

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

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Support person present: No.

1. My name is ■■■. I was given a middle name, ■■■, but it's not on my passport anymore. My date of birth is ■■■ 1976. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My mum's name is ■■■ and my sister's name is ■■■. ■■■ is about two years older than me. She lives in Indonesia now with her child. My dad was ■■■. He died of cancer recently. He was a bit of a gangster and a local hard man. He wasn't a good person. When I heard that he had died, I don't know how I felt.
3. My dad was from Ayr and I was born in Ayr. We lived there when I was a kid. There was never any food in the house because my mum and dad were both drinking. It was a bit crazy. My dad was a party animal and he was never at home. He worked in pubs as a bouncer and bar tender. He was a bad man. He shot my dog and he used to beat us. He spat in my face. He had a really sick sense of humour. He used to make me drink his urine.
4. I think I was five or six years old when my parents split up. My sister and I lived with our mum at ■■■ in Ayr for a while. The old guy who lived down the stairs used to take care of us more than my mum because she was never really in. Eventually, we moved to Irvine. My mum couldn't cope with me. I think I was a bit disturbed when I


was a kid. I had a psychologist when I was about eight. I didn't really know he was a psychologist at the time. He would give me jigsaw puzzles, but I suppose he was asking me questions. I remember he asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up and I said that I wanted to be the strongest man in the world. I think social workers became involved when we lived in Irvine and I was six or seven years old. I can't remember the name of my first social worker, but one of them was Veronica Mellie.

5. I don't really remember much about how it happened, but my sister and I went into a children's home. My sister was taken back to live with my mum and I was left in the home.

**Burnside Children's Home, Kilwinning Road, Irvine**

6. I think I was about eight years old when I went to Burnside. Secondary Institutions - to be publ

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**Leaving Burnside**

24. I think I was in Burnside for about a year and a half, two years. I can't really remember how I came to leave. My mum was in the Mormon church. There were foster parents who were Mormons as well. I can't remember if I went to another children's home first or straight to the foster parents.

**IIK and IIJ, Ardrossan**

25. I must have been about ten when I went to IIJ-IIK. I don't remember any meetings or panels, but I vaguely remember talk about them being Mormons and my mum was in their church. I can't exactly remember how it came about. I just knew I was going to this Mormon family. I definitely think everything was done through social work.

26. IIK and IIJ lived in Ardrossan. It was just a normal house, not really big. They had three kids, , and . I think was their daughter but she didn't live there. It was just myself, and was around sixteen. He was a spotty teenager who listened to Kate Bush. I think was roughly the same age as me. There might have been a year between us. was older and I think she just visited on a Sunday.

**Routine at [REDACTED]**

*First day*

27. The day I arrived, I remember being in the living room. [REDACTED] was there and she asked me to go and count how many pints of milk were in the fridge. I don't know why she asked me to do that, but I did it. That's pretty much all I remember from my first day there.
28. Life was a bit strange. I found it a bit weird because it was a family thing. The dad went out to work and the mum was at home. I really have no idea what the dad did for a job. I just know they were churchy people. I got on quite well with [REDACTED] for a while because we were roughly the same age. It couldn't have been easy for him having this kid just come in, but he was alright. We probably did fight sometimes, but fair play to him, he did make an effort and he was just a kid.
29. [REDACTED] was a bit of a lone wolf. He didn't care that these other kids were there. He probably just wanted to go out and hang about with his friends. With [REDACTED] there was definitely a difference in how [REDACTED] treated us. For example, I got money from social work to buy a Scouts shirt. I do remember [REDACTED] sometimes talking about getting money for looking after me and I guess that she or [REDACTED] applied for the money to buy me the Scout shirt. We went to a store to buy it and the parents decided to use the money to buy one for [REDACTED] and I didn't get one. It was things like that. Obviously, he was their son and it was quite blatant that I was the underdog.
30. In general, I wasn't at the same level as their own. There was a feeling of me being disliked and not accepted. They were quite horrible to me and I can't really remember any kind words from them.

*Mornings/bedtime*

31. I didn't have my own bedroom. At that time, I shared a room with the two other boys. I was in the top bunk. [REDACTED] was in the bottom bunk and I think [REDACTED] was in a bed



next to us. I'm sure he hated the fact he had to share a room with these wee boys. He must have wanted his own space.

*Mealtimes/food*

32. There was enough food and it was ok. I can't remember having any issue with that or being hungry.

*Washing and bathing*

33. I can't really remember the washing arrangements. Nothing really sticks out about that.

*Clothing*

34. I always got [REDACTED]'s second-hand clothes. That's what I wore most of the time. I don't remember having any new clothes. So, if they got money or a clothing grant from social work, I don't know where that went.

*Schooling*

35. I went to Winton Primary School. It was near the house and I think we walked to school. We just had to walk up a lane and past the football ground. I guess [REDACTED] was in High School. I didn't really know much about him. He didn't want to mix.

*Chores*

36. There were chores to do around the house. I didn't really like it, but I had to do my part. Because I was always badly behaved, I had to clean and do the dishes while they all played. I guess they were trying to instil something in you where you had to muck in and do your bit.

*Leisure time*

37. [REDACTED] was a Scout Leader so I joined the Scouts while I was living there. I wasn't much of a Scout to be honest, but I did my best to get the badges and shirt.
38. [REDACTED] a hill called Cannon Hill and there is an old castle at the top. I used to play on the hill. I remember playing at soldiers with sticks and climbing this ancient castle. It was quite fun.

*Trips and holidays*

39. [REDACTED] possibly did take me on trips, but off the top of my head, I can't particularly remember any family holidays. I'm sure I went on trips with the Scouts to different places.

*Religion in the household*

40. I went to church with [REDACTED] family quite a bit. There were also times when I didn't go or they didn't go. There were scriptures and books around the house and there was a dinner on Sunday after church. We went to church and then had this dinner together. They were quite religious, but thinking about daily life, it didn't really make a big difference.

*Christmas and birthdays*

41. I seem to remember birthdays and Christmases being pretty normal. They had their own religious aspect which was a bit more airy-fairy I suppose.

*Family contact*

42. My mum was quite flaky with contact. She was really bad at that sort of thing. She would promise to come and see me at a certain point or a certain time. Then, she would forget or she just wouldn't show up. If she did show up, she would come to the

town and meet me at a predesignated spot, like on a bridge. I just remember waiting for her a lot.

43. I did get to go home to my mum's house sometimes. I think there was an agreement at some point where I got to go home, say every second Sunday, for example. It would fall apart because my mum wouldn't keep her end of the bargain. Then there would be a new arrangement and it would fall apart again. My social work records talk about contact with my mum breaking down a lot. I also got the impression that the foster mum didn't like my mum's involvement. IIK would tell me things like my mum didn't love me.
44. I can't remember seeing my sister much at that point. I think she was there when I did get to go home. I just remember her always winding me up. I think she deliberately tried to make things difficult for me when I was at home.

#### *Visits*

45. After I was fostered by IJ-IJK, I don't recall any social work visits. I don't remember a social worker coming to the house at all.

#### **Abuse at IJ-IJK**

46. Discipline in IJ-IJK house was difficult. It was pretty harsh. I don't know if there was any kind of religious aspect to that. I can't recall really getting into any sort of trouble, but I was always in trouble.
47. IIK was an angry woman. I was a really small child and she would violently throw me around. She was really fat and stocky, probably borderline obese. She would crush me under her weight for nothing. Sometimes I might have been a bit cheeky, but that's it. I remember her pinning me down on the floor with her weight, like a wrestler would do. It was terrifying. I was always walking on eggshells because she would hold on to things that happened days ago and then suddenly, she would explode with anger

and ragdoll me around the place. She'd grab me by my clothes, shake me and pin me down. It was easy for her because I was so light and so small. There wasn't much I could do. I couldn't say exactly how often that happened, but it was pretty normal behaviour for her. I can't remember [IIJ] being present when [IIK] was being violent. It mainly happened when I came back from school or in the afternoon. I guess [IIJ] wasn't around because he was at work.

48. [IIK] was just horrible. She was like a witch. I was terrified of her, absolutely terrified. She would scream at me all the time. She would tell me my mum didn't love me. She would call me horrible and ugly. I remember trying to hold her hand once in the street. She got angry and said I was too big to hold her hand. She just pushed me away. She was always angry at me and didn't seem to like me very much.
49. I remember having to go to the toilet at night once. I must have woken her up because she came through to the bathroom. She started screaming at me and threw me up against the wall. After that, I was too scared to go to the toilet. I started to pee on the carpet in my room. That went on for quite a long time. They found out, I guess because of the smell. The strange thing is, they never said a word about it. They came into the room, didn't say anything to me about it, and cleaned the carpet.
50. [IIJ] would take his belt off and use it on me. He usually belted me around the legs, on the back sometimes, and my buttocks. I remember having buckle marks from the belt around my thigh area. It happened less frequently than the wrestling moves from [IIK], but it happened a few times. [IIK] would be present when [IIJ] was belting me. One time, I stole some sweets from a shop and got caught. The police came and took me back to [IIJ-IIK]. [IIK] was there and she was obviously angry. She called [IIJ] at work and he came home. She had told me before that they would never give me in trouble twice for the same thing. I remember thinking, she had already told me off, and wondering why I was getting in trouble again. That was one of the times [IIJ] used the belt on me quite viciously.
51. [IIJ] was generally unpleasant. I remember once when we were driving back from somewhere, [IIJ] and I were in the back of the car and [IIJ] and [IIK] were in the

front. [REDACTED] was passing wind and kept blaming it on me. I denied it but [REDACTED] said a really weird thing. He said, "I know the smell of my son's own farts." He stopped the car and made me stand outside. That just typifies how it was with them. I actually developed a nervous tick while I was living with them. I made a sound from my throat, I guess because they were messing me up in the head. I remember it happening a lot in the morning and [REDACTED] would get angry and make me go outside to stand at the bottom of the garden. I had to stand there and face away from the house.

52. Sometimes, I wasn't allowed to go to sleep. [REDACTED] would go to his bed at bedtime, which was around 09:00 pm, but I wasn't allowed to go to bed. I had to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the living room. I remember being tired and my eyes closing. They would clap their hands, slap me or shout at me to keep me awake. It was mostly [REDACTED] that would shout and slap. They would berate me because I was trying to fall asleep. Eventually, much later, I got to go to bed. It didn't just happen once, it was quite a few times, maybe three or four.
53. At some point, [REDACTED] bought or rented a new house in the countryside, in a place called [REDACTED] in Ayrshire. I would guess it was about a year after I started living with them. It was a big place, like an old farmhouse. They took in another foster child while I was living with them, a little boy called [REDACTED]. He had [REDACTED]. We might have moved when they took him in.
54. After we moved, there were times when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would run a freezing cold bath and take me through to the bathroom. It must have been at night-time because I would be in my pyjamas. One of them would run the bath so it was about half full. They would lift me up and submerge me again and again and again in the water. [REDACTED] would be quite quiet during the whole thing. He didn't really say much. [REDACTED] would be screaming and shouting. I guess she was the leader of that. I remember thinking 'What are they doing'. I wondered if they were baptising me because they were Mormons. I don't know if there was some kind of religious aspect to that. I don't remember anything happening in the lead up to it to explain why they would do that. It happened maybe two or three times, at least.

55. IJK was just horrible. I was terrified of her and constantly walking on eggshells. I never knew when I was going to get hit or rag-dolled. IJ wasn't nice, but IJK seemed to be the leader of the two. She seemed to be more fiery and controlling.

*Running away because of abuse*

56. I think I ran away from IJ-IJK a couple of times and went to my mum's. I specifically remember running away when we moved to the countryside. It was after one of the times they put me in a cold bath. I was in the bathroom and I locked the door so they couldn't get in. It was night-time and I was in my pyjamas. I climbed out the window and hitched a lift to my mum's house. The guy driving the car must have been wondering what was going on with this kid, in the rain, in pyjamas.
57. When I got to my mum's, I told her what was happening at IJ-IJK and she phoned the police. I can't distinctly remember telling the police what was happening to me, but I had told my mum, so it was out there. The police drove me back to IJ-IJK house that night. I can't really remember what happened when I got back. I know social work were involved, but I'm not aware of them following up on what I told my mum.
58. Sometime later, I got another beating from IJ. I went to school the next day and I just refused to go back to their house. There were bruises all over me. I had to go to the headmistress's office. I told her I didn't want to go back to the place where I lived. She contacted social work or police.

**Reporting of abuse whilst in foster care**

59. After I refused to go back to IJ-IJK and I spoke to the headmistress at school, I remember saying to myself, "I'm not going to take this anymore," and I knew I had to tell somebody. I told a social worker that I had bruises all over me. A female social worker had a look at the bruises and I was taken to a children's home. It might have

been back to Burnside. I wasn't there very long. It was definitely overnight, but not very long.

60. I told the headmistress at my school, a social worker and my mum what was going on at [REDACTED] but I was still taken back to live with them after that. I have a social work letter, which I've provided a copy of, that references the bruises on my body and talks about providing additional support to the foster parents so they could handle me. I remember [REDACTED] gave me a teddy bear and told me that if I had any problems or secrets, I could tell the teddy bear. A bit ridiculous, but I did.

### Leaving [REDACTED]

61. I think I lived with [REDACTED] for about a year and a half, possibly two years. There must have been some kind of panel or a review of my care, but I can't remember if I was a part of that or not. I remember leaving the foster placement and going to Dalrymple Place. I might have gone to Burnside first, then Dalrymple.

### Dalrymple Place, Children's Home, Irvine

62. I think I was about twelve years old when I went to Dalrymple Place. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions -

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**Leaving Dalrymple Place**

76. I think I was at Dalrymple place for about two years. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later I think they just decided that was it and I was sent to Kerelaw.

**Kerelaw Residential School, Stevenston**

77. I must have been around fourteen years old when I was sent to Kerelaw. It felt like I was put there because they just didn't know what to do with me. It was the end of the line.

78. There was a secure unit and an open school there. The secure unit, which was literally a jail, was for kids who had done really bad stuff. Apparently, the James Bulger murderers were in there. I don't know if that's true, but that was the rumour. I was taken up to the secure unit by one of the staff as a warning. I was told that if I didn't toe the line, that's where I'd end up. The open school, where I was, was a bit different. There were four residential units, two girls' units and two boys' units, and there was the school where we would learn.

79. The staff at Kerelaw were like lads. There were a lot of ex-footballers. They had this lad culture going on. Some of them would have been in their early twenties, so they were still young themselves. They were quite openly violent with us. They would regularly slap us, hit us, put us in 'full nelson', which is a wrestling hold, punch, pummel, subdue and kick us. They just generally beat the boys a lot.
80. For a lot of us, from our backgrounds, that was the norm. It was just like a continuation of life. We just accepted that the staff would do these things. It was completely part of the culture of Kerelaw. I suppose the boys, myself included, were rougher and more unruly than the average kid and there were a lot of us together. It was like the staff had to show their bravado and they did that with violence.
81. From my experience, some of the staff at Kerelaw were nice. There was a woman called **KBT**, she was nice to me. I remember a woodwork teacher who would come in with a hangover every day. He was just a nice old guy with long hair who listened to Dire Straits and chopped some wood. My keyworker was an ex- player called **GVN**. He didn't do anything to me while I was at Kerelaw. I can't really remember all the names of the staff who were nice, but I can remember the names of some of the staff who were mean. There was Matt George, John Muldoon, **LEJ**, **IHG** and **IHF**. They were not good guys.

### **Routine at Kerelaw**

#### *First day*

82. I was put in Fleming unit. I think there were about ten to twelve boys in my unit and we were all about the same age. We were all just kids, but some of the kids were criminals.

#### *Mornings/bedtime*

83. I don't remember much about the morning and bedtime routine.

*Mealtimes/food*

84. I can't remember anything about the food at Kerelaw, not even where we ate. The only time I recall anything to do with food was the day I arrived. We all ate together in my unit and one of the other kids spat in my food.

*Washing and bathing*

85. We could use the shower facilities daily. I always found it a bit weird that the female staff members could walk in and see naked boys. I remember one kid called [REDACTED]. He was naked in the shower and he exposed himself to the staff member and she just stood there laughing. It was really weird.

*Schooling*

86. The schooling at Kerelaw wasn't up to much. I only remember the woodwork class because I liked the teacher. He was an old hippy ex-biker who couldn't give a shit. He was a nice guy. I really can't remember much else. I was terrible at school.

*Work/chores*

87. I can't remember having to do any chores.

*Family contact*

88. I don't remember my mum coming to visit me at Kerelaw, but I guess she must have been there at some point. I do remember my dad coming once. At some stage, I was allowed to have home leave at the weekends, but I think it only happened occasionally. It certainly wasn't a frequent thing. My sister wasn't at home at this point. I think she might have been living with people from the church.

*Visits*

89. I think I had a male social worker when I was at Kerelaw. I feel a bit sorry for the guy. I don't think I was very nice to him. He would come up and ask if I wanted to go for a drive. I'd probably just say "Fuck you". There was social work involvement, but at that point, I was absolutely done with everything and everyone. I was living life by my own rules.

*Running away*

90. I didn't run away from Kerelaw. I was definitely better behaved in there Secondary Institute  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
Secondary In the kids in Kerelaw were more my age. I actually got on quite well with the other guys and I think I was reasonably high up in the pecking order. There were maybe some fights between the two boys' units. There were a couple of guys, [REDACTED] and IWR vying for top man position. I remember they had this huge fight. Apart from that, I don't think there was much peer bullying in there. We were all just trying to survive against the staff.

**Abuse at Kerelaw**

*Matt George*

91. Matt George was an art teacher at the school in Kerelaw. He didn't even work in the unit I was in, but he would come from his classroom and hang around with the staff in Fleming unit. He would just hit kids randomly. That was something I saw a lot. He would also give you Chinese burns by twisting the skin on your arm. He thought he was a Kung Fu guy. I don't know if he was but he would do pressure holds on people and put them in headlocks.
92. One time, I was in his classroom on my own. He had a Pac Man puggy and I was playing it. He came up behind me and took me by the neck in a headlock. He dragged me off the chair and backwards along the floor. He was really angry. He was choking me until I almost passed out. That was him in a nutshell. He would do random things

like that a lot. I saw him karate chop kids. He would wind kids by punching them in the stomach.

93. Matt George and another guy, an ex-footballer who I think played for [REDACTED] took myself and four or five other boys into the games hall. They had golf clubs and golf balls. We were made to face the wall and take down our shorts and pants. They struck golf balls at us from a distance. I can't remember the ex-footballer's name. He was a bit older than the others. The thing with the golf balls happened to me once but it was something that was known to happen. Other boys in there would regularly show us the bruises on their ass where the golf balls hit them. It was just normal there.
94. There were a couple of incidents where Matt George was sexually abusive to me. The showers at Kerelaw were open at the front. There was a wall at the side separating the showers, so you had a bit of privacy from the side but not from the front. Matt George was often in the shower room. One time, I was in the shower and there were other boys in the shower room. Matt George stood in front of where I was showering. I was completely naked. He was talking about the size of my penis. He was making comments about it. Then, he got a bar of soap and threw that at me. It hit me and he was laughing. He went on to harass other kids.

*Matt George and John Muldoon*

95. Another time, I was taken to Matt George's flat in Largs. A lot of the boys had home leave from Kerelaw at weekends. Some kids didn't get home leave and I was one of those kids. One weekend, when there were only two or three of us in the unit, Matt George asked me if I wanted to go for a run in his van. That was fairly normal behaviour for him but he took me to his flat. When I went into the flat, John Muldoon was already there. I remember thinking, at the time, that this was a bit weird. We used to call John Muldoon 'Mouldy'. He worked in the unit next to mine and he was generally a creepy guy. [REDACTED]
96. John was sitting on the edge of the sofa to the left. I was sat down on the sofa to the right and Matt George sat in the middle. Matt and John were talking about me. I don't

know exactly what they were saying. Matt George asked me about girls. He asked who I liked in the girls' units. I used to fancy a girl in there called [REDACTED] so I told them that. They started asking me sexually orientated questions. Matt George started to touch me and rub my legs. He rubbed my crotch area. John Muldoon could see all of this. At some point later, I was outside the living room. Matt George grabbed me by the neck, pushed me against the wall and he grabbed me by the crotch. I think I might have said something to him and he was really angry. He was squeezing my private parts with his hand, really hard, while he had me by the neck. I couldn't speak and it was difficult to breath with his hand round my neck.

[REDACTED] LEJ

97. [REDACTED] LEJ was another teacher who would slap you randomly. He would also pummel you on the arm really hard and give you dead legs. If he was walking past, he'd punch your leg really hard, say 'dead leg' and keep on walking. He would do that if you maybe gave him a bit of lip. That was enough to warrant violence.
98. He put me in a cupboard once. I had been sleeping and was woken up by [REDACTED] LEJ and another staff member coming into my bedroom. I used to share with a guy call [REDACTED]. They came in and they were angry about something. [REDACTED] LEJ put me in my clothes cupboard and shut the door. Then, he and this other staff member lifted up the cupboard and moved it towards the window. They told me they were going to open the doors and let me fall out the second-floor window. They threatened to do it, but they didn't. I don't know why they did that. I guess it must have been retribution for something I had said in the unit.

*'The Running man'*

99. Sometimes at night the staff would drive us to Fairley moors. I remember the old guy who had played for [REDACTED] being involved. It would be night-time. The van would be full of boys. The roads were really thin, it was dark and we were in the moors. The staff would play a game called 'the running man'. It meant that a boy had to stand in front of the van. He was told to run to a certain point. While we ran, the staff told the



other kids to throw things at the person running. They riled everybody up. The van was driving immediately behind the boy who was running. The headlights were facing front and the van would be bumping into you. It was crazy. You weren't allowed to leave the road. You were threatened that you couldn't leave the road. You had to run while the boys in the van threw things like shoes and other objects. The door of the van was slid open while it was moving and boys were hanging out the side. It was incredibly unsafe and irresponsible. This happened to me and other boys. I can remember it happening to a boy who was nicknamed [REDACTED]. I can remember it happening a few times. I think that sums up the culture of the sort of things that happened at Kerelaw.

IHG [REDACTED]

100. IHG [REDACTED] was an amateur footballer who worked at Kerelaw. He started after I had been there a while. I think he was maybe a trainee residential care worker in Fleming unit, possibly part-time. He was quite a handsome, cool guy. He had darker skin and I would estimate he was in his early twenties. I remember he did a trial, I think for [REDACTED]. We all went to watch him play. Looking back on it, I think he was gay. I didn't know that then, but I remember when he played football he wore pink shin pads. He also had a gold earring. That doesn't make him gay, but that's what I remember about him.
  
101. We went on a trip to Kendal in the Lake District once and IHG [REDACTED] was there. I think we stayed for a few nights in a cabin. He came out of the shower with just a towel round his waist. I think it was just me and IHG [REDACTED] in the cabin. He started talking about his sex life. He was telling me that his penis was bent to the side like a banana. That was the word he used. He opened his towel and exposed himself to me. Then, he took me by the arm or the wrist and pulled me towards him. He made me do an act on him with my hand. I stopped but I can't remember what I said. He was angry and he took a light bulb from a fitting and stuck it in my chest. The light bulb had been on so it burned my chest. I remember mentioning the chest burn in the van on the way back to Kerelaw but I didn't mention the other act. There were other boys in the van

and a member of staff driving, but violence was such a normal occurrence that no one reacted.

102. For a while after that, the hair on that part of my chest would only grow in white. I had a circular scar that faded over time. I actually looked for it recently but all you can see now are a few white hairs.

IHF

103. IHF was one of the staff who would put boys in a 'full nelson' hold. It could be in response to absolutely nothing. It was like the law of the jungle. It seemed that these men, in a group, would lose all sense of how they should be acting and it was like tribal behaviour. They didn't need a reason to hit you or hurt you or grab you. IHF just seemed like a very angry man. I remember one occasion where I was in an area where the boys used to sit. IHF came in and put me in a 'full nelson'. From behind, he would put his arms under both my arms and round the back of my neck. It was like something out of WWF. It wasn't like he was doing this for fun. It was to hurt me, dominate me and totally incapacitate me. It was humiliating, controlling behaviour. I suppose it was all about power for him. That's the only time I remember him doing it to me specifically, but I saw him do it to others.

104. There was quite a big football culture at Kerelaw. We used play football in the games hall. I think it might have been one unit versus another. I nutmegged IHF one day and he got really angry. He started shouting and screaming at me. He was facing down at me and kicked me to the ground. He continued to kick me when I was down. No one really batted an eyelid, not even the other staff. They stopped what they were doing when it happened but then they just continued with the game.

IHD

105. There was a female member of staff called IHD. She was the daughter of . I was in her apartment somewhere in Irvine and we kissed. I was in her bedroom in her home. I can't remember whether we had

sex, but we definitely kissed in a sexual manner. I was about fifteen and a half at the time and she was in her early twenties. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later I saw her years later when I was living in Spain and visiting Scotland. I was in the library in Irvine, sitting with a book. I looked at this woman and I was shocked. She caught me looking at her. She looked shocked. She said to me that her husband was just outside.

#### *Witnessing abuse of others*

106. The abuse at Kerelaw was constant, punching, hitting and bullying. I regularly saw all of the staff I've mentioned, apart from the [REDACTED] player, being abusive to other kids. [REDACTED] LEJ [REDACTED] in particular was pummelling boys all the time and he was a big strong man. There were other staff that were abusive too, but I can't remember their faces or names.

#### **Leaving Kerelaw**

107. I was at Kerelaw for about a year and a half. During that time, I left Kerelaw once and then ended up going back. I went to some kind of supported housing. There was a woman, I think her name was [REDACTED], who had a house in Irvine and she had agreed to take in a kid from care. At the start, when I went there, a social worker came with me but I can't remember who it was. Social work paid the rent and I was supposed to find a job. That relationship broke down after a few months and I had nowhere to go. [REDACTED] was a nice woman but I wasn't ready to live normally. I was below the age of sixteen so they took me back in to Kerelaw.

#### **Leaving care**

108. I wasn't back at Kerelaw very long before I left the care system. I didn't really have anywhere to go and I was homeless for a while. Social Work put me in a hotel in Stanecastle in Irvine for a couple of weeks after I turned sixteen. That was really the

last intervention from social work. I was in a really difficult place at the time and I kind of felt like social work didn't want to help me because of my attitude.

### **Life after leaving care**

109. When I had to leave the hotel after a couple of weeks, I went to my mum and told her I had nowhere to go. She found me a guy's sofa to sleep on for a week. After that, my life just went completely crazy.
110. From the age of sixteen until nineteen I was mainly involved in drugs and fighting. I was causing a lot of trouble, but never really got in trouble with the police. I got into a bad situation with some local guys and was attacked with a hammer. My skull was fractured. I was lucky to be alive.
111. When I was around 21, I jumped on a bus and moved to London. I stayed with a friend for a while and worked in a sandwich shop. That didn't work out and I became homeless in London a few times. I walked past a travel agent one day and saw one-way tickets to Holland for sale for £34. I just packed my bag and left. I met a couple of guys over there and we hitchhiked through Europe. I ended up in Spain and lived there for about ten years. I worked as a DJ or a bar tender during the summer to save up some money. Then, in the winter, I travelled to India, Malaysia, Indonesia and South East Asia for months at a time with just a backpack. I ended up in China and I tried to get a job teaching English but I couldn't because I didn't have a degree. I went to Thailand and bought a fake degree. Then, I went back to China and picked up some real teaching certificates. I lived and taught in China for eleven years. I just got back to Scotland about a month ago.
112. Since getting back, I visited the house I used to live in as a kid at [REDACTED] in Ayr. I don't have the best memories from that time but I thought it was important for me to go there. I went into a bar next to the house and started talking to some old guys who knew my dad. They were saying all these nice things about him and I knew I needed

to get out of there. It was a bad idea. I also made a point of walking past Dalrymple. I thought it might bring me some closure in a way, but it didn't.

### **Reporting of abuse**

113. I did think about making a formal statement to police when I visited Scotland from China, but I didn't do it. With the Redress thing coming up in the news, I thought it was time to bury this whole thing and make a point of talking to people about what happened to me. That's why I contacted the Inquiry. I've travelled all over, but you can't run from yourself. I've tried but it doesn't work like that.

### **Impact**

114. I find the impact of my time in care hard to explain. For a start, every relationship I've had has finished. I just find it tough to be a person. Every day it's difficult to be normal. I've had a lot of friends but I have a habit of ending friendships. I just cut people out. I've had huge anger issues, so much so that it's surprising I'm still alive. I've got mental health issues which are difficult to deal with. I'm not a danger to people, but at one point in my life, I was a danger to myself. I've got no confidence. I feel unworthy of people. I feel too ugly to face people or get a job. Sometimes, I don't want to even walk out in the street. I sometimes feel unwell and sometimes I feel ok.
115. I've been in touch with Future Pathways and they have said they will help me find a counsellor. I've also tried to register with a doctor here but they can't find any record of me, probably because I've moved around so much. I really just want to find a good job and have a good life. I'd like to work in residential childcare.

## **Records**

116. I obtained my social work records from North Ayrshire Council. I have six files of documents on my iPad. I don't know if there's any more, but that's what I was sent. I've looked through some of them. It's a bit difficult to read things about my mum. I have sent some information from my records to the Inquiry.

## **Lessons to be learned**

117. I think the main lessons to be learned are accountability and safety for kids. Care staff need to be accountable for things that happen and shouldn't ignore things they see other staff do. People who work with kids need to be trained and vetted very well. I think there's a lot of bad people out there who get into jobs they shouldn't. If they were properly vetted and didn't get into those jobs in the first place, it would lessen the chances of that sort of thing happening again.
118. I think when I came to the end of my time in the care system, social work were glad to get rid of me. Social work need to make sure that kids who are leaving the system at sixteen years old have a plan in place. I'm sure that exists now, but it didn't when I was young. Kids need to be supported until they are ready to move on. They need access to appropriate outlets. If they are violent, take them to the boxing and let them box it out in the ring. Find out what they are interested in and support them. If not, they might turn out to be abusers themselves.
119. I think the world has changed a lot since then and things that were acceptable then are not acceptable now. I do think people are more in touch with how we should be taking care of kids and how we should be helping and encouraging them.

## **Hopes for the Inquiry**

120. For me, I just needed to let the right people know what happened to me. It's really the first time I've talked about it. I don't necessarily want to see [REDACTED] rot in jail, but

maybe she should. Maybe some people are already paying the price for their crimes, which is justice. I can't really say what I think should happen to them. If it was up to me, a few years ago, I wouldn't want it to be a nice ending. I hope some of the physical abusers have realised they've done wrong. Maybe they just joined in with the pack which is human nature.

121. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..... 03 May 2023 .....