morning to you. My name is Hugo Keith. I'm  
10 Counsel to the Inquests and I propose to ask you some  
11 questions on behalf of Lady Justice Hallett, the coroner  
12 in these proceedings.

13 Before I do so, can I ask you, please, to be sworn,  
14 and there will be a gentleman next to you who will have  
15 provided you, I know, with the appropriate  
16 documentation.

17 MR SHABAZ AMIR FAZAL (sworn)

18 (Evidence given by videolink)

19 Questions by MR KEITH

20 MR KEITH: Could you give the court, please, your full name?

21 A. Shabaz Amir Fazal.

22 Q. Mr Fazal, we know that you prepared a witness statement  
23 for the police dated January 2006. I'm aware that the  
24 statement was taken some time ago, and you have reported  
25 to the Solicitor to the Inquest, Mr Smith, who's there

1 with you, that some parts of that statement might not be  
2 accurate. But what we need to know from you, please,  
3 this morning, is the best account that you can give  
4 regardless of whether or not it's in the statement. All  
5 right?

6 A. Yes, yes.

7 Q. At the time that you made the statement, and certainly  
8 before then, you were living in the Beeston area of  
9 Leeds. Is that right?

10 A. That's correct, yes.

11 Q. At some point around about 2001, or perhaps 2002, you  
12 became involved in an association or an enterprise  
13 called the Iqra bookshop?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. In the course of your involvement in that bookshop, did  
16 you work together with a man called Tafazal Mohammed who  
17 happens to be your uncle?

18 A. I worked with him, but not literally alongside with him  
19 at the same time, but, yes, we were involved in the  
20 bookshop, yes, together.

21 Q. Were you and some of your friends and colleagues also  
22 regular attendees at a mosque in Hardy Street, the  
23 Hardy Street mosque?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did the Iqra bookshop come about because there was some

1 dispute as to the running of the facilities that the  
2 mosque provided, and you decided to set up a new  
3 organisation?

4 A. My recollection of that is I don't think it was a direct  
5 result of the rifts, as it was pointed out in the  
6 statement, it was purely we had something that was in  
7 the pipeline for, like, an outlet, because I was only  
8 youth working for four hours per week at this time, so  
9 my attendance was very limited, and we did feel that  
10 there was a need to have more of a social outlet for the  
11 children, because there were no events taking place, so  
12 we thought that maybe we should have something else, but  
13 we didn't know what.

14 But I think that was like the pivotal point when  
15 there was some sort of a rift with the committee members  
16 and we thought, "Right, this is it, we do need to have  
17 us own place. They obviously don't like the way we're  
18 running things here", so I think it was based on that.

19 Q. What facilities had the Hardy Street mosque provided, do  
20 you recall?

21 A. It was -- sorry, could you repeat that? What  
22 facilities?

23 Q. What facilities had the Hardy Street mosque provided  
24 before you ended up leaving to set up the Iqra facility?

25 A. The only thing the committee had supplied was,

1 basically, that we could use the hall, the funding of it  
2 was through the council, in terms of the gymnasium  
3 equipment. That's all there was, really. There was  
4 gymnasium equipment, nothing else. I mean, it was all  
5 donated from the youths in terms of books and games,  
6 board games. So the committee themselves just allowed  
7 us access to use the basement, basically.

8 Q. All right. Do you recall now what the nature of that  
9 rift, if there had been a rift, was?

10 A. No, I don't recollect the actual rift that occurred, but  
11 I'm sure it would have been something trivial and,  
12 hence, why I can't remember, but it was enough for us to  
13 think we need to just have us own place.

14 Q. Was the Hardy Street mosque a mosque that was known to  
15 lean towards a particular sect or a particular doctrinal  
16 view, as opposed to other mosques in the area?

17 A. I don't know that. I couldn't comment on that. As far  
18 as I was concerned, it was a place that I could carry  
19 out my youth work for the Leeds City Council. I didn't  
20 get involved in, obviously, how they'd deal with it  
21 upstairs in the mosque itself.

22 Q. What was the purpose, then, of the Iqra facility when it  
23 opened?

24 A. My recollection of that is that we wanted to get the  
25 youth -- there was a lot of drug abuse going on in the

1 area, there were a lot of children making excuses that  
2 there wasn't any facilities and we needed to have  
3 somewhere else, like a drop-in learning centre. So  
4 I think it was purely based on having an outlet to --  
5 for children and youths and people of all religions just  
6 to drop in and make use of, basically.

7 Q. Do you recall when it first started?

8 A. I don't, not exactly when it first started. I remember  
9 some of, obviously, the bookshop itself, but not exactly  
10 when it started.

11 Q. We are aware, because a document has come to light which  
12 shows that an application was made in January 2003 for  
13 trustees to join the charity that the Iqra bookshop  
14 subsequently became, so we're aware of that application  
15 in January 2003. But it may be that it commenced before  
16 then. Do you recollect?

17 A. I don't recollect that.

18 Q. Do you recall who the prime movers were in the setting  
19 up of the Iqra bookshop? Whose idea was it and who were  
20 members of the founding group?

21 A. I don't remember all of the founding group members, but  
22 I know Taf, who is my uncle, Tafazal Mohammed, he was  
23 like a leading role in the setting up of the whole  
24 bookshop itself, because I distinctly remember the  
25 actual owner of the premises was -- was somebody that

1 Tafazal knew, my uncle, but I don't remember the  
2 committee members at the time of this being set up,  
3 I don't, I don't remember all of them.

4 Q. You don't have this document, but we do, so I can't ask  
5 you to look at it, but I'm going to read out some names  
6 from the application for trustees to join that charity.  
7 It's my Lady's [INQ9370-7].  
8 Naveed Khan. Do you recollect a name called  
9 Naveed Khan?

10 A. Naveed, I remember. I'm not sure of the surname, but  
11 I'm sure it will be him, yes.

12 Q. You refer in your statement to a man called Naveed Fiaz.  
13 A. Yes, sorry, I'm getting mixed up, that's Naveed Fiaz,  
14 I don't know Naveed Khan.

15 Q. Tafazal Mohammed is the second name, he's your uncle:  
16 Sidique Khan. Do you recollect Sidique Khan?

17 A. Sorry, we just lost a bit of signal there, could you  
18 repeat?

19 Q. Yes, the third name on our list of trustees is a man  
20 called Sidique Khan.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Do you recollect him?

23 A. I do, yes.

24 Q. Could you tell us, please, what you recollect of him?

25 A. Just that he was part of the Iqra bookshop, nothing more

1 than I recollect of Tafazal Mohammed, that we were  
2 involved in the bookshop.

3 Q. Just pause there one moment, please. We're just trying  
4 to see whether we can raise the volume a little bit.

5 It's become rather hard to hear you.

6 In your statement to the police, because you  
7 provided, in fact, a second statement, dated  
8 13 February, you were able to provide a few more details  
9 about Sidique Khan, or "Sid", as you knew him, because  
10 you observed that he'd been involved in the bookshop in  
11 the first year and he'd been previously involved in  
12 other activities in Beeston. He was quite well-known,  
13 it seems, in the local groups, as somebody who had been  
14 able to contribute to youth activities in that area.

15 Do you recollect that?

16 A. Sorry -- yes, yes.

17 Q. What was the nature of his involvement or the extent of  
18 his involvement in the Iqra bookshop when it started?

19 A. I cannot, for sure, recollect his actual involvement or  
20 the actual role he played in that, but I know he was  
21 somebody who was participating in the setting up of it  
22 and the running of it.

23 You see, the reason for that is, because I was --

24 I wasn't attending the Iqra bookshop even. From when it  
25 was opened up, I probably attended that shop, at the

1 most, two or three times a week, and literally for 15 to  
2 20 minutes. So I can't, for sure, say what Sid's role  
3 was in the Iqra bookshop. They were organising things  
4 themselves, between themselves, and Taf and I had, like,  
5 a backstage role, I wasn't at the forefront.

6 Q. Did it seem to you that there was a group of people, who  
7 knew each other well, who were those who were primarily  
8 concerned in the running of the Iqra bookshop?

9 A. Yes, yes, I do believe that, yes.

10 Q. But you, yourself, Mr Fazal, were quite involved,  
11 because I think you set up an account with the  
12 Yorkshire Bank in Dewsbury Road with your uncle, Taf,  
13 and another man called Majid --

14 A. That's correct, yes.

15 Q. -- as the bank account of the Iqra?

16 A. Yes, I understand that perfectly well. Yes, my  
17 involvement was up to that, but in terms of actually  
18 being at the shop, setting the shop up, putting the  
19 books there, that was done -- because I had a full-time  
20 job, I was working 9.00 to 5.00, and they were actually  
21 doing things on their own accord and running things  
22 themselves. But, yes, I did have involvement in that,  
23 and I did feel obliged to open up the bank account as  
24 Taf had asked me, being my uncle.

25 Q. How long did you remain as a signatory on the bank

1 account of the Iqra bookshop for?

2 A. I don't know for sure, I couldn't say for sure.

3 Q. It was some time, though, wasn't it?

4 A. Yes, yes.

5 Q. In your statement, you record how, after the London  
6 bombings on 7 July 2005, you cancelled your direct debit  
7 mandate with the Iqra bookshop. Was that something that  
8 you had carried on throughout these years,  
9 a contribution by way of costs for the running of the  
10 Iqra bookshop?

11 A. I believe, yes, I mean, I can't say for sure when -- now  
12 I can't recollect exactly when or for how long I was  
13 paying for, but, yes, I did, I voluntarily gave  
14 donations for the upkeep, to pay the rent, et cetera,  
15 yes, I was involved in that, yes.

16 Q. If you were a contributor by way of direct debit and you  
17 were a signatory on the account, you must have had some  
18 idea or understanding of the income of the Iqra bookshop  
19 and where its expenditure was.

20 A. Yes, yes, I did.

21 Q. What was the income, in general terms, of the Iqra  
22 bookshop?

23 A. To quote figures would be -- it would be just --  
24 I couldn't quote any figures. It was a charitable  
25 organisation and the profits were minimal. Most of the

1 workers, from my recollection, were voluntary, I don't  
2 think anybody was being paid, and the expenses were  
3 basically the rent and the purchases that were made in  
4 terms of the books that were bought.

5 Q. Were you aware, from being a signatory, that there were  
6 quite a few people who were contributing monthly to the  
7 Iqra account through their own direct debits or standing  
8 orders?

9 A. No, the bank statements, if I remember right, were  
10 actually coming to the Iqra bookshop itself. I didn't  
11 have access -- I think Taf was actually dealing with  
12 that side of it. I was basically there to, "This needs  
13 a signature", and I'd sign.

14 Q. Did you prepare --

15 A. (Break in connection).

16 Q. Did you prepare accounts or see accounts being prepared  
17 for the Iqra bookshop?

18 A. I can't remember. I don't think I will have been -- no,  
19 I wouldn't have been involved in accounts or the drawing  
20 up of the accounts.

21 I may have helped out in terms of adding up when  
22 purchases were made, whether they were overcharged or  
23 anything, but not in terms of an accounting for  
24 a certain period, like, you know, year-end accounts, no.  
25 Nothing to that extent.

1 Q. Police found, on the computer that Mohammed Sidique Khan  
2 used at the Hillside Primary School, draft accounts  
3 from February 2002 and minutes of meetings of the  
4 persons involved in the running of the Iqra bookshop  
5 from April 2002.

6 Were you aware that he was preparing minutes and  
7 accounts of the Iqra bookshop?

8 A. I can't remember that for sure.

9 Q. Mr Fazal, why did you cancel your direct debit mandate  
10 after the London bombings?

11 A. Because I was perplexed as to what had happened, why it  
12 had happened, it was just: what, when, why, how? Why  
13 has all this happened? Surely there's something  
14 happening that I don't know about, and I just wanted to  
15 wash my hands of anything that I could be implicated  
16 with. So that was the reason why I decided to cancel  
17 the mandate.

18 Q. For you to be concerned that you might be unwittingly  
19 implicated in something, you must have had some basis  
20 for suspecting that others would take that view, hence  
21 the cancellation of your direct debit.

22 A. No, not necessarily because they'd take that view, it  
23 was based on an outcome of events that had taken place.  
24 It wasn't based -- if that was the case, I wouldn't have  
25 been involved in the bookshop itself from the outset.

1 Q. So what led you to be concerned that others might take  
2 a different view and in some way criticise you for  
3 contributing to the Iqra bookshop after 7 July?

4 A. I think the same reason what I've given is -- it's  
5 basically, because of the events that had taken place,  
6 led me then to believe that something had happened,  
7 obviously while I was part of the Iqra bookshop and  
8 I didn't want -- and I was obviously a voluntary  
9 contributor to that, so I just wanted to wash my hands  
10 of that.

11 There was nothing prior to 7/7 that led me to  
12 believe that I would in any way be involved or be  
13 contributing towards anything untoward to the general  
14 public. It was just after the events that I decided  
15 that, "Hold on, something's happened here, I don't want  
16 anything to do with this, I want to cancel any link that  
17 I've got with that place".

18 Q. But what had happened here, had you thought? I mean,  
19 Mohammed Sidique Khan --

20 A. The actual -- I think --

21 Q. -- was not, of course, a regular attendee there, so what  
22 was your worry, what was the connection that you were  
23 concerned about?

24 A. I think -- you've jogged my memory there. I think it  
25 would have been the time that the white tents were going

1 up around people's houses, remember it was on the news,  
2 Iqra bookshop had been closed down, and it was just that  
3 alarm bells started ringing and obviously the events  
4 that had happened, that's the reason why.

5 Q. All right. Just turning back to the list of trustees,  
6 I'd like to ask you, please, about some of the other  
7 names on that list, [INQ9370-7].

8 Sadeer Saleem, was he somebody whom you encountered  
9 in the course of your involvement in Iqra?

10 A. Not on a (break in connection) or not on a working  
11 alongside him basis, but I do remember seeing his face  
12 there at the shop, and at the Hardy Street mosque, but  
13 I can't remember exactly when.

14 Q. You told the police that you used to see him there quite  
15 a lot. He was serving at the counter and he got more  
16 and more responsibilities and appeared to be very  
17 closely involved in the running of the Iqra bookshop.  
18 Is that right?

19 A. Yes, I mean, I don't recollect it, to be honest.  
20 I mean, it's that far back, but I believe so, yes, that  
21 probably would have been the case.

22 Q. The next name is Shipon Ullah also known as Waheed Ali.  
23 Do you recall him?

24 A. Vaguely, yes.

25 Q. Did he attend regularly?

1 A. I don't think he did. From my recollection, it was,  
2 I think, maybe towards -- maybe three or four years into  
3 the bookshop having opened that I may have seen him  
4 a few times. I don't know if he was actually involved  
5 in -- there were a lot of people, you see, you've got to  
6 understand. There was quite a few youths that were  
7 voluntarily coming into the shop and asking to serve  
8 there, become a part of the community and help out in  
9 any which way they could, so there may have been a lot  
10 more people than, obviously, the names that you've got  
11 there.

12 Q. Could I jog your memory, Mr Fazal? You told the police  
13 that you had seen Shipon Ullah a lot over the next  
14 couple of years, that's what you told the police on  
15 13 February, that he wasn't involved at the beginning  
16 but that you did see him a lot after that. Do you  
17 recall that?

18 A. No, I don't recall that. Not to say that that's not  
19 true, but I just don't recall that. Sorry.

20 Q. All right. Another name on the list of trustees is  
21 Khalid Khaliq. Do you recall that individual?

22 A. I do recall the individual, yes.

23 Q. Was he a regular attendee in the shop?

24 A. I don't know for sure. I can't remember him being  
25 a regular attendee. It doesn't ring any bells, but I do

1 remember being -- him being involved maybe in meetings  
2 or something, but not for sure, I can't remember for  
3 sure. I can't, I can't remember for sure, it's that far  
4 back, I'm sorry.

5 Q. The final name on the list of interest is  
6 Shehzad Tanweer. Do you recall anything of him?

7 A. Just that his father's well-known in the area and he  
8 used to work at the local -- the local fish bar. I'd  
9 seen him there a few times, but not actually at the --  
10 I've got no recollection of him being at the Iqra  
11 bookshop.

12 Q. One name that's not on list of trustees, but a man from  
13 whom we'll be hear this afternoon, is a man called  
14 Martin Gilbertson, who will, we anticipate, say that he  
15 carried out computer work or computer consultancy work  
16 at the Iqra bookshop over a number of years, but  
17 primarily from 2002 to 2004.

18 Do you recollect a man of such a name,  
19 Martin Gilbertson?

20 A. Is that the US Marine chap?

21 Q. No, there's a man called McDaid whom you may be thinking  
22 of.

23 A. Yes, no, I don't recollect the first name that you gave,  
24 no. But I do recollect a man -- a McDaid,  
25 Martin McDaid, I believe.

1 Q. Was he there a lot?

2 A. I recollect seeing him only on two -- one or two  
3 occasions. I don't know, but I think there were --  
4 I think he may have been involved, but I would be just  
5 guessing, I don't know for sure.

6 Q. All right. One of the things that Mr Gilbertson may  
7 talk of when he gives evidence himself later today is  
8 that there were areas in the Iqra bookshop in relation  
9 to which access was strictly controlled, that there was  
10 a computer room installed in the back of the ground  
11 floor of the Iqra bookshop and only a certain number of  
12 people were allowed in there with unrestricted access to  
13 the computers.

14 Do you recollect anything of that sort happening at  
15 the Iqra bookshop?

16 A. No, nothing of the sort. The bookshop, I mean, from the  
17 outset, it was open-door policy. Anybody could freely  
18 go upstairs, into the back room. The computer that  
19 I remember being there was there for the community to  
20 come and do their homework, go on the internet, like  
21 a drop-in centre. There wasn't a restricted area, as  
22 far as I can recall, no.

23 Q. It may be, Mr Fazal, that your recollections are  
24 primarily concerned with the beginning of the Iqra  
25 bookshop, so let me ask you this --

1 A. Probably.

2 Q. -- when you were there, was the back room on the ground  
3 floor and the first and second floor of the building in  
4 use, or were those rooms unoccupied, as far as you can  
5 recall? Because it may be that the computers were  
6 installed later after your involvement greatly reduced?

7 A. I mean, you've used the word "computers". My  
8 recollection is a computer being installed in the early  
9 days of the Iqra bookshop opening. I don't remember  
10 seeing more than one computer there. That's my  
11 recollection.

12 Q. Where was that?

13 A. That was at the back room downstairs. But upstairs,  
14 from the outset, I don't think it was in use and I don't  
15 remember it being in use. I think the front or the side  
16 towards Trentham Place was used as a prayer meeting  
17 room. That was from the outset as well.

18 Q. After some time, did you become concerned as to the  
19 nature of some of the material that was being displayed  
20 by the Iqra bookshop?

21 A. Well, the agreement was from the outset, because I have  
22 a different view to -- well, not a different view, but  
23 I have my own view as to what Islam tells the general  
24 public and Muslims alike, and I said from the outset  
25 that I would only be part of this service or this

1 bookshop if every book, before it was put on the shelf,  
2 was basically looked at to make sure that it portrays  
3 a true image or a true reflection of Islam, and that  
4 wasn't happening -- well, it was happening in the  
5 beginning, but only for maybe one or two weeks, and then  
6 it was just, like, run haphazardly. Books were being  
7 bought and then just put on the shelf, and I brought up  
8 obviously this concern with -- I think it was with Taf,  
9 if I remember rightly, and I said that I wasn't happy  
10 with the way things were being done.

11 It just seemed that my concern wasn't being  
12 addressed, so I just thought I need to take a backstage  
13 here, because, you know, obviously I was aware of, you  
14 know, people's misconceptions about Islam and I didn't  
15 want that to be consolidated in -- obviously in the  
16 wrong manner.

17 So I detracted myself from the shop based on purely  
18 that. Not the actual content of the material, just that  
19 the content wasn't being vetted before it was being put  
20 on the shelves. And that's what I told the police at  
21 the time.

22 Q. Did you, yourself, see material that could be described  
23 as inflammatory or hateful or extremist?

24 A. No, definitely not inflammatory or extremist in any way,  
25 but there was -- there's a lot of mystical things about

1 Islam, which, you know, I'm totally against and they  
2 were purely the reasons why I felt that, you know, I'm  
3 not happy with the books that are coming on, not that  
4 they were inflammatory or extremist, no, definitely not  
5 that.

6 Q. You told the police --

7 A. Not to say that there weren't any.

8 Q. Quite so. You told the police, in fact, that it  
9 wouldn't have surprised you if such material had been  
10 displayed or made available in the Iqra bookshop. Why  
11 did you say that?

12 A. I can't remember why I would have said that, but  
13 obviously, if something's inflammatory, then it's going  
14 to have a negative impact and I didn't want that  
15 happening.

16 Q. That wasn't quite the question, with respect, Mr Fazal.  
17 You told the police --

18 A. Sorry.

19 Q. -- that you wouldn't have been surprised if it had  
20 turned out -- and that's a matter for my Lady to  
21 determine, perhaps, in due course -- that there had been  
22 inflammatory or extremist material there, which seems to  
23 imply that there was something about the running of the  
24 bookshop that had given you those concerns.

25 A. No, it's not that the material -- I don't know how to

1 answer that. Could you just repeat that question again?

2 Sorry.

3 Q. Yes. By telling the police that you wouldn't have been  
4 surprised if it had turned out that there was extremist  
5 or inflammatory material there, you seemed to be giving  
6 the impression that there was something about the  
7 running of the Iqra bookshop that might have made that  
8 possible, that might have brought that about.

9 A. Yes, I mean, purely based on the vetting process that  
10 we'd initially agreed, that wasn't being followed, so  
11 obviously there will be books out there that don't  
12 portray a true picture of what I feel Islam is and,  
13 therefore, could, you know, put in the wrong hands, give  
14 the wrong subliminal messages about Islam, maybe  
15 inflammatory, yes.

16 Q. Were you aware, at the time that you were involved in  
17 the Iqra, of rumours of young males, in particular, in  
18 the local community going to Afghanistan for Jihadist  
19 training?

20 A. No, I don't recollect that, no.

21 Q. Did you not hear rumours to that effect, Mr Fazal?

22 A. I don't recollect anything of that nature.

23 Q. You did tell the police that you recollected, two or  
24 three years before the giving of your statement, that  
25 there were rumours of local youths going to Afghanistan

1 for training:

2 "I don't remember any names being mentioned, but my  
3 reaction was sheer disbelief. I thought they must have  
4 been mad."

5 Do you remember telling the police that?

6 A. No, I don't, with all honesty, I don't remember having  
7 said that.

8 Q. It is in a statement that you signed.

9 A. But I don't recollect it. I'm not saying that that's  
10 not the case, it's just that, at this moment in time,  
11 I don't recollect or -- somebody having told me that  
12 somebody had gone to Afghanistan for training, but even  
13 if I did, it probably would have been in jest and I may  
14 have thought, "Yes, they must be mad". But I don't  
15 recollect that, for sure.

16 Q. Do you know for how long your uncle remained connected  
17 to the Iqra bookshop?

18 A. I think he would have been there from the outset until  
19 it was closed, yes.

20 Q. Do you know when that was?

21 A. Up until when the -- I couldn't say for sure, but  
22 I believe that he would have been there until it was  
23 actually closed down by the police, I think.

24 Q. So after 2005, July 2005?

25 A. I believe, yes, I believe so.

1 MR KEITH: Thank you, Mr Fazal, those are all the questions  
2 that I have for you.

3 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Patterson?

4 Questions by MR PATTERSON

5 MR PATTERSON: Mr Fazal, can I begin, please, with the  
6 Hardy Street mosque? You said, I think, that you worked  
7 there as a youth worker employed by Leeds City Council.  
8 Is that right?

9 A. That's correct, yes, that's correct.

10 Q. We know from other evidence that  
11 Mohammed Sidique Khan -- you've mentioned Sidique and we  
12 saw his name on the list of trustees -- we know that he  
13 worked there at some stage in the early stages, also  
14 involved in youth work. Is that right?

15 A. Yes, he will have been involved in youth work, yes.

16 Q. In relation to him, I think you had known him since  
17 childhood. In your statement you said that:

18 "I had played football with him in the street from  
19 the age of about 15 or 16."

20 A. I don't recollect having said that in my statement that  
21 I played football with him, but I do remember that  
22 Sidique and his family lived in the vicinity and I may  
23 have seen him once or twice, but I didn't actually play  
24 football with him. Football is not my talent and I've  
25 never really been involved in football.

1 Q. "We were kids aged 15 or 16, and would play football in  
2 the street together. I got to know him ..."

3 A. That's not something I said. That's not something that  
4 I've said.

5 Q. I'm reading from your statement made to the police on  
6 24 January 2006, which contained, at the beginning,  
7 a declaration of truthfulness and an awareness that you  
8 would be liable to prosecution if you said in it  
9 anything that you did not believe to be true.

10 A. Of course, and I stand by that. I do not believe, at  
11 this moment in time, that I said that I played football  
12 with Sidique, because I have no recollection of that.

13 Q. No, but you wouldn't have lied to the police when  
14 asked --

15 A. No, exactly not, I wouldn't have lied.

16 Q. -- in 2006, to make a statement about all of these very  
17 important issues, would you?

18 A. No, I wouldn't.

19 Q. So do you accept that that must be true if you said it  
20 in your statement to the police?

21 A. To make matters easier, I have no recollection of  
22 playing football with Sidique, I don't. I do remember  
23 seeing him in the vicinity as we were growing up, but  
24 not playing football, not distinctly playing football  
25 with him on regular occasions, or even on one occasion

1 for that matter.

2 Q. In any event, he worked, did he not, from that basement  
3 gym at the Hardy Street mosque --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- with youngsters; is that right?

6 A. Yes, he did, yes.

7 Q. Roughly, what sort of age group were these youths?

8 A. It ranged from -- I think from the ages of about 8  
9 upwards. There was no upper limit, but generally, they  
10 tended to be up to the age of 22, 23. Not much older  
11 than that.

12 Q. Then you've dealt with the opening of the Iqra bookshop.  
13 I think that was in about -- according to your  
14 statement, that was about the year 2002. Does that  
15 sound about right?

16 A. Probably, yes, yes.

17 Q. You've mentioned that Mohammed Sidique Khan -- who was  
18 known by many as "Sid" -- became involved in it in the  
19 early stages; yes?

20 A. Of the Iqra bookshop?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. Yes, that will have been the case, yes.

23 Q. Just as you donated on a monthly basis from your bank  
24 account to the running of it, we know that he did as  
25 well. Were you aware that he, too, was contributing on

1 a monthly basis to its running?

2 A. I cannot say for sure. The list of the contributors was  
3 not in my control, but I was a signatory, yes. But  
4 I don't know who the actual donators were, but I believe  
5 he would have been, yes.

6 Q. In your statement, you said to the police that the  
7 average age of the youths who attended the bookshop  
8 ranged from 9 to 15. Again, presumably that would have  
9 been the truth if you told the police that in your  
10 witness statement?

11 A. I didn't tell the police that that was the age range for  
12 people attending the bookshop, because that is  
13 definitely not the case. The range of people attending  
14 the bookshop were from the ages of 3 to 4 right through  
15 to, you know, 50-, 60-year-old people. It was a drop-in  
16 centre for the general public.

17 I think there is a mixup in terms of the age  
18 category there. That was probably more likely for the  
19 youths that attended the Hardy Street mosque. So  
20 there's something not right there with that statement.

21 Q. Mr Fazal, are you trying to protect the position of your  
22 uncle, who, as you've already agreed, was very heavily  
23 involved in the setting up and in the running of this  
24 bookshop?

25 A. Protect the position of my uncle? I don't understand

1 what you mean by that.

2 Q. Are you trying to minimise the extent to which there was  
3 extremism at that bookshop, radical ideas being  
4 disseminated to the youth of Beeston?

5 A. I personally do not believe, from my involvement in the  
6 Iqra bookshop, that there was anything of that sort or  
7 anything of that nature and, therefore, I stand by what  
8 I say. I'm telling the truth. I've nothing to hide in  
9 terms of hiding anybody's innocence or trying to protect  
10 their innocence. We're obviously all here to answer  
11 questions about what happened at 7/7 and I'm willingly  
12 taking part in that and honestly.

13 Q. So although your statement refers to the average age of  
14 youths being 9 to 15, you say that that is a wrong?

15 A. That is definitely wrong. The statement -- from my  
16 recollection, this statement dated 13/2/2008, which  
17 I have a copy of, there's events in here that didn't --  
18 well, statement -- parts of the statement which I never  
19 even said. I never signed to that. It would have been  
20 nice to have seen a statement which had my endorsement  
21 at the bottom of it.

22 Q. Mr Fazal --

23 A. This is like ...

24 Q. Mr Fazal, I'm not asking you about your statement in  
25 2008. I'm asking you about the one nearer to the events

1 in question in 2006.

2 A. Sorry, yes, that's the one I'm referring to as well, the  
3 24/1/2006.

4 Q. In relation to Khalid Khaliq, in that statement in 2006,  
5 you said that you had known him for some 8 to 9 years  
6 through youth work and that "we would also socialise out  
7 of work". Is that correct?

8 A. "Socialise" is probably the wrong word. I feel that,  
9 when I was talking to the police regarding this matter,  
10 they were making notes which, once they typed up the --  
11 they actually went away and typed up the statement. The  
12 statement wasn't made with the police and me at the same  
13 time. Notes were being made and then I was asked to  
14 come back to sign some statements and, when I came back  
15 to sign the statements, I wasn't happy with some of the  
16 words that had been used, the vocabulary and some of the  
17 things that were said. They were just -- they were  
18 wrong, and I said that I wasn't happy with that and they  
19 said that they would change them, but it appears that  
20 the same words that were presented to me by the police  
21 are here once again.

22 So for that matter, some of the things in here  
23 I totally -- I have no recollection of and I can't  
24 believe the things that are in there and,  
25 chronologically, there's some errors in there and

1 especially with regards to the 9 to 15-year-olds. The  
2 only restriction on age groups was for the youth groups  
3 at Hardy Street. Not at Iqra bookshop. That was an  
4 open bookshop, open learning centre, for people of all  
5 ages and from all religions.

6 Q. It's a matter of public record that, in 2008,  
7 Khalid Khaliq was convicted and imprisoned for  
8 possession of an Al-Qaeda training manual.

9 Were you aware, at any stage, that this person was  
10 somebody who had an interest in that kind of material?

11 A. Definitely not, no.

12 Q. Did that come as a surprise when he was indicted and  
13 pleaded guilty at Leeds Crown Court for that allegation?

14 A. I didn't know that he pleaded guilty to that particular  
15 indictment, I didn't know that. I knew he was found  
16 guilty of some sort of involvement, not that he was in  
17 possession of that kind of material.

18 Q. You said today that, in essence, you were unaware of  
19 precisely what sort of material was being sold or  
20 disseminated from the bookshop, but that it was simply  
21 the procedure for vetting that caused you to  
22 disassociate yourself. Is that the position?

23 A. Yes, it was purely the -- not the actual -- the content  
24 itself, because, if you can imagine, it was a bookshop,  
25 there were literally 100 books bought maybe every three

1 to four days, so to actually go through each one of them  
2 would have been exhausting, to say the least.

3 But it was just purely the principle that we'd  
4 agreed originally wasn't being applied, and I'm a man of  
5 principle. If I'm being involved in something, I like  
6 to know what's happening, why it's happening and we  
7 should stick to rules, and that wasn't happening, so  
8 I detached myself, purely based on the fact that books  
9 were being put on the shelf, not because of the content,  
10 because we weren't able to have the opportunity to read  
11 the content before they reached the shelf.

12 Q. So it was on the theoretical possibility that they might  
13 contain things that you disagreed with that you  
14 disassociated yourself?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Is that what you're saying?

17 A. Yes, yes, things that I don't agree with. But not  
18 necessarily inflammatory. This is why I don't want the  
19 confusion to occur. Not inflammatory or extremist, but  
20 just a wrong image or portrayal of Islam --

21 Q. In your second statement to the police --

22 A. -- none of this is right.

23 Q. In your second statement to the police, you indicated  
24 that you were involved with the checking of the books,  
25 in that you knew where they came from, you were

1 initially a signatory, that you saw the invoices for the  
2 purchase of the books:  
3 "... and this is how I became aware of where they  
4 came from", is what you said in your statement.  
5 Is the truth --  
6 A. Yes, that's true.  
7 Q. Is the truth that you were aware of exactly what was  
8 being sold at that bookshop?  
9 A. Sorry, we lost a bit of signal there. Could you repeat  
10 the question, please?  
11 Q. Yes, I was asking you about the invoices that you saw.  
12 You agree that you saw those invoices, yes?  
13 A. Yes.  
14 Q. You said in your statement to the police that you knew  
15 the books may have come from -- you said from Dewsbury,  
16 but they may have come from Batley or from Saddle town,  
17 yes?  
18 A. That's correct, yes, that's correct.  
19 Q. You said to the police in your statement:  
20 "This how I became aware of where they came from,  
21 from seeing these invoices."  
22 A. That's correct.  
23 Q. I'm suggesting that you knew fine well the sort of  
24 material, extremist material, that was being sold at  
25 that bookshop.

1 A. No, I think you're putting words into my mouth there.  
2 Not that I knew -- I knew (inaudible) of the purchases,  
3 but not the actual content of the books that were being  
4 bought.

5 Q. In your statement, speaking about Khan,  
6 Mohammed Sidique Khan, you said this:

7 "I got to know him better when I became involved in  
8 youth work, although I never agreed with his views."

9 Now, is that something in your witness statement  
10 that you stand by?

11 A. Yes, I do. From -- I think there may have been one or  
12 two events that had happened where, you know, I didn't  
13 think that he was conducting himself -- being involved  
14 in Iqra -- in a true Muslim manner. That's why I would  
15 have said that. I can't recollect the actual events,  
16 but, yes, there's a lot of people that I believe have  
17 a different opinion of Islam to myself.

18 Q. You also spoke about Shehzad Tanweer and how you would  
19 occasionally see him and how he would later start  
20 hanging around with Sid. Again, do you stand by that?

21 A. Sorry, that I would start hanging around with Sid or --

22 Q. No, that you knew Tanweer, that you would see him  
23 occasionally --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and that you knew that he started to hang around with

1 Sid.

2 A. Yes, I do recollect seeing them together. It's a small  
3 community. Yes, without doubt, I do remember seeing  
4 them together, yes.

5 Q. About Tanweer, what you said in your statement to the  
6 police was this:

7 "We knew he held some extreme right-wing views."

8 A. That is a lie, I never said that to the police. I'm  
9 sorry, but I never knew the man, I never knew him to  
10 talk to. I only knew of his father and the fact that he  
11 was hanging around with Sidique Khan.

12 But to say something like that, I can't recollect  
13 that and, for sure, I know that I've never spoken to  
14 him, so I couldn't make a comment as to his views, no,  
15 definitely not.

16 Q. If it was suggested that both these men were openly  
17 sharing with people their extremist views and, in  
18 particular, their view that violence was something that  
19 could and should be used, what would you say?

20 A. Obviously, I've addressed that. I mean, if they were  
21 making allegations as to extremist views, I would  
22 obviously address that and say, you know, exactly what  
23 are you referring to here, so I would have become  
24 involved in that, knowing that -- well, Sidique was part  
25 of the Iqra bookshop, but nothing to my -- I can't

1 recollect of having said anything of the sort.  
2 You've got to remember my involvement in the Iqra  
3 bookshop was like a sleeping partner. I wasn't there at  
4 the forefront of it. I was a youth worker at  
5 Hardy Street for four hours per week and I was  
6 a signatory at the Iqra bookshop, but the actual  
7 involvement in the running of it, getting the people to  
8 run the shop itself, opening and closing, you know,  
9 pricing up the goods and what, I had no involvement in  
10 that whatsoever.

11 Q. Mr Fazal, in 2006 -- so when the events were obviously  
12 a lot fresher in your memory than they are today -- you  
13 told the police in your signed statement that -- you  
14 said this:

15 "I recollect about two or three years ago hearing  
16 rumours of local youths going to Afghanistan for  
17 training. I do not remember any names being mentioned."

18 Then you said this:

19 "But my reaction to this was utter disbelief."

20 A. That probably will have been my reaction, but I honestly  
21 don't remember obviously that event being said to me,  
22 but that probably would have been my reaction, yes.

23 Q. Was it the case that, in fact, it was fairly well-known  
24 within the local community that there were trips of this  
25 sort by youths from the area to train overseas?

1 A. It couldn't have been that well-known. I didn't get to  
2 hear of it. No, I wouldn't say it was well-known in the  
3 area, definitely not.

4 Q. But certainly it reached your ears?

5 A. Yes, for me to have made that comment, yes, it will  
6 have.

7 Q. In your statement, you said that Shipon Ullah was  
8 somebody that you had seen at Iqra a lot over the years?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Is that accurate?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. At his trial in 2008, and again in 2009, he confirmed  
13 that, back in 2001, he and Khan had gone to a training  
14 camp in Pakistan and had then crossed the border into  
15 Afghanistan and gone right up to the front line where  
16 there was fighting with the northern alliance. Did he  
17 ever tell you that?

18 A. No, that -- this is the first I'm hearing of that, I've  
19 never known that.

20 Q. In your statement, you said that you knew  
21 Mohammed Shakil and that he attended Iqra and that you  
22 saw --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- a change in him:

25 "... and I would describe his approach as

1 'hardline'", is what you said in your statement.

2 Do you stand by that part of your statement about  
3 Mohammed Shakil?

4 A. "Hardline"? From my recollection of him, no, I don't  
5 stand by -- see, this is difficult. I mean, it's a long  
6 way back and to make me come to a point in time when  
7 I've made a statement and to give you a full  
8 recollection or to affirm something that had happened  
9 that far -- I'm honest, I'm not the best candidate for  
10 memory retention, that's for sure, but if -- I can't  
11 remember the -- sorry, the limping lad being -- Shakil,  
12 sorry, I beg your pardon, being a hardliner.

13 I don't -- in my opinion, none of them, from what  
14 I recollect, were hardliners or extreme in any form.

15 Q. So you've --

16 A. This is why I found it -- sorry?

17 Q. I was going to say, so you've no idea how your witness  
18 statement contained those words:

19 "I would describe his approach as 'hardline'."

20 A. No, not that I don't understand how they contain it,  
21 that I can't bring myself back to that feeling that  
22 I had towards Shakil at the time. I mean, from now,  
23 I can honestly say that I don't think any of them were  
24 hardline.

25 Q. Finally, this --

1 A. But this is --

2 Q. Forgive me. Finally, this please: at Shakil's trial in  
3 2008 and again 2009, he admitted that he had gone, with  
4 Mohammed Sidique Khan, to training in 2003, and that  
5 this was to a training camp in Malakand where the two of  
6 them had fired weapons and been involved with others who  
7 were later convicted of the fertiliser plot.  
8 Did he ever share any of this with you when you saw  
9 him at the Iqra bookshop?

10 A. No, this is the first I'm hearing of that -- this as  
11 well. No, I've never heard of that before, previously.

12 MR PATTERSON: That's all I ask, thank you.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Any other questions for Mr Fazal?  
14 Mr Fazal, I have a question, I'm Lady Justice  
15 Hallett, the coroner conducting these inquests. As  
16 somebody who's been employed as a youth worker, can you  
17 tell me, have you ever been aware of any kind of steps  
18 by any authority to try to ensure that anybody, of  
19 whatever faith, of extremist views doesn't indoctrinate  
20 the young people whose care they have?

21 A. No, to be honest with you, from -- I don't think there  
22 was any involvement from the council or from any  
23 authority. They were just left to their own devices.  
24 Basically, it was a bookshop that was -- sorry, the  
25 Hardy Street, that -- the youth work, I actually applied

1 to Leeds City Council myself to be employed by Leeds  
2 City Council to alleviate the drug problem, and to get  
3 the youths to focus their energy on to activities within  
4 the centre, and myself and Tafazal actually did this,  
5 I do recollect that for sure, and -- but apart from  
6 that, there was no involvement -- obviously, the council  
7 had certain forms that needed filling out with regards  
8 to the actual job role itself, but in terms of anything  
9 going to any extremities or any implications on any  
10 religion, there was no involvement from any authority to  
11 say, "Look, this is what you should be doing and this is  
12 what you shouldn't be doing".

13 But I do believe that the committee members of  
14 Hardy Street were just -- they just didn't allow the  
15 youths to do the activities that we wanted them to do,  
16 and that was the rift, the so-called rift. There wasn't  
17 anything untoward with regards to religion or anything,  
18 no, definitely not.

19 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Are you still involved in community  
20 work?

21 A. No, from that point onwards, I detached myself and I --  
22 obviously, I focused myself on my own personal projects  
23 and obviously my working life and I've got a growing  
24 family. It was just like a turning point for me in my  
25 life, you know, thinking that you've grown up with

1 people, knowing them, and then for them to have been  
2 involved or been responsible for innocent lives, it was  
3 a shock, you know. I'd seen Sidique's picture in the  
4 newspaper, I remember distinctly. Tears came to my eyes  
5 to think I've grown up with these people and it's ended  
6 up, you know, that they've taken innocent lives. It was  
7 just shocking and it's put me off youth work, to be  
8 honest with you.

9 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: So you can't help me whether anybody  
10 today, if they wanted to get involved in youth work,  
11 whether anybody would be trying to ensure that they  
12 didn't -- as I say, whatever their religion --  
13 indoctrinate young people? You can't help with what  
14 happens today?

15 A. Sorry, if you can explain yourself a bit. I don't  
16 understand exactly.

17 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Just supposing somebody were in your  
18 position today and they happened to have extremist  
19 views, do you know whether there's any way of checking,  
20 if any checks are kept on them, from what you've seen  
21 around?

22 A. No, in terms of -- it's like with any job, I mean, if  
23 you're involved working somewhere, it's only until  
24 somebody raises a concern through the right channels  
25 that it would be addressed. But there are no checks and

1 balances that are made with regards to a person's  
2 persona in carrying out their particular job, especially  
3 youth working. They have a role to carry out, which is  
4 to work with the youths for the betterment of the local  
5 community, but in terms of having extremist views,  
6 I don't think there's anything there to stop them, most  
7 definitely not.

8 So there would be, I suppose, a channel for somebody  
9 having extremist views to let that be channelled through  
10 and filtered through into the community, yes. There is  
11 nothing there to stop that from happening.

12 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you very much, Mr Fazal. Those  
13 are all the questions we have for you. Thank you for  
14 being prepared to talk to us.

15 A. You're welcome. Thank you.

16 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Would you like me to rise?

17 MR KEITH: My Lady, yes, please, the exigency of the process  
18 requires that we take a bit of time each time.

19 (11.05 am)

20 (A short break)

21 (11.15 am)

22 MR HAY: My Lady, may I invite you to call Tanweer Akhtar?

23 Mr Akhtar, my name's Benjamin Hay. I'm one of the  
24 barristers acting as Counsel to the Inquests and I'm  
25 asking questions on behalf of Lady Justice Hallett. If

1 at any point you can't hear me, please do say so.

2 THE WITNESS: Yes, okay.

3 MR HAY: May I ask you to be sworn?

4 THE WITNESS: Yes.

5 MR TANWEER AKHTAR (sworn)

6 (Evidence given by videolink)

7 Questions by MR HAY

8 MR HAY: Mr Akhtar, I think it was just suggested, if you

9 could do your best to keep your voice up, that would be

10 helpful.

11 A. Yes, okay.

12 Q. Could you confirm your full name, please?

13 A. Yes, Mr Tanweer Akhtar.

14 Q. Mr Akhtar, I want to ask you questions regarding the

15 backgrounds of Mohammed Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer,

16 Jermaine Lindsay and Hasib Hussain. May I make it plain

17 that none of my questions are a criticism of you or the

18 community in which you live?

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. In about 2000, you moved to Dewsbury. Is that correct?

21 A. That's correct, yes.

22 Q. Without giving the precise details of your address --

23 A. I didn't actually move to Dewsbury. That's when I moved

24 to Lees Holm.

25 Q. That was going to be my next question. You moved to

1 Lees Holm.

2 A. Yes, in September 2000. I think I moved to Dewsbury  
3 maybe about five, six years before that.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 A. 1995, I think it was.

6 Q. Can I turn first to Jermaine Lindsay and going back to  
7 2001? I think that's when you first met him, but you  
8 knew him by the name of "Jamal"; is that correct?

9 A. That's right. I don't think it was 2000 -- I'm not --  
10 I think it was more 2002, 2003 maybe.

11 Q. But you knew him by the name of "Jamal"?

12 A. Yes, I knew him as "Jamal", yes.

13 Q. Do you recall where you first met him?

14 A. The first time I met him, it was after one of the  
15 prayers in the mosque in Birkby, and me and one of my  
16 friends, we just met him outside the mosque -- outside  
17 the actual mosque.

18 Q. It's right, isn't it, he hasn't always been a Muslim?

19 A. No, no, he (break in connection) about 14 or 15 years'  
20 old, he was quite young when he became a Muslim.

21 Q. When you first met him, what was your impression of him?

22 A. I thought that he was -- he was quite strict, you know,  
23 in the sense that, very eager to practise Islam, because  
24 someone told me that he's -- because he'd actually  
25 (break in connection) but, because he'd actually

1 converted his parents as well, I think he said his  
2 parents became Muslim as well, so he -- we thought he  
3 was quite devout, you know, because of that.

4 Q. Mr Akhtar, I'm sorry, we had a slight technical  
5 difficulty. We lost you for a little bit there.

6 I think you were explaining that Jermaine Lindsay was  
7 quite devout and you thought that because he had  
8 converted his parents or his mother as well?

9 A. That's right, yes, I think his mother had become Muslim  
10 as well, because we just ask -- the first time, you  
11 know, when you meet a person for the first time, that's  
12 normally, like, a usual question, you ask them "How did  
13 you become Muslim?", and so that's what we asked him,  
14 and he was just -- he was telling us, and he was saying  
15 that he also had talked to his mum and she'd become  
16 Muslim as well. I'm not sure about his father, I don't  
17 remember, possibly his father as well, I don't know.

18 Q. Despite being sort of 16 or 17 years' old, was he able  
19 to speak Arabic and read Arabic?

20 A. He could read Arabic, but he couldn't speak it, I don't  
21 think. I'm not sure.

22 Q. In those early stages when you first met him, you've  
23 mentioned he appeared to be quite devout and keen to  
24 learn.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Did he ever express any views which you may consider to  
2 be either insightful, or hatred or extremist in any way?

3 A. No, it was never like that.

4 Q. I think in about 2003, you went into business with  
5 Jermaine Lindsay. Is that correct?

6 A. That's right, yes.

7 Q. From when you first met him in about 2001/2002, did you  
8 stay in regular contact with him before you went into  
9 business together?

10 A. Sorry, I don't understand that. Did I ...?

11 Q. Did you see him regularly at the mosque?

12 A. No, no, no, from the time we started business, no, not  
13 really, because I -- I wasn't in Huddersfield that  
14 often, so it's just maybe, when I was there, I might  
15 have seen him, but I didn't really keep in contact with  
16 him or anything.

17 Q. But that changed when you went into business together?

18 A. Yes, yes, when we went into business together, then  
19 we -- obviously we saw each other about once a week.

20 Q. The business was he was supplying you surplus mobile  
21 phones and mobile phone accessories. Is that correct?

22 A. No, it was mobile phone accessories, it wasn't phones.  
23 He used to -- we did like sale and return, you know,  
24 type business, that he'd give us stock and we'd sell  
25 what we could and then give the rest back to him or we

1 wouldn't actually pay him for it, we'd pay him once we'd  
2 sold it, and we could swap the stock, so if he had new  
3 stock and if we had something which wasn't selling, we  
4 could, you know, swap it over like that.

5 Q. You mentioned that you spoke to him or saw him about  
6 once a week.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. At that point, in 2003, did you see him as religious as  
9 when you had first met him?

10 A. He was religious in the sense that he was still praying  
11 and everything, but it wasn't something that he was  
12 talking about all the time, he was more interested, at  
13 that time, in business and more interested in wanting to  
14 get his business going.

15 Q. So did it seem to you that he had become less  
16 interested, at that point, in Islam?

17 A. I don't think he was less interested. I think he just  
18 had other things now -- I think, when he was younger, it  
19 was just Islam, and then now, obviously, he'd had his  
20 own business and everything as well, so I think he was  
21 kind of devoting -- wanting to devote time to that as  
22 well.

23 Q. Towards the end of 2003, Lindsay moved to the south-east  
24 of England. Is that correct?

25 A. Yes, he moved to London, yes.

1 Q. That's because he wanted to pursue a trade?

2 A. Yes, he said he was going on a plumbing course,  
3 British Gas or something, I think he got a plumbing --  
4 on, like, an apprenticeship, I think it is, a plumbing  
5 apprentice, something like that.

6 Q. I think, once he moved to London, you had less contact  
7 with him, although he came up to stay with you and your  
8 family for a weekend?

9 A. Yes, that's correct, yes.

10 Q. Can we move on now to 2004? In about --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- August 2004, do you recall a man,  
13 Mohammed Sidique Khan, moving in to Lees Holm?

14 A. I remember seeing him outside the house, but I don't  
15 think he'd moved in there, but -- did you say August  
16 or September?

17 Q. About August or September 2004.

18 A. Yes, I just -- I saw him there, I don't think he --  
19 I don't think he moved in until the following year,  
20 I think it was just -- he was -- I saw him outside the  
21 house.

22 Q. In September 2004, did you see Jermaine Lindsay at the  
23 house with Mohammed Sidique Khan?

24 A. Yes -- no, I didn't see them together, I just saw him at  
25 the house with his wife.

1 Q. With whose wife? Jermaine Lindsay's or  
2 Mohammed Sidique Khan's?

3 A. Jermaine Lindsay's -- no, Jermaine Lindsay's wife.

4 Q. Did Lindsay stay at 69 Lees Holm in September 2004?

5 A. He did stay there. I'm not exactly sure which month it  
6 was. I think the police officers, you know -- I said  
7 roughly a few months and she's put September 2004, but  
8 I think it was around that time. It was definitely  
9 before Ramadan and I think Ramadan was in,  
10 like, October/November. So it was before then.

11 Q. When he moved in, did you attend mosque with him?

12 A. No, that was -- that's actually -- the officer's  
13 actually mixed that up on the statement.

14 When he stayed in my house for the weekend, which  
15 was before this particular time, that's when we went to  
16 the mosque together. It wasn't while he was staying at  
17 69.

18 Q. When you went to mosque together the weekend that he  
19 came to stay with you --

20 A. Yes, that's the weekend we went to the mosque together.

21 Q. -- did he express any different views on Islam to that  
22 which he had expressed previously?

23 A. No.

24 Q. In your statement, you mention that when Lindsay came up  
25 to Lees Holm, in about September 2004, that he went to

1 karate with Mohammed Sidique Khan, karate classes. Do  
2 you recollect that?  
3 A. Yes, he came (break in connection).  
4 Q. Sorry, Mr Akhtar, we lost you there. Can you repeat  
5 your answer, please?  
6 A. Yes, he came once to the karate class, yes.  
7 Q. Who else was at the karate class with  
8 Mohammed Sidique Khan?  
9 A. They used to -- there was about 15 people all together  
10 who used to come to the class. Sometimes 10, up to 20,  
11 so it would be an average of about 15 people, and the  
12 other two which I mentioned in the statement, they were  
13 also there at the class as well, Shehzad Tanweer (break  
14 in connection).  
15 Q. Sorry, Mr Akhtar, we lost you again at the end. You  
16 mentioned that Shehzad Tanweer also attended the classes  
17 and you were about to go on to say another person. Who  
18 was the other person?  
19 A. The other person that's mentioned, Hasib Hussain.  
20 Hasib Hussain, yes.  
21 Q. Were you surprised that Jermaine Lindsay was acquainted  
22 with Mohammed Sidique Khan?  
23 A. Yes, yes, I didn't know they knew each other.  
24 Q. Do you know how they became acquainted?  
25 A. No, I don't know.

1 Q. Did you ever discuss it with Jermaine Lindsay, how he  
2 knew him?

3 A. No.

4 Q. I want to move on now to the Iqra bookshop.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You started working there in December 2003. Is that  
7 correct?

8 A. That's right, yes.

9 Q. Initially, what work were you doing?

10 A. I was working in the shop. They had a bookshop and they  
11 sold, like, Islamic clothes and accessories and books  
12 and things like this, so I just worked there in the  
13 shop.

14 Q. Were you actually doing some volunteer work, working  
15 with young people who either were taking drugs or maybe  
16 thinking of taking drugs?

17 A. Yes, but that wasn't with Iqra. That was with Lifeline  
18 in Huddersfield. That's -- it was -- it was -- it was  
19 paid, I think we got paid for three hours and -- three  
20 or six hours we got paid for, and the rest was -- any  
21 other time was voluntary.

22 Q. Was that the work at Iqra, the work you got paid for?

23 A. No, that -- yes, that I got paid for, but this was  
24 separate, this was -- I don't know if this was before  
25 Iqra. I can't remember if it was before. But that was

1 with Lifeline in Huddersfield.

2 Q. If we could just focus on Iqra, then, rather than  
3 Lifeline.

4 A. Okay, sorry.

5 Q. When you were working at Iqra, were you being paid for  
6 the work you were doing?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. That was part of the Government's New Deal scheme?

9 A. That's right. They paid Iqra, I think, £50 a week, and  
10 then they paid me -- I was working there two days or  
11 three days, I think it was two days, 16 hours.

12 Q. When did you stop working there?

13 A. I worked there for about five, six months and then I got  
14 another job at Leeds Health Focus.

15 Q. So you started work in December 2003 and it took you  
16 through to about April/May 2005?

17 A. Yes --

18 Q. Sorry, 2004?

19 A. 2004, yes.

20 Q. Can I ask you about the people who were also at Iqra?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Do you remember a gentleman called Mohammed Tafazal  
23 working there or running it?

24 A. Yes, he was -- yes, he was like my boss.

25 Q. He's also known as "Taf". Is that correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Do you remember seeing a gentleman by the name of  
3 Naveed Fiaz working there?

4 A. I don't know if he worked there, but I did see him  
5 there, yes.

6 Q. And a gentleman called Khalid Khaliq?

7 A. I did see him there once as well, but I don't think he  
8 worked there. I think he worked somewhere else.

9 Q. Do you recall a gentleman named Martin McDaid who would  
10 go to the bookshop often?

11 A. I did see him -- I saw him there once or twice, yes.

12 Q. Finally, what about a gentleman by the name of  
13 Shipon Ullah, do you recall him being there often?

14 A. No, I didn't really see him there, no.

15 Q. Can I ask you about the bookshop itself? You say you  
16 were working in the bookshop part of Iqra. Is that  
17 correct?

18 A. That's right, yes.

19 Q. That's on the ground floor of the building. Is that  
20 right?

21 A. That's right, yes.

22 Q. Was there also another room on the ground floor where  
23 there were computers?

24 A. Yes, there was two entrances, one for the bookshop and  
25 then, just along the street, there was another entrance

1 and that -- there was a room there with computers,  
2 I think, I'm not -- I think there was some kind of  
3 computer club there or something.

4 Q. Who had access to use the computers?

5 A. I don't know. I mean, I know Tafazal and -- they had  
6 access, but I don't know who else, because, I mean, the  
7 shop was separated. There was a shutter between the  
8 shop and the back room and then obviously the upstairs,  
9 that was all connected through the other door.

10 Q. Mr Akhtar, you worked there for four or five months.

11 You must have seen --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- who had access going in and out of the computer area  
14 over that time, surely?

15 A. No, I saw people going in and out, but you were saying  
16 who had access to the computers, because there was -- it  
17 was the same entrance and some people were going  
18 upstairs, because there were offices upstairs as well,  
19 which I think they used to rent them out or something,  
20 there was -- there was a few people going to the -- so  
21 I don't know if -- you know, when they're going in the  
22 door, either they're going upstairs or they're going  
23 into the computer room. So I mean there was -- I saw  
24 Tafazal there. I saw one lady there. I don't know her  
25 name. Asian lady.

1 Q. Do you recall whether Tafazal ever restricted who had  
2 access to the computers?  
3 A. I think it was restricted. I don't know who, though.  
4 Q. Why do you think it was restricted?  
5 A. Well, we weren't allowed to use them.  
6 Q. Did you want to use them?  
7 A. Not really. I think maybe once or twice I might have  
8 asked if I could check my email, but I was busy with the  
9 shop, you see, so it's just -- not really.  
10 Q. But on those occasions when you wanted to check your  
11 email, you weren't allowed to do so?  
12 A. Sorry, could you say that again? I didn't ...?  
13 Q. On the occasions when you wanted to check your email,  
14 you weren't allowed to do so?  
15 A. I think he did allow me, but he said that, you know,  
16 that they weren't supposed to because the actual  
17 computers were -- they'd got some funding for them or  
18 something, and they were supposed to be used for people,  
19 you know, after school and, like, as a -- what's the  
20 word when you have a place where you can use computers?  
21 Internet cafe. An internet cafe and stuff.  
22 Q. Mr Akhtar, do you ever recall a gentleman named  
23 Martin Gilbertson attending the Iqra bookshop or working  
24 there?  
25 A. I saw him there once, yes, he came to the shop and then

1 he was asking for Tafazal, so I told him to go next  
2 door. I think he said he'd come to repair the computers  
3 or something.

4 Q. Can I ask you now about Mohammed Sidique Khan?

5 A. Mm-hmm.

6 Q. You mention in your statement that you knew him from  
7 Islamic meetings in Huddersfield.

8 A. Yes, what it is, is that I didn't actually say that.  
9 What I said is that -- the officer, she asked me, "When  
10 was the first time you saw him?", and I said I saw him  
11 at an event in Huddersfield. It was like an open -- it  
12 was like a community event, and there was about 400 to  
13 500 people there, and what it was, was that he was --  
14 I said I remembered seeing him there because he was on  
15 the food stall and he was serving the food. I didn't  
16 speak to him at the event. That was only just one  
17 occasion that I saw him.

18 Because, I mean, from the statement it says that  
19 I knew him over the last few years, but that's not  
20 actually what happened. It was just an open day and  
21 I saw him there. That was the first time I saw him and  
22 that's what she asked me and that's what I remembered  
23 about him.

24 Q. Did you see him afterwards, though, on a number of  
25 occasions?

1 A. No, not -- just in -- I mean, like I said, I saw him in  
2 Beeston, because I used to work there, but just in  
3 passing, not really conversation or anything.

4 Q. But you knew he went by the name "Sid". Is that  
5 correct?

6 A. I think I'd heard people say that, call him that name,  
7 but I can't remember.

8 Q. Before you started working at Iqra, is it right that  
9 Mohammed Sidique Khan was involved in the bookshop?

10 A. Yes, he was. But I only found that out after the  
11 bombings. I didn't know he was actually part of the --  
12 they never really talked about him or anything and, as  
13 far as I knew, there was only three people who were in  
14 charge of Iqra. There was Naveed, Khalid and Tafazal,  
15 these three were in charge. I didn't know he was  
16 actually part of it until afterwards.

17 Q. Why was he no longer involved when you started working  
18 there?

19 A. Well, what I was told is they had a disagreement  
20 about -- it was to do with a particular scholar called  
21 Hamza Yusuf, who -- he used to give lectures on Islam,  
22 and in the bookshop they used to sell his lectures on  
23 tape, and then, after 9/11 happened, he actually gave  
24 a lecture condemning suicide bombings and saying how it  
25 was against Islam and it was un-Islamic, and he actually

1 also -- I mean, he gave a few interviews on TV as well,  
2 so they had a fallout about him, because I remember --  
3 well, what I was told is that Sidique Khan didn't like  
4 this particular scholar and didn't like what he'd said,  
5 and so he said that, you know, we have -- we should stop  
6 selling his cassettes, you know, his propaganda or his  
7 knowledge or whatever, we shouldn't have it in the shop.  
8 So as far as I know, they had a meeting about him  
9 and they decided -- Tafazal and the others, they decided  
10 that the cassettes should stay, that there was nothing  
11 wrong with the cassettes, nothing wrong with what the  
12 scholar was saying. But he disagreed. So as far as  
13 I know, he left the bookshop and hasn't -- basically  
14 didn't come back after that.

15 Q. Whilst you were working in the bookshop, were you aware  
16 of any vetting process in respect of the books which  
17 were stocked or the cassettes or the videos?

18 A. Tafazal was in charge of -- and really in charge of all  
19 the -- whatever stock was bought for the shop. I mean,  
20 I only -- with respects to the perfumes, because that  
21 was -- they actually -- they were happy for me to buy  
22 the perfume that was to be sold in the shop, but the  
23 rest they did themselves.

24 Q. Whilst you were working there, did you have any concerns  
25 as to the material which was being stocked in the

1 bookshop?

2 A. No, I didn't really see anything out of the ordinary, it  
3 just seemed normal.

4 Q. You also spent time working at the Hamara Centre, is  
5 that correct?

6 A. Yes, I used to -- I was actually working for a place  
7 called Leeds Health Focus, but my remit was to work with  
8 the South Asian people, you know, helping -- I had two  
9 part-time jobs: one was working with the drugs  
10 awareness; and the other one was with Leeds Smoking  
11 Services, so promoting and helping people to give up  
12 smoking. So I used to run a clinic in the Hamara Centre  
13 once a week.

14 Q. It was at the Hamara Centre where the karate classes  
15 took place. Is that right?

16 A. That's right, yes.

17 Q. You attended those on a Saturday?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. That was in about August 2004 onwards?

20 A. Yes, I would say around that time, yes.

21 Q. At those classes were Mohammed Sidique Khan?

22 A. Yes, they came -- the three of them which I mentioned,  
23 they came -- they used to come to the class and, I mean,  
24 I only went on a Saturday because on a Saturday I used  
25 to teach -- I used to be at Leeds community school and

1 I used to teach there, which is across the road from  
2 Hamara Centre, and so one of the other teachers who  
3 worked with me used to go to these classes. So  
4 I started going with him, the two of us would go  
5 together, but they were there for about six weeks or  
6 something, or a couple of months they came for --

7 Q. And --

8 A. -- and then they stopped coming (break in connection).

9 Q. Sorry, we lost you again, Mr Akhtar. You said that they  
10 were there for about six weeks. I think you were  
11 referring to Mohammed Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer and  
12 Hasib Hussain. Is that right?

13 A. Yes, that's right, yes.

14 Q. You also mention in your witness statement that they  
15 attended swimming classes together.

16 A. Yes, that's what one of my friends -- because when I was  
17 working at Leeds Health Focus, Pervais used to work with  
18 me, would run (break in connection) and he told me that  
19 they came there as well.

20 Q. So they also went to the swimming together. Did you  
21 also see them attending mosque together?

22 A. No, no, I didn't. I know it's actually in the  
23 statement, but I never saw the three of them in the  
24 mosque together. As far as I know, he was actually  
25 banned from the mosque. I mean, that's what the locals

1 said and that's what it said in the papers as well,  
2 that --  
3 Q. When you say "he", do you mean Mohammed Sidique Khan?  
4 A. That's right, yes.  
5 Q. Which mosque do you say he was banned from?  
6 A. The Beeston mosque.  
7 Q. Do you know why that was?  
8 A. I don't know.  
9 Q. When you attended the karate classes, did you speak to  
10 the three of them?  
11 A. Not much, they tended to keep themselves to themselves.  
12 I spoke to them a little bit, but not in detail.  
13 Q. Did you discuss with them world affairs or anything like  
14 that?  
15 A. No, just martial arts theory, that's all.  
16 Q. We understand that Mohammed Sidique Khan and  
17 Shehzad Tanweer went to Pakistan in about November 2004  
18 to February 2005. Over that period, did Hasib Hussain  
19 continue to attend the karate classes?  
20 A. No. They all stopped together and then none of them  
21 came back.  
22 Q. Did you ever see Hasib Hussain and ask him why he was no  
23 longer attending the classes?  
24 A. No, I didn't actually see him, no. What happened is  
25 that -- because I remember saying to the officer what

1 happened is that, because they stopped coming to the  
2 class, so what would happen is the classes would take  
3 place in the hall, so before the class, we'd get changed  
4 and we would be putting the mats out and everything, and  
5 it was -- as far as I know, I think it was the  
6 instructor, he asked where they were, why they hadn't  
7 come to class and, as far as I know, somebody said that,  
8 you know, he'd -- Shehzad had gone to Pakistan.  
9 So I remember we were all joking that he's probably  
10 gone to get married. But I remember somebody saying  
11 that he was injured, but this was -- there was about six  
12 or seven of us just having this conversation, you know,  
13 whilst we were getting changed for karate class as we  
14 were putting the mats out. I didn't actually phone --  
15 speak to him specifically and ask him, you know, why he  
16 hadn't come.  
17 Q. In your witness statement you said this:  
18 "I saw the other one, Hasib, around Beeston."  
19 A. Yes.  
20 Q. "I asked him why he had not been training. He said he  
21 had been injured. He seemed to be keeping a low profile  
22 and avoiding people."  
23 Does that jog your memory at all?  
24 A. No, I mean, I've read over the statement and this was  
25 one of the things which I mentioned to the solicitor is

1 that some of the statement I feel is not correct.

2 I mean, what happened is, when the officer, she took

3 the statement, I mean, she was a constable, took the

4 statement, and she actually said, before she took the

5 statement, that it's not her normal practice to take

6 statements, but what it was is her superior was going to

7 let her do it, you know, just for her training and for

8 her development, and because also -- because when --

9 after the bombings happened, she was one of the officers

10 who came knocking door-to-door to all the houses.

11 So what would happen is that I would give the

12 statement -- I mean, I was speaking and, whilst I was

13 speaking, she would be listening and then she'd make her

14 own notes afterwards, and she actually told me she was

15 doing that, she said that there was too much to write,

16 so she was just going to -- so that's why the statement

17 has actually mixed up a few little bits here and there.

18 Q. Mr Akhtar, sorry to interrupt you. You're obviously

19 aware, given that this statement was taken very shortly

20 after the bombings, that it was of great importance?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. It's been signed, it had a declaration of truth

23 confirming that it is true to the best of your belief

24 and that you will be liable for prosecution if it's not.

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. Surely you checked it through afterwards?  
2 A. No, but, you see, that's the thing, I mean, I didn't  
3 check it properly. This is one mistake I made, because,  
4 I mean, this is one thing I said to the solicitor, and  
5 he asked me, "Did you sign the statement?" and I said  
6 "Yes", and he said, "Well, it's too late now, you've  
7 signed it, there's nothing you can do about it".  
8 But I mean, at the time, what it was is it was  
9 a long day, I was there all day from, I think about --  
10 I can't remember if it was like 9.30 in the morning  
11 until about 4.00 in the afternoon, and we were  
12 discussing this statement, and then, at the end,  
13 I was -- you know, I was tired, I wanted to go home, so  
14 I just quickly read over it.  
15 I mean, if I'd known how important it is, I would  
16 have gone through it in more detail.  
17 Q. All right, Mr Akhtar, let's move on. Can we move on  
18 to February 2005?  
19 A. All right.  
20 Q. You mention there that Sidique Khan had returned to  
21 Lees Holm at that point.  
22 A. Yes.  
23 Q. You say in your statement, "He was very strange with  
24 me."  
25 What do you mean by that?

1 A. No, I mean, what I meant to say is I saw him and I --  
2 because, with the cul de sac, there's only space for  
3 three cars and his house is right in front, so his house  
4 is right in the middle, and then -- so there's space for  
5 one car there and there's space for cars on either side.  
6 So he -- I was parking up my car and he came and I just  
7 got out and said "Salaam" to him, which is like a Muslim  
8 greeting, "Salaam aleikum" and he never replied and he  
9 just walked off, which is quite strange, because even  
10 somebody who's not really practising Islam at all, when  
11 you say "Salaam" to them, you always expect a reply from  
12 them. It's something that, you know, it's kind of like  
13 compulsory that you have to reply.

14 So I said "Salaam aleikum" to him and he just  
15 ignored me and walked off.

16 Q. On the occasions you had seen him before then, would he  
17 always respond to you when you said "Salaam aleikum"?

18 A. Yes, he would. He might not have a conversation with  
19 me, but he would always say "Aleikum salaam" and go off  
20 inside or wherever. He wouldn't ignore me, do you know  
21 what I mean? Because it's something that, as a Muslim,  
22 if somebody said "Salaam aleikum" to you, you have to  
23 reply.

24 So, when he didn't reply, then I thought you know  
25 "What's wrong with him, why is he behaving like that?"

1 Q. So there seemed to be a change in his behaviour?

2 A. Yes, that's how I (break in connection), when I greeted  
3 him, when I said "Salaam aleikum" to him, he just  
4 ignored me which, you know, obviously was different from  
5 what he was supposed to do.

6 Q. Between, February 2005 and July 2005, did you see  
7 Mohammed Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer and Hasib Hussain  
8 together on a number of occasions?

9 A. No, I just saw Shehzad Tanweer come to his house on  
10 a couple of occasions, I think about once or twice.

11 That's all (break in connection).

12 Q. You say in your witness statement that:

13 "Most of the time I saw them, it was mostly just the  
14 three Asians together. They would be sat in a car,  
15 mainly Kaki", a reference to Shehzad Tanweer.

16 Do you recall seeing them in the car together?

17 A. Yes, that was -- that statement was -- you know, when it  
18 was karate class, that I usually -- if they came to  
19 karate class, they'd all be together and, when they'd  
20 leave, they'd always be together, and during the class  
21 as well, they tended to, like -- what would happen is  
22 the instructor would show you the moves that he wanted  
23 you to learn, and then usually you'd pair in, like, twos  
24 or threes, and practise that, and they would always be  
25 together -- do you see what I mean? -- they wouldn't be

1 paired with anybody else.

2 So that statement -- I made that earlier on. I know  
3 it's towards the end of the statement, but that's  
4 something which you said with regards to them, you know,  
5 at the karate class.

6 Q. But that's a reference you're saying to the karate  
7 class, but in the statement you refer to them sitting in  
8 the car together, so they obviously weren't in the class  
9 at that point.

10 A. Yes, when they came to class, I mean, they'd -- because  
11 sometimes what would happen is that -- I don't know,  
12 somebody had the keys for the centre, there would be  
13 a caretaker who would usually come and he'd open --  
14 because the classes -- the centre was -- I mean, 9 to  
15 5 -- I mean, Monday to Friday, it was open all the time,  
16 then on the weekends, there was a --

17 Q. Mr Akhtar, I'm sorry to interrupt you, I don't think  
18 we're too concerned with the opening hours of the karate  
19 class.

20 A. Okay, sorry.

21 Q. Can we just go back to the three of them together?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Did it appear, then, even prior to February 2005, when  
24 they're at the karate class, that they were a tight-knit  
25 group, that they were distant from other people in the

1 community?

2 A. Yes, they pretty much were, yes.

3 Q. Did that -- sorry, carry on?

4 A. No, that's all.

5 Q. Did that continue from February 2005 onwards?

6 A. I didn't really see them after February 2005. I only

7 saw -- I said I saw Shehzad Tanweer come to

8 Sidique Khan's house, I think on a couple of occasions

9 I saw him come, but I didn't see the three of them

10 together.

11 Q. Did you ever see Jermaine Lindsay from February 2005

12 onwards visiting Mohammed Sidique Khan?

13 A. No, no, I didn't, no.

14 Q. Do you recall when the last time you saw

15 Jermaine Lindsay was?

16 A. It was around about, I think, December 2004, when he

17 came up to -- he came for a couple of days and that was

18 the time where he bought his car. I saw him at that

19 time. I think it was in, like, December time, December.

20 Q. The car he bought was the Fiat?

21 A. Yes, Fiat Brava, yes.

22 Q. Where he was he staying at that point, in December 2004?

23 A. I think some days he stayed with -- at 69, at

24 Sidique Khan's house, because the house, like I said,

25 was empty, it was -- so I think he was staying there.

1 Q. That's when we know Mohammed Sidique Khan was in  
2 Pakistan?

3 A. Yes, yes.

4 Q. So he had access to Mohammed Sidique Khan's house while  
5 he was abroad in Pakistan?

6 A. That's right, yes, he will have, yes.

7 MR HAY: Mr Akhtar, thank you very much. I have no more  
8 questions for you, but there may be some others.

9 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Patterson?

10 Questions by MR PATTERSON

11 MR PATTERSON: Eight days after the 7/7 bombings, on  
12 15 July, Mr Akhtar, you made a detailed eleven-page  
13 witness statement to the police, did you not?

14 A. That's right. I think it was -- it was --

15 Q. I have it in front of me here.

16 A. Yes, I mean, I don't know, it was -- it was 15 pages,  
17 but then they've --

18 Q. A lengthy and detailed statement, yes?

19 A. That's right, yes.

20 Q. What you said in that, at page 5, in relation to  
21 Mohammed Sidique Khan, was that:

22 "I knew Sidique from Islamic meetings in  
23 Huddersfield over the last few years."

24 That's what you said in the statement taken  
25 in July 2005. Isn't that right?

1 A. No, I don't -- I didn't say that. I mean, like I said,  
2 she asked me when was the first time I saw him, and  
3 I said that's when I saw him, at an Islamic meeting in  
4 Huddersfield.

5 Q. All right, we'll take it in stages, please, if I may.  
6 You agree that that's what appears in your statement at  
7 page 5?

8 A. That is what appears in my statement, yes. But I don't  
9 (break in connection) that's what I said.

10 Q. You'd agree with me that tends to suggest, does it not,  
11 that you had met him over several years and that you  
12 knew him?

13 A. Yes, that's what it suggests in the statement, but  
14 that's not what happened.

15 Q. You are now saying --

16 A. (Break in connection).

17 Q. -- that that's incorrect, that that's not what you said  
18 to the police officer, and the police officer wrote down  
19 something that was inaccurate?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Now, you had an opportunity, did you not, to read  
22 through this statement and to make any corrections that  
23 were needed before you signed it?

24 A. Yes, but --

25 Q. Is that right? Did you have that opportunity?

1 A. Yes, I had an opportunity, yes.

2 Q. You agree that you did not correct or change in any way  
3 that sentence about having known Sidique over the last  
4 few years?

5 A. Yes, like I say, I don't remember that sentence even  
6 being in there.

7 Q. But you agree that you didn't correct it?

8 A. No, I mustn't have done, if it's still in there.

9 Q. I'm not suggesting for one moment that you were in any  
10 way involved with him in what clearly we all know now he  
11 was up to, but is the truth that, in fact, you did know  
12 him for several years before 2005?

13 A. No, I didn't know him. I said I saw him. This is what  
14 I was asked, and I said I saw him at this meeting in  
15 Huddersfield and, like I said, there was about another  
16 400 people there and the reason why I remember him is  
17 because he was on the food stall serving the food.

18 Q. So the guy who was serving food at this huge event with  
19 400 or 500 people was somebody who stuck in your memory,  
20 is that what you're saying?

21 A. No, they asked me "When was the first time that you saw  
22 him?", and I said that was the first time I remember him  
23 (break in connection) a series of meetings or anything  
24 which happened over a few years. It was just an event  
25 which took place and I went there.

1 Q. When you go to a football match or a concert or anything  
2 like that, do you always find out the name and identity  
3 of the person who sells you a hot dog?

4 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: I think I have the point,  
5 Mr Patterson.

6 A. (Overspeaking).

7 MR PATTERSON: My Lady, yes. You mentioned your  
8 understanding that he had been unhappy about the keeping  
9 of material from this scholar, Hamza Yusuf at the Iqra  
10 bookshop.

11 A. Sorry, I didn't hear what you said.

12 Q. You mentioned a particular scholar, Hamza Yusuf --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- and how the Iqra bookshop supplied, I think you said,  
15 cassettes that had come from this scholar?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Your understanding was that this was a Muslim scholar  
18 who was condemning suicide bombings, who was condemning  
19 terrorism, and saying that all of that was something  
20 that was entirely contrary to Islam?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. But that your understanding was that  
23 Mohammed Sidique Khan disagreed and wanted the Iqra  
24 bookshop to have nothing to do with this scholar and his  
25 teachings?

1 A. Yes, that's what I was told, that's why he left.

2 Q. During those months when you were working at Iqra -- you

3 said it was from December 2003 to about April

4 or May 2004 -- is it not the case that

5 Mohammed Sidique Khan was still associating, still

6 coming to the bookshop?

7 A. I don't -- I didn't see him there at the bookshop.

8 I mean, I said I was only there, I think, two days

9 a week and I didn't see him come. As far as I know, he

10 didn't -- they didn't get on, they didn't talk to each

11 other and stuff like this.

12 Q. Yes, but various witnesses have told us, or I anticipate

13 will be telling us, that he was there regularly, that

14 Shehzad Tanweer was there regularly, that Tanweer was

15 working, actually working there, on a voluntary basis.

16 Are you saying --

17 A. I didn't see neither --

18 Q. You saw neither of them at the bookshop.

19 A. I didn't see either of them at the bookshop.

20 Q. Indeed, there's also evidence that I anticipate we will

21 hear that there was a gym that was linked to the Iqra

22 bookshop, an Iqra youth club that was actually run by

23 Khan at premises nearby, at -- I think it's

24 Woodview Road.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Were you aware of that?

2 A. I didn't know Sidique Khan ran the gym. Like I said,  
3 I saw -- the gym -- because the gym was free to use, so  
4 I used to go there a couple of times a week. I'm not  
5 sure if it was -- I think it was whilst I was working  
6 there, and I saw -- I did see Sidique Khan there at the  
7 gym.

8 Q. You mentioned some computers -- forgive me I interrupted  
9 you.

10 You mentioned some computers and I think, if my note  
11 is accurate, you said that there were computers there  
12 which were supposed to be used by children after school.  
13 Is that right?

14 A. I think so, yes. I think that's where the funding came  
15 from. It was like -- I don't remember. I mean, it was  
16 something which Tafazal mentioned --

17 Q. Tafazal Mohammed told you this, did he?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Where did the funding come from to provide these  
20 computers that were being used by children?

21 A. I don't know.

22 Q. Did there come a time when the back room on the ground  
23 floor at the Iqra bookshop contained four computers that  
24 could be used by people?

25 A. Yes, I think there was about four computers there, yes.

1 Q. So they were present in that back room on the ground  
2 floor --  
3 A. Yes.  
4 Q. -- while you were there, which was in the spring of  
5 2004. Is that right?  
6 A. Yes, there was computers then in the back room, yes.  
7 Q. You mentioned in your statement to the police  
8 a particular gym where you saw Mohammed Sidique Khan:  
9 "I also saw Sidique at a gym in Beeston which was  
10 a community gym. I knew another male called Kaki who  
11 also went to the gym."  
12 A. Yes.  
13 Q. That presumably --  
14 A. Yes, I saw him at the gym.  
15 Q. Right. That presumably was Mohammed Sidique Khan and  
16 Shehzad Tanweer that you were talking about there?  
17 A. Yes, what it is, is I didn't see them in the gym  
18 together but I remember seeing Shehzad Tanweer there at  
19 the gym as well.  
20 Q. Then when you saw them all later, in 2004 and 2005 --  
21 I'll not go through the details, you've explained  
22 already how you saw them in a number of different places  
23 doing the karate classes and at Khan's home address on  
24 Lees Holm.  
25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Yes?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. I think you told the police in your statement that the  
4 others were actually helping Khan to decorate his house.

5 A. Yes, yes, the three of them were together at his house,  
6 yes.

7 Q. In general terms, what you told the police in the  
8 witness statement was that they seemed to be very close  
9 together, very close friends, pretty tightly-knit. Is  
10 that a fair summary?

11 A. Yes.

12 MR PATTERSON: Thank you very much.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Any other questions for Mr Akhtar?  
14 Mr Akhtar, I'm Lady Justice Hallett, the coroner  
15 conducting these inquests. Those are all the questions  
16 that we have for you. Thank you for being prepared to  
17 try to assist me.

18 A. Thank you very much.

19 MR HAY: My Lady, if you would rise for five minutes, that  
20 would be very helpful.

21 MR KEITH: It might, I'm afraid, be a bit longer, my Lady,  
22 because they are going to try to re-establish the link  
23 to make it a bit better.

24 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: I shan't come back until I'm told.  
25 (12.05 pm)

1 (A short break)  
2 (12.15 pm)  
3 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Keith?  
4 MR KEITH: Good morning. Can you hear me.  
5 THE WITNESS: Yes, I can hear, good morning.  
6 MR KEITH: Could you be sworn, please, and then provide the  
7 court with your full name?  
8 THE WITNESS: My full name is Sarwar Khan.  
9 MR KEITH: Mr Khan, you should have a card with you, or it  
10 will be given to you, from which you can then take the  
11 oath for the purposes of these proceedings.  
12 THE WITNESS: Yes.  
13 MR SARWAR KHAN (affirmed)  
14 (Evidence given by videolink)  
15 Questions by MR KEITH  
16 MR KEITH: Mr Khan, thank you for making yourself available  
17 to give evidence. I want to ask you, please, on behalf  
18 of Lady Justice Hallett, the coroner in these  
19 proceedings, some questions about activities in Beeston  
20 and, in particular, your memories of the mosques in the  
21 Beeston area and the involvement that you had in the  
22 area through the Kashmir Muslim Welfare Association.  
23 All right?  
24 A. Yes.  
25 Q. We know that there were a number of mosques in the

1 Beeston area in the early 2000s but there came a time,  
2 did there not, when something of a doctrinal split  
3 occurred in the area between two particular mosques, one  
4 in Stratford Street, the Stratford Street mosque, and  
5 one in Hardy Street, the Hardy Street mosque. Is that  
6 right?

7 A. Yes, the two mosques, yes.

8 Q. Was there a divide in their doctrinal view in the  
9 religious views to which both mosques were respectively  
10 committed?

11 A. Yes, but that doctrine I think was led before -- that  
12 was led with there just sort of being one mosque in  
13 early 1980s, which was Stratford Street mosque, and  
14 there was a -- some sort of -- two groups came apart,  
15 nothing to do with religion, it's just the two groups,  
16 an election, and a political view that two groups came  
17 into existence, and that is where they had different  
18 opinion on where a big mosque should be in the area, at  
19 that time in 1980s, and there has been some sort of  
20 different views of the locations, et cetera, among those  
21 people who were already committee and et cetera.

22 And that is how KMW, Kashmir Muslim Welfare  
23 Association, which is at 1 Hardy Street, came into  
24 existence --

25 Q. Can I pause you there?

1 A. -- because they --

2 Q. Sorry, Mr Khan, can I just pause you there, because we

3 must keep up with what you're saying?

4 Was, and is, the KMWA, the Kashmir Muslim Welfare

5 Association?

6 A. Sorry? Repeat again?

7 Q. You've just referred to an acronym of an association,

8 but you referred to it by its initials. Was that

9 a reference to the Kashmir Muslim Welfare Association?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What was that association designed to do? What was the

12 purpose of the setting up of that association?

13 A. To serve the local community, especially for elderly,

14 for young people, originally, when they started, like,

15 an association, a local group, where they had found

16 a place, which was Hardy Street, and that is where

17 a community centre and mosque came into existence. The

18 main purpose was a mosque and a community centre.

19 Q. Did the Kashmir Muslim Welfare Association operate out

20 of the ground floor of that building, and the mosque

21 with which it was associated operated on the second

22 floor?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. Your statement that you kindly gave to the police

25 in July of 2007 refers to how, after the association was

1 set up, a divide came into being between Sunni and  
2 Wahabi elements in the local community, and the Kashmir  
3 Muslim Welfare Association was more associated with the  
4 Sunni persuasion and there were others in the community  
5 who took a more Wahabist view. Would you agree?

6 A. Yes, I agree to certain extent, but that was when the  
7 two mosques came into existence, maybe in early 1980s,  
8 and there was the, like, two sects in Wahabism and  
9 Sunnism.

10 Wahabism, those groups of those people were using  
11 Stratford Street mosque. The Sunni people, they were  
12 using Hardy Street mosque. There was not any  
13 restriction on either mosque. If a Sunni can go --  
14 would not go or the Wahabi would not go into  
15 Hardy Street, there was not any restriction upon any of  
16 the mosques, but it was just the --

17 Q. I'm sorry to interrupt. You are addressing then the  
18 position as it had originally been in the 1980s.

19 Perhaps the fault is mine for not making it sufficiently  
20 clear. We're more concerned with whether or not, later,  
21 2000, 2001, 2002, that divide, such as it was, was still  
22 maintained in the community.

23 A. It was still existing in the community, that divide  
24 line, unseen divide line.

25 Q. What, in essence, is the distinguishing characteristic

1 of those who lean towards the Wahabist view?

2 Can you hear me, Mr Khan?

3 A. Yes, I can hear you, but I was viewing as well, you was  
4 paused, so can you -- yes, I can hear you.

5 Q. I'm afraid the system froze there for a moment, so I'll  
6 repeat the question.

7 What, in your view, is the defining characteristic  
8 of those who lean towards the Wahabist view?

9 A. Only slightly different way of preaching. There is  
10 not -- I will not like to go into, because that may be  
11 for a scholar to explain exactly, but what it was known  
12 in the community and it was something slightly different  
13 way of preaching.

14 Q. It was not a way of preaching that was welcome in the  
15 Hardy Street mosque and in the Kashmir Muslim Welfare  
16 Association, was it?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Because your statement records how you, as a senior  
19 member of that association, and of the Hardy Street  
20 mosque, became aware that a group of people were trying  
21 to introduce more Wahabist views into the Hardy Street  
22 mosque and the KMWA.

23 A. That was felt.

24 Q. When was that?

25 A. I think 2001 or 2002, if I'm not wrong.

1 Q. That attempt, as I've said -- and you've agreed -- was  
2 not welcome and, as a result, did that group of people  
3 move out of the premises, stop using the KMWA and stop  
4 attending the Hardy Street mosque and go elsewhere?

5 A. I think I would put it in a different phrase. That  
6 group was using that time, not mosque, but basement  
7 where they have got the sporting facilities.

8 Q. Why --

9 A. Not --

10 Q. I am so sorry to interrupt. Please continue.

11 A. Not the mosque. They were not gone from the mosque.  
12 They were using a basement as training for sports and  
13 other youth activities because, while they were there,  
14 they were trying to teach Wahabism in such a way that it  
15 has angered the elders or the preacher who were using  
16 the mosque since 1980s, and that was felt strongly in  
17 2001 or 2002.

18 Q. Thank you. I don't want you to delve too far into  
19 a doctrinal debate. As you've indicated, it's perhaps  
20 a matter for scholars. But would it be fair to say that  
21 the concern that you and others had was that the  
22 Wahabist view tends towards a more extremist  
23 interpretation than the Sunni view, the persuasion to  
24 which you adhere?

25 A. No, that wasn't the view of the committee or elders. It

1 was purely the Sunni and Wahabism which was existing for  
2 long time, even before 1980s, so there are two -- there  
3 are two groups or sects in Islam. They do not go  
4 sometimes well together. So that is where there was  
5 a divide.

6 Q. All right. That group had a number of people in it whom  
7 you knew and one of them was, according to your  
8 statement, Tafazal Mohammed. Is that right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. He was working as a youth worker in the community and  
11 associated with a number of charitable enterprises,  
12 voluntary associations in the Beeston area?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Were you aware that the group also comprised a man  
15 called Mohammed Sidique Khan and another man called  
16 Khalid Khaliq?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. It was well-known, wasn't it, that on account of their  
19 religious views, in part, that that group associated  
20 together? You described them in your statement, in  
21 fact, as a rival group. Is that a fair description?

22 A. Yes, it is, and when I mentioned in my statement the  
23 rival group, I mean the local groups working, he was  
24 working -- I think they were working for South Leeds  
25 Elderly Group and it was the youth section more they

1 were focusing, and, yes, there was a rivalry between the  
2 two groups.

3 Q. Through Tafazal Mohammed, you met, did you not, a man  
4 called Martin Gilbertson, because he came to mend your  
5 computers on a number of occasions?

6 A. Yes, twice.

7 Q. Twice, thank you. Did you have any dealings with  
8 Gilbertson other than that?

9 A. No, no, my computers were something wrong and because,  
10 through Tafazal Hussain, I was introduced, that he can  
11 mend the computer, so I got in touch and he came and he  
12 mended my computer and I think they had gone wrong,  
13 something wrong, and he came again. He did twice  
14 repaired my computer in my home.

15 Q. You knew him by sight, therefore, and subsequently, did  
16 you meet him in December of 2005?

17 A. Yes, I did.

18 Q. We know from your witness statement, Mr Khan, that you  
19 are also a taxi driver. Did you have an occasion when  
20 you picked him up outside Leeds train station that  
21 month?

22 A. Yes, I did.

23 Q. Do you recall your conversation with him?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did he discuss with you the Iqra bookshop?

1 A. Yes, he did.

2 Q. Were you --

3 A. Not on that -- sorry, not on that night, but when he was  
4 repairing, I think, my computer -- because we did have  
5 some sort of talk that he's working in Iqra bookshop and  
6 he's repairing their computers and so forth, when he  
7 mentioned his local radio, he said he know their  
8 website, et cetera. That sort of talk on the computer  
9 base. Yes, there was a talk, and in December, I think  
10 2005, yes, I met him in the taxi.

11 Q. Were you aware of the Iqra bookshop?

12 Hello, Mr Khan, can you hear us?

13 A. I lost -- can you repeat the question, because there was  
14 a pause?

15 Q. Yes. Did you know of the Iqra bookshop? Had you heard  
16 of the Iqra bookshop from others? Were you aware of its  
17 existence?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What did you know of it?

20 A. Iqra bookshop, because it is in the same locality and it  
21 is in the community, everybody is -- was well aware of.  
22 These youngsters have opened a shop which is Iqra  
23 bookshop, there's a library, there's the books,  
24 et cetera, the youth services they are providing for the  
25 community.

1 Q. In your statement, Mr Khan, you refer to how, in the  
2 course of meeting Mr Gilbertson in December 2005, you  
3 asked him about Iqra and, according to your signed  
4 witness statement, you said:

5 "I cannot remember the exact conversation, but  
6 I told him that, as he worked at Iqra and he was  
7 involved in the computers, he must have had some  
8 information."

9 Do you recall telling that to the police officer who  
10 took your statement? You'll see the reference to it,  
11 Mr Khan, on page 3 of your witness statement, if you  
12 have the typed version. Halfway down the page.

13 A. Gilbertson, yes, I can see it.

14 Q. Is that accurate, that reference?

15 A. That he was working the Iqra bookshop?

16 Q. And that you asked him about the Iqra bookshop on the  
17 basis that you supposed he had had some information  
18 about it because he was involved in the computers there.

19 A. Okay, yes, it was -- it wasn't only my -- well, my  
20 question, but that time a -- this unfortunate event  
21 which has shook the whole community, especially Muslim  
22 community, yes, it was a question came in to my mind  
23 because I knew he was working for Iqra.

24 Previous to 7/7, I met him in taxi and there was  
25 a lot of -- Iqra bookshop, it was raided, it was in the

1 media, it was in the public domain.

2 So after July, December, he come into my taxi, I did  
3 not recognise him, but he did recognise me and we start  
4 talking and that is where, yes, I think I did ask him,  
5 "You did work for Iqra that time and Iqra is in the  
6 media and there is a lot connected with this atrocity,  
7 big event, whole community". So, yes, I did ask him.

8 Q. Thank you, that's very helpful. In the course of that  
9 conversation, did he mention to you anything about  
10 telling somebody about information that he had about the  
11 Iqra bookshop?

12 A. He sort of, in a complained way, or in a regretting way,  
13 he said he has spoken and nobody's taking notice of his  
14 complaint, and I was surprised, as I'm surprised today,  
15 why could not police, police who would have taken notice  
16 of this vital link in Iqra, and I said "I cannot  
17 believe, why could not you go to the police?". He said  
18 he had been, they're not interested in.

19 I said "If that is the case, why don't you go to the  
20 media? Why don't you speak to your local MP? This is  
21 very, very serious matter", and you could hope -- you  
22 could have --

23 Q. I'm sorry to pause you there, Mr Khan. You said that he  
24 had said that he had spoken to someone and then you went  
25 on to say that you understood he'd tried to speak to the

1 police.

2 Did he, himself, tell you that it was the police to  
3 whom he had tried to speak?

4 A. He said to me he tried to speak to the police, but  
5 they're not -- they haven't taken any notice of him.

6 Q. Thank you. Now, this is an important area, for reasons  
7 that I won't trouble you with, but we'll be hearing from  
8 Mr Gilbertson later, who may give evidence to the effect  
9 that he tried to speak to the police, and so this  
10 account may assist on the accuracy of what he may say  
11 later.

12 Did he tell you who it was precisely, in terms of  
13 which police force or where they were, to whom he had  
14 tried to speak?

15 A. As I remember, he mentioned that he tried to speak to  
16 the police but they are not interested in, which was  
17 a surprise comment listening from him. The police were  
18 looking for anything, everything, for this sort of big  
19 atrocity --

20 Q. Did he mention --

21 A. -- and they would have been interested?

22 Q. Quite so. Did he mention how he had tried to contact  
23 the police? By what means he had attempted to make the  
24 link?

25 A. No, I do not recall that. He did not -- I do not recall

1 that he specifically, which mean -- sources he used to  
2 get in touch with police.

3 Q. Did he say when it was he had made these attempts?

4 A. No, I cannot recall that. It must have been after 7/7,  
5 but I cannot recall and I never met him before December.

6 Q. Your name is Khan, of course, but you are no relation of  
7 Mohammed Sidique Khan.

8 A. Exactly.

9 Q. Mr Gilbertson --

10 A. He was --

11 Q. Mr Gilbertson may suggest in due course that, in the  
12 course of this conversation, you said something to him  
13 along the lines of "You know who turned my brother and  
14 you know what's going on in Beeston".

15 Is that something that you would have said, Mr Khan?

16 A. What I can vaguely remember now that he -- I think he  
17 was thinking that I may be related to Sidique Khan  
18 because he's a Sidique Khan and I am Sarwar Khan, which  
19 I told, I think, him "No, there are two different  
20 Khans". And he knew -- he knew, when he repaired my  
21 computer, who I am; I am running the KMWA set-up there,  
22 I am the secretary there. He knew that, and he was well  
23 aware of the rivalry groups in the area, sort of thing.  
24 So I was surprised how he is confused when Sidique Khan  
25 and other youths were in the Iqra and I was with the

1 Hardy Street. So I have told him, no, there are two  
2 different Khans.  
3 Q. Given that you are no relation, may we presume --  
4 A. No --  
5 Q. Please listen to the question.  
6 Given that you are no relation, would you therefore  
7 have said words to the effect of "You know who turned my  
8 brother"?  
9 A. Sorry, repeat that again, please?  
10 Q. Yes. Given that you are no relation of  
11 Mohammed Sidique Khan, would you, therefore, have ever  
12 made any remark to Gilbertson to the effect that your  
13 brother, Mohammed Sidique Khan, had been turned in some  
14 way?  
15 A. Has been turned?  
16 Q. Turned, indoctrinated.  
17 A. I don't think so.  
18 Q. Thank you.  
19 A. I cannot remember.  
20 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: We could be using "brother" in  
21 a different sense.  
22 MR KEITH: It could, my Lady. But that's not, in fact, from  
23 Mr Gilbertson's witness statement, the way in which he  
24 plainly thought it was being said, because he goes on to  
25 discuss how he thought he was actually his relation.

1 Was there any conversation between you at all in  
2 relation to the second part of what I put to you, which  
3 is that there had been something going on in Beeston of  
4 which you knew?

5 A. Could you repeat, because there was two pauses in your  
6 question, sir?

7 Q. Did you ever discuss with Mr Gilbertson during that taxi  
8 ride in December 2005 a knowledge, a supposed knowledge,  
9 of what had been going on in Beeston before 7 July 2005  
10 and the bombings in London?

11 A. Did I ask Gilbertson, is that your question?

12 Q. Did you ask Gilbertson, or did you discuss with him or  
13 acknowledge with him that there had been some problem or  
14 some activities in Beeston which were relevant to the  
15 events of 7 July 2005?

16 A. I might have conversation with him being working for  
17 Iqra that, you know, "What did you know?". Is there  
18 anything worse which, you know, could have been  
19 prevented, or if there was any criminal activities  
20 behind the scene, I might have asked him.

21 Q. Did you know of any activities behind the scene or any  
22 aspect of community life in Beeston that caused you  
23 concern before 7 July 2005?

24 A. Not anything such as that which was resulted in 7/7, no,  
25 there wasn't anything to my knowledge or my committee or

1 in the community. This was a surprise to everybody.

2 Q. There are two ways, with respect, of analysing your  
3 answer there.

4 Do you mean there was no knowledge of the nature of  
5 the event that occurred in London on 7 July as opposed  
6 to any concern as to radicalisation of members of the  
7 youth in Beeston? Did you have any concerns in a more  
8 general sense that extremist views were being allowed to  
9 develop amongst certain segments of the Muslim youths in  
10 the Beeston area?

11 A. No, no.

12 Q. None at all?

13 A. None at all. There was only two concerns which came  
14 into -- which I have, reverting, referred here, rivalry  
15 groups, one was Wahabism, different way of teaching kids  
16 on a slight different way. The other one may have been  
17 some sort of rivalriness in the group, it could be KMW,  
18 it could be Iqra bookshop or community school or any  
19 others, there might have been some sort of a different  
20 rivalry, but not what it came out.

21 That wasn't in -- what I'm saying, this was -- they  
22 were using the basement in 2001 and 2002. I think in  
23 2002 they were asked to leave. So after that, I cannot  
24 tell you how they are using the centre. The Iqra  
25 bookshop was in the existence and they were -- everybody

1 in the community knew they are providing, you know, the  
2 service to the youngsters, sisters, brothers,  
3 everybody -- like, male or female in other words -- the  
4 computer classes, et cetera, library, that sort of thing  
5 was in the community domain.

6 MR KEITH: All right, thank you, Mr Khan, I've no further  
7 questions for you. There may be some more questions for  
8 you from lawyers representing the other interested  
9 persons in these proceedings.

10 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Patterson?

11 Questions by MR PATTERSON

12 MR PATTERSON: Mr Khan, I think you knew  
13 Mohammed Sidique Khan through the community and through  
14 his family who attended at the Hardy Street mosque. Is  
15 that right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You knew that Khan was somebody who was involved with  
18 the South Leeds Elderly Group, is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. At one stage, were they based at 73 Lodge Lane?

21 A. That's true.

22 Q. Did there come a time when that particular  
23 association -- the South Leeds Elderly Group -- moved  
24 premises to -- I think it was number 1 Tempest Road. Is  
25 that right?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. In relation to Khan, you've already said that he was  
3 involved with the group that ran the gym in the basement  
4 at the Hardy Street mosque --

5 A. That's true.

6 Q. -- and that, because of the friction between the  
7 different sects, the KMWA thought it would be a helpful  
8 thing for the youth of the community to allow this gym  
9 to be run in the basement. Have I got that right?

10 A. Yes, that is right.

11 Q. So it was to help the youth of the community, to get  
12 them off the streets and keep them out of trouble and it  
13 was purely a physical exercise thing in the basement.

14 That was what was intended?

15 A. Exactly, that was the intention.

16 Q. You've just said that it was in 2002 that this group  
17 that Khan was involved with in the basement gym were  
18 asked to leave the premises.

19 It was simply because they were getting involved,  
20 not just in physical education, but also preaching to  
21 the youths, preaching to the children. Was that the  
22 concern?

23 A. Can you repeat your question, because there was a pause  
24 and I might have missed something, but I got your first  
25 bit and the last bit?

1 Q. Yes, you said they were asked to leave.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. It had been set up purely to provide a physical  
4 organisation for the children, for the youths of the  
5 area, but what had happened was they had begun to preach  
6 their views to the children. Was that your  
7 understanding?

8 A. Yes, I think I got the gesture of your question, sir,  
9 but there was a pause again and I do not want to answer  
10 that until you clearly question me, because it may be  
11 a vital something that you asked and I did not get that.

12 Q. The reason they were asked to leave was because they  
13 began to preach or to teach to the children in relation  
14 to their views, their religious views. Is that right?

15 A. Yes, Wahabism, yes.

16 Q. But it must have been sufficiently worrying to have  
17 caused the elders at the mosque to ask them to leave?

18 A. Yes, it was worrying. It did upset the elderly and the  
19 all preachers of that mosque. They wanted something in  
20 a different way.

21 Q. But was it just a minor and subtle difference as to the  
22 mode of preaching, or was it something more worrying and  
23 more extreme than that?

24 A. No, it wasn't the extremism; it was the Wahabism.

25 If I can, you know, make it more clearly, there

1 wasn't any element of extremism, it was Wahabism, the  
2 way the people were preaching a mosque at that  
3 Stratford Street, which is more Wahabism, there is  
4 a slightly different way of preaching, and that is what  
5 has -- was upsetting the elder.

6 Q. The group then went to the Iqra bookshop. Is that  
7 right?

8 A. Yes, I think, when they were there, they were from South  
9 Leeds Elderly Group, they all were all the same group,  
10 the same people running, and Iqra bookshop was in  
11 existence at that time and they left from there and they  
12 went to 1 Tempest Road.

13 Q. When the Iqra bookshop was set up on Bude Road, did you  
14 associate the Iqra bookshop with the Wahabi sect as  
15 opposed to the Sunni sect?

16 A. Can you repeat that question again, sir?

17 Q. Yes. When the Iqra bookshop was set up on Bude Road,  
18 was it your understanding that it was initially more  
19 associated with the Wahabi sect than the Sunni sect?

20 A. That was very clear in the community and, yes, that was  
21 clearly known to everybody in the mosque, in the  
22 Hardy Street and Sunni group.

23 Q. Although you, yourself, never went there, so presumably  
24 you don't know yourself what precisely was going on  
25 there or what precisely was being sold from those

1 premises?

2 A. I never been there, I never visited, I never been into  
3 the shop.

4 Q. In your statement to the police you said that your  
5 understanding was that young people were attending Iqra  
6 and were accessing literature and were using computers.  
7 Is that right, what you told the police?

8 A. That is right.

9 Q. I think a few moments ago you said that there were  
10 computer classes that were held, to your understanding,  
11 at the Iqra bookshop.

12 A. I think there were -- the classes, what kind of classes,  
13 who was running, I cannot say anything because I do not  
14 know, but what I know of the people who were -- who used  
15 it that they have got the computer, they have got the  
16 books, they have got, you know, even the -- they're  
17 trying to provide some sort of services for the youths.  
18 So I was just thinking it could be something, you  
19 know, the community needs. It may be good for the youth  
20 services. There wasn't anything for me to concern that  
21 it is, other than this is the Iqra bookshop and all  
22 books will be all on the Wahabism. That was my  
23 understanding, along with my other colleague and  
24 everybody from the Hardy Street. Nothing other than  
25 that. There wasn't anything.

1 Q. I think in your statement to the police your experience  
2 was that the youths of the community tended to prefer  
3 learning from computers than perhaps via more  
4 traditional methods of teaching?

5 A. Yes, that was my view, that these other groups probably  
6 maybe providing a good material in English and CD or the  
7 way the youths of today -- they were more attractive to  
8 them, because traditionally, Sunni must -- most Imams  
9 were -- I'm talking back in now from the (inaudible)  
10 there has been a lot of improvement, but they were all  
11 non-English speaking, and that was a problem and that  
12 I felt five, six years, when I was with KMW, strongly,  
13 and that there is a need for it because there is a lack  
14 of communication between Imam and the youngsters  
15 especially.

16 MR PATTERSON: Thank you very much, Mr Khan.

17 Questions by MR BEGGS

18 MR BEGGS: Mr Khan, in the taxi ride in December of 2005,  
19 did you say to Mr Gilbertson, in answer to his question  
20 whether you were Mohammed Sidique Khan's brother, "Yes,  
21 he is my brother"?

22 A. No, he wasn't my brother, so I could not say he was my  
23 brother.

24 Q. Thank you. Secondly, did you speak to Mr John Battle,  
25 an MP?

1 A. Yes, I did speak to him and I met him and I told him the  
2 concern what Mr Gilbertson has told me, and he said,  
3 "Ask him to speak to me, come to my surgery", and he was  
4 as surprised as much as I was.

5 Q. You spoke to him at his surgery, did you, at Mr Battle's  
6 surgery?

7 A. No, I did not go to his surgery because I was working in  
8 a community group, Kashmir Muslim Welfare Association,  
9 so I have known his local MP, so I have known him many,  
10 on different occasions, in civil call in Leeds, on  
11 different matters, on community matters, so I knew him,  
12 I'd spoken to him, I met him and I told him "This  
13 gentleman, Mr Gilbertson, has got this concern", and he  
14 said "Ask him to" --

15 Q. In the statement you made to the police in July of 2007,  
16 the statement that Mr Keith was taking you through, you  
17 said that Mr Gilbertson said to you that he was at Iqra  
18 at the time of the bombings.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. That was, again, in the back of the taxi, or just  
21 getting out of the taxi, in December of 2005. Do you  
22 remember that?

23 A. He came into my taxi.

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. December.

1 Q. That's it, December 2005.

2 A. 2005.

3 Q. In your statement, you have Mr Gilbertson saying to you  
4 that he -- Martin Gilbertson -- was at Iqra at the time  
5 of the 7/7 bombings. That's the context. Do you  
6 remember that now?

7 A. He was at that time, because previous to 7 -- 2005,  
8 I think he has mended my computer, then he told me where  
9 he's working, at Iqra, yes.

10 Q. I'll just try one more time.

11 In December of 2005 -- it's very difficult, I know,  
12 because you're having to put your mind back six years  
13 and then put your mind back again to what you're talking  
14 about, but do you remember when you met him in the taxi?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. When you met him in the taxi outside Leeds railway  
17 station, you have recorded in the statement that you  
18 gave to the police that Mr Gilbertson -- it's at page 3,  
19 if you have it, almost exactly in the middle of the  
20 page -- you've recorded that Mr Gilbertson said to you  
21 that he was at Iqra at the time of the bombings, and I'm  
22 assuming that must be the 7/7 bombings. Is that right,  
23 that's what he said to you?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Thank you, although, before I sit down, I'll let you

1 finish. He told you he was at Iqra at the time of the  
2 7/7 bombings?

3 A. On that specific night, when I picked him up in my taxi,  
4 I will try to go again, recall the whole conversation.  
5 It wasn't a big conversation, but it was specifically --  
6 yes. When he spoken to me, he recognised me, he had  
7 beard that time. When I met him at the -- when he  
8 repaired my computer, he did not have beard. So he has  
9 spoken to me, he recognised me, he said "Hello, how are  
10 you?", "Okay". We start the conversation, and I carried  
11 on, and he -- at that time, I could not specifically  
12 recall it whether he said, when this happened, he was at  
13 the Iqra, but one thing I asked him, "Oh, you was with  
14 Iqra, you told me before, and did you know anything  
15 behind the scene or anything, you know, some activities  
16 which were criminal, or any kind of that nature?"  
17 Now, I cannot recall that, if you are asking me  
18 exactly whether he admitted me on that night that he was  
19 at Iqra when this happened, I cannot remember.

20 MR BEGGS: Thank you very much.

21 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Any other questions?

22 Mr Khan, can you hear me? I'm Lady Justice Hallett.  
23 I'm the judge conducting the inquests. I have just two  
24 questions. You mentioned that you felt that there was  
25 a lack of connection between the Sunni preachers and the

1 youngsters, but I think you've suggested in your  
2 evidence that that's changed. Is there now a better  
3 degree of communication between --

4 A. Lot better. I'm glad to say it is lot better and we are  
5 communicating with the youngsters with a focus point in  
6 the community and there has been lot of work been done  
7 in the community, even though I'm not in the committee,  
8 but I am with the committee, and there are some still  
9 issues there which are, locally, we need a community  
10 centre, a big one, where we can cater all these  
11 services. So my Lady, yes, there has been lot of  
12 improvement.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: That was my second question.  
14 I noticed in your statement that one of the things you  
15 felt had gone wrong was that there were these rival  
16 groups and, therefore, the extremists could flourish  
17 undetected in a rival group.

18 Has anything happened to bring the groups together  
19 so that you, the community, can try to make sure that  
20 extremism doesn't flourish?

21 A. As I mentioned, my Lady, in that statement at that time,  
22 that they should have -- they should have been -- if  
23 there was a big community centre where the service  
24 should be provided to all elders, youngsters, ladies,  
25 and children sitting under one roof, it would be a great

1 achievement. That was my view at that time. Today,  
2 it's still my view, the same.  
3 On that sense, nothing has been changed. Everything  
4 is exactly the same. We, in Beeston, still dealing with  
5 the bureaucracy of local community -- with local  
6 council, we haven't got a community centre where we  
7 could -- we could have a community centre and have all  
8 those groups to run. So that -- there isn't -- we  
9 haven't achieved that one goal yet.

10 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: So it remains your dream, but not  
11 a reality?

12 A. I think exactly these are the words I could have used  
13 it.

14 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you very much, Mr Khan. Those  
15 are all the questions that we have for you, and I'm very  
16 grateful to you for being prepared to talk to me so  
17 frankly. Thank you very much.

18 A. Thank you.

19 MR KEITH: My Lady, may I take a moment or two just to  
20 explain where we are in terms of today's list? Because  
21 some of my learned friends I think are intending to come  
22 to court specifically for Mr Gilbertson's evidence, but  
23 it may not be now at 2.00. We've got a witness from  
24 this morning still to give evidence, a Mr Hargreaves,  
25 who is in the video suite at the moment, so could

1 I invite you to call him at 2.00? We'll then conclude  
2 him as fast as we reasonably can, and then move to  
3 Mr Gilbertson who has arrived in London.

4 There was a further witness today, this morning, put  
5 over from yesterday: namely, Ms Pike. Overnight,  
6 there's been quite a bit of contact with her through  
7 a friend of hers. It seems now very likely that she  
8 will not attend court. She wasn't present at the video  
9 suite this morning. She exhibited a high degree of  
10 distress overnight and expressed a view to others that  
11 she had no intention of giving evidence. She may,  
12 unfortunately, not have returned home overnight because  
13 of the stress of her prospective appearance in these  
14 proceedings.

15 I'll make the appropriate application later this  
16 afternoon, but for present purposes, we don't anticipate  
17 her coming to give evidence live.

18 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you, Mr Keith. 2.10 pm.

19 (1.05 pm)

20 (The short adjournment)

21

22