

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IUH

Support person present: No

1. My name is IUH. My date of birth is 1970. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Oban. My father is and my mother is, although she goes by the name. I have a brother, who is two years older than me and I have three younger sisters and a younger brother. They are, who is about ten years younger than me, who is about twelve years younger, who is about twenty years younger and, who is about twenty-two years younger. and I had the same mother, who was my dad's first wife. and were my dad's second wife's and and were his third wife's.
3. After my parents separated I lived with my mum in Edinburgh from the age of about three until about six and then, until I was about eleven, I lived with my father and his second wife on a farm in the countryside near Oban. My dad owned restaurants and the farm was more what you might call a hobby farm.
4. I went to a local school in a place called at first. It was a small school and it was okay. My brother had gone to Belhaven School at Dunbar and my mum inherited some money, so it was decided that I should go there too when I reached the age of eleven. My mum wanted us to have a good education and, because mum lived in Edinburgh, Belhaven was convenient.

### **Belhaven School, Dunbar**

5. Belhaven was a small prep school for boys and girls between the ages of eight and thirteen. I think there were maybe eighty boys when I was there and three girls.
6. The headmaster was Donald Vass, who lived in a house on the grounds with his wife. His wife was also quite involved with the pupils and spent time talking to them. I would guess there were eight to ten teaching staff in total, who all had a pastoral role as well. One was a Mr Townley. Staff were always around and they used to come around in the evening and at night and, perhaps because of that, there was no culture of bullying. There was not an anti-sneaking culture at Belhaven either.
7. I started at Belhaven in 1981 and I was there until 1983. It took me a while to settle in, but I would say that on the whole my experience at Belhaven was okay. My brother [REDACTED] and I were not close, but we did cross paths for a term or two. After that he moved on to senior school at Loretto.
8. If I remember correctly, I took a test for Loretto as well and I think I got broadly the same results as [REDACTED] which I don't think were that good. For some reason it was decided that I should go to Gordonstoun instead. I think my mum was probably sold on the ethos of Gordonstoun and she knew someone from Belhaven whose child was there.
9. I am fairly sure that I sat the common entrance exam at Belhaven for getting into Gordonstoun.
10. I wasn't asked my views about going to Gordonstoun and I think I was a bit unsure about going because it was so far away. I did wonder about that, especially as Loretto was only an hour away from my mum.
11. The child that my mother knew who was at Gordonstoun was in Bruce House and my mother tried to get me in there as well, however she found out before I went that there

was no space in Bruce. I recall she was told that Altyre House was beside Bruce House and that I would be going there. I remember her telling me in a phone call while I was still at Belhaven that it should be okay in Altyre.

### **Gordonstoun School, Moray**

12. Gordonstoun consists of several boarding houses and various buildings scattered throughout the large grounds, with all the teaching facilities situated in the centre. Three houses were on the periphery, which were Bruce, Duffus and Altyre. Duffus and Altyre were situated on opposite sides of the periphery and there was over a mile between them. That was probably the biggest distance between houses. The other houses were more in the middle and they were called Round Square, Cumming, Gordonstoun, Hopeman and Windmill. Hopeman and Windmill were for girls and I believe that girls also stayed in Gordonstoun house. The refectory was also in the middle and near Altyre and Bruce house were the sports hall and the swimming pool.
13. There were about three hundred boys at the school and there would have been about one hundred and forty girls.
14. In Altyre, which was all boys, there were about twenty seniors and forty juniors. I don't know how many pupils were in the other houses. I remained in Altyre throughout my time at Gordonstoun, which was standard practice for all the pupils. Boys in each of the houses ranged in age from thirteen to eighteen.
15. Altyre and Bruce were both one-storey wooden houses built on foundations. They were not quite like army barracks, but they were not totally dissimilar. When you walked in the main entrance there was a phone booth and a common room with a ping pong table. Further inside was the notice board and a few stairs leading down to the main house corridor. Off to the left was the toilet block and the shower block. There was also a TV room, near the main common area, and there was a tiny library.

16. Boys slept in either dormitories or study bedrooms and where you slept went by seniority. The junior boys would be in a dorm and then as boys got older they moved into smaller study bedrooms. I don't remember the dorms having names. There were just beds in the dormitories and, in some, there was a communal space for storing things.
17. There were combinations of dorms for eight to ten people and there were study bedrooms which two or three students shared. There were also individual study bedrooms and there were rooms which were just studies, some of which were individual and some that were for six kids.
18. I don't think anything was lockable, unless you brought a lock yourself. We would try and do our desks up nicely, but I would say the best word to describe Altyre house was that it was frugal.
19. The headmaster throughout my time at Gordonstoun was Michael Mavor, whose nickname was Mole, because of his diminutive stature. I don't recall who the deputies were. There was also [REDACTED] called Mr [REDACTED] and in addition to the senior staff there were teachers and housemasters, although I'm not sure how many. The housemasters also had teaching roles and each house also had some teachers allied to it, who were called house tutors.
20. My housemaster in Altyre was a man called John Lofthouse, who taught English and drama. His house was joined onto the end of Altyre and he lived there with his wife Carol and their two children. Carol Lofthouse taught English, but she didn't really have much involvement with the boys of Altyre unless, as happened on a very rare occasion, we went into their house for some food.
21. In Altyre house it was interesting now to reflect on how little interaction there was between pupils and staff. There was a lack of teachers and other staff just being around, which was quite different to my experiences at Belhaven.



22. Each pupil was assigned a house tutor and I recall in Altyre they were [REDACTED] Andrew McEwan and Chris Barton. I had [REDACTED] as a tutor at first and then Andrew McEwan. Mr McEwan lived in a studio flat within Altyre house for a while, although I'm not sure when that was.
23. Gordonstoun had a system called 'colour bearers', which meant a number of senior boys and girls had a small purple patch on their jumper, but I don't know if that position conferred any privileges upon them. They did not have a disciplinarian role and I'm unsure if they could issue punishments as a colour bearer.
24. I was never a colour bearer, however I don't think they were any different to the other boys. Seniority ranked down quite like the military and by age, so boys in the top form, 6A, were the most senior and duties were apportioned accordingly. House duties were apportioned by the housemaster, Mr Lofthouse.
25. Fagging existed and was known as 'boggie jobs'. I think it was probably more informal at Gordonstoun than it might have been at other schools. It wasn't the case that a particular senior boy would be allocated a particular junior, it would depend on which senior wanted which junior to do what. You might be asked by a senior to do something like polish their shoes or carry their books. It could be any task.

### **Routine at Gordonstoun**

#### *First day*

26. I remember my mum bought me a bike on my way to Gordonstoun and that it was dark and cold when she and I arrived there. I vaguely remember going in the front door, but I can't remember my first night, nor whether I was introduced to anyone.
27. I imagine I was pretty scared when I arrived, because it was such a complete unknown and such a long way from my mum's.

### *Daily routine*

28. Seniors would come and wake people up in the morning, which was a duty that rotated amongst them. I'm fairly sure we were woken up at 6:50 am and then we'd have to go for morning run. Another of the seniors would tick boys off as being in attendance, but it wasn't a run as such, boys just walked to the top of the hill, which was fifty metres away, and back. Some boys were in their dressing gowns. It was a stupid activity and I think it was treated as such.
  
29. After morning run we would all shower, get dressed and go to the refectory for breakfast. After breakfast there was chapel and then we would have one or two classes before a tea break in the refectory again. After that break we had more classes until lunchtime and more classes in the afternoon and then a sports activity before dinner, which again was in the refectory. Weekends were more free and didn't involve classes.
  
30. After dinner we had prep, which was done in our houses, and then we had some free time, from roughly around 7:30 pm, until roughly 9:30 pm when we would get ready for bed. As you got older and had your own study bedroom, or shared a study bedroom, there was more freedom as to when you went to bed. There was a specific lights out time, but I can't remember when that was.

### *Bed Wetting*

31. I don't know if any boys had a problem with bed wetting. I wasn't aware of it at all and I don't know how it might have been dealt with if any boy did.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

32. The refectory served meals for the whole school and was a large open plan room. All there was in Altyre house was an urn or a kettle and sometimes a toastie maker. In the refectory we ate at long tables with chairs on them. Seating wasn't assigned, but

pupils from the various houses would generally sit together at breakfast, whereas it was more of a free for all at lunch and dinner.

33. The food was okay. There was a choice of dishes and there was a decent amount and seconds were available if you wanted. Some stuff, like hot food, was served to us and we would help ourselves to cold things, like salad. If anyone didn't like a particular thing, there would be something else to choose from and I never saw a child being forced to eat anything.
34. Sometimes the staff would eat at their own table in the refectory, but they wouldn't share a table with us and they didn't normally eat with us. I'm not sure whether there was a separate staff canteen and I don't remember any staff being there in a supervisory capacity.

*Washing/bathing*

35. There was no supervision of the showers by the staff and I think whether a pupil had a shower or not depended on the individual. There was an opportunity to have a shower every morning, although they did tend to get a bit cold after a certain amount of time, because there was limited hot water. If you really wanted a shower there was also an opportunity to have one in the afternoon after sports.
36. There were a couple of baths, but the showers were communal and, if I remember correctly, there were only about six, so you had to time it right to get one.

*Clothing/uniform*

37. We each had a locker near the shower room, but I can't remember if that's where we kept our clothes or if we kept them elsewhere.
38. My mother had been provided with a list of what clothes to buy before I started at the school. You could wear your own casual clothes at the weekend, but for the rest of

the week we wore the school uniform, except for during sports. I think on Sunday mornings we had to wear school uniform for chapel.

39. The uniform was black/grey trousers and a blue jumper with a grey shirt. There was no jacket. I'm not sure if we all had to wear certain things for different sports.
40. Our clothes were cleaned by the staff in the laundry block and there was a seamstress who fixed them. When we needed to change our clothes we put the dirty ones in bags and the laundry would, I think, be collected once a week.

*Leisure time*

41. There was a swimming pool, gym, squash courts and tennis courts that we could use in our free time. We could play ball games too, if we wanted. Staff had involvement with us for formal sports activities and teaching, but otherwise in our free time, there was little interaction.
42. There was a library in the school and also a tiny library in Altyre with some books in it that we could read if we wanted. There was also a common room in Altyre with a ping pong table in it. For a while there was a café within the school too, although not at weekends.
43. We could go into Elgin by taxi at the weekend if we wanted. You got what was called a 'chit' from the housemaster, so if you wanted to go in you went to the housemaster who gave you a chit and you had to give the chit to the taxi driver. It was then known who was coming and going for security and that basically allowed them to control the timing of when people could go into town.
44. There was a covered shed where I kept the bike my mother had bought me when she took me to the school on the first day. It was possible to go cycling outwith the grounds if you wanted and I don't think you had to get permission to do so.

45. Girls and other pupils were allowed into the common room during leisure time, but not into the rest of the house. I think that was the same for all the houses.

*Trips and holidays*

46. In the winter there were skiing daytrips at the weekends to somewhere in the Highlands, possibly Glenshee. I did that a few times and I also went on a school skiing trip to France once, although that was during the holidays. I don't remember where we went, but it was okay. On another occasion I went on a cruise.

*Schooling*

47. I studied for O-levels and A-levels and I managed to get three A-levels, which were in Biology, Business Studies and Economics and Politics, but at very low grades. There was no teacher present at prep and, because of the impact upon me of living in Altyre House and the bullying I was subjected to, my experience of studying was made difficult, regardless of subject or teacher. Despite that, there was no assistance for me, like extra help or extra tuition. I have no recollection of anyone getting extra tuition.
48. We also all had to participate in an extra-curricular activity outwith school hours. We had to choose from fire service, golf, seamanship, community service and air force cadets. I chose seamanship and then later community service, which involved going into care homes for the elderly and chatting to people.

*Sporting activities*

49. It was compulsory to do a sport of some sort. The primary sports were rugby, hockey and athletics. It could be freezing and snowing outside, but we would still be playing rugby. It could be a poor experience for a boy doing a sport they didn't want to do.
50. There were other sports available too, albeit the choice was limited. I played squash, which I enjoyed and I was in the school team. One of the teachers, Chris Barton, used



to take us to different clubs in the area to play against grown men. Mr Barton did this in his own time, which I appreciated.

*Healthcare*

- 51. There was a sanatorium block with a doctor and nurses. The nurses were there permanently, but I'm not sure if the doctor was, or whether he was a local GP. If anyone was sick, they could stay in the sanatorium. I saw the doctor and the nurse there on occasion and I stayed in there once when I was sick.
- 52. I remember there were some form of regular health checks, but I can't recall what that involved. I don't recall seeing a dentist during term time, although I'm sure there would have been some procedure for emergencies.

[REDACTED]

- 53. [REDACTED] Mr [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Occasionally someone would give a talk at chapel during the week as well. There were actually two chapels within the school. One was a really large church and there was another smaller chapel named Michael Kirk as well. I'm sure there would have been special services at certain times of the year, although some would of course have fallen over the holidays.
- 54. Every day in chapel we sung a hymn and there would be a Bible reading and there was also Religious Studies in school. I don't know what denomination the school was.

*Work*

- 55. We were assigned all kinds of chores by the housemaster, including sweeping, cleaning and looking after the tuck shop or the house bank. At the beginning of term the housemaster would put a list up and you would get your chore. You could be assigned multiple chores, but I think there was a fair amount of leeway with regard to the standard of cleaning, because cleaners came in as well.



56. There were different levels of responsibility as well, with the tuck shop and looking after the house bank. I can't remember how the house bank worked, even though I was on it for a time.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

57. I don't think birthdays were formally celebrated. I recall that at prep school you got a cake, but I don't remember anything like that at Gordonstoun. I can't speak for other houses, but that was certainly the case in Altyre.
58. We would be home for Christmas, however I think there was a Christmas tree in the Altyre and there was an end of term religious service before we broke up. There was a summer ball for seniors, but I'm not sure if there was one before Christmas.

*Personal possessions*

59. You were allowed your own things, like clothes, food, or any other personal possessions, such as radios, or whatever. If you wanted to keep any of your stuff securely you could have your own lockable trunk that you kept in your study.

*Visitors*

60. I never saw anyone have friends from outwith the school visit. Your family was allowed to come and take you out for the weekend on specific days. I remember my mum coming up and staying in a hotel, possibly on an open day. I'm fairly sure multiple parents came that particular weekend, but all I remember of that open day is being out for a bit.
61. I didn't get to go home at any times other than the holidays. A lot of the other students lived in London so they didn't get home either.

*External Inspections*

62. I don't remember anyone coming to do any inspections. I have no recollection of speaking to anyone who might have been carrying out an inspection, nor speaking to any governors. I never saw any of the board of governors either.

*Family contact*

63. There was a report from the housemaster at the end of term, which was co-signed with a note from the headmaster. There were also individual reports from the teachers of each class.
64. If there was a necessity for parents to call the housemaster, or if Mr Lofthouse needed to call parents, then that would happen, although that would be more in an emergency.
65. There was a payphone in Altyre for boys to use if they wanted, but there was only one so obviously it wasn't always possible to get on it. There were quite a lot of kids in Altyre for one phone and some would have long conversations.

*Discipline*

66. Teachers could give detention for anyone acting up in class, but discipline in Altyre was initially the responsibility of Mr Lofthouse, the housemaster. I think Mr Mavor, the head, would have made any final decision for anything more serious. The punishments Mr Mavor might consider were expulsion or suspension for a week or two.
67. There was also caning, although it was not common. I only remember one instance of a boy getting caned and that was Mr Mavor the headmaster who did that. The boy had farted in chapel and tried to argue with the headmaster. I never witnessed the caning, but the boy talked of it afterwards. I don't know how many strikes he got, nor whether it was across his hands or not.

## Experiences, including abuse, at Gordonstoun

1984 3<sup>rd</sup> form

68. About three weeks or so into my first term, the Spring term of 1984, one of the other students I shared a study with called [REDACTED] blurted out "let's call him IUH". The nickname IUH stuck for the remainder of my time at Gordonstoun. I was called by my nickname IUH by all the other students and some teachers.
69. It was a strange and disconcerting experience, losing my name at Gordonstoun. As an adult I politely asked my Gordonstoun friends not to call me IUH. I'm almost certain that Mr Lofthouse called me IUH most of the time rather than IUH.
70. We were told as new 3rd formers that we had it easy and seniors would share about how they were bullied. There was a thing called two weeks grace for new students in their first term where essentially you had it easy as a new boy for the first two weeks. This grace period lulled me into a false sense of security.
71. In my first dormitory at Gordonstoun, [REDACTED] was dormitory captain and everyone in Altyre was terrified of him. [REDACTED] was a notorious Altyre house bully.
72. I had a cold and the night before in the dorm and had been sniffing and was then sniffing again for a second night. [REDACTED] asked me to stop sniffing a few times after lights out. I had a cold, so it was quite challenging to stop sniffing and I sniffed again a few times. Primarily [REDACTED] and to a lesser extent [REDACTED] started winding [REDACTED] up. [REDACTED] said words to the effect of "[REDACTED] are you going to take that from IUH?"
73. [REDACTED] got out of his bed and summoned me to get out of bed and stand up in the almost dark in front of him. Like everyone else in the dorm I was terrified of [REDACTED] by reputation alone and I did exactly as he asked, without question.

74. [REDACTED] proceeded to punch me six to eight times in my both my face and upper body. After each punch I would fall down and take a few moments to recover before [REDACTED] punched me again. [REDACTED] behaved in a very cool, calm and collected manner and his violence was meted out without any obvious display of emotion. After the beating I went to the toilet to wash my face and came back to the dorm and went back to bed.
75. I have been haunted by [REDACTED] beating my entire life. To say I was beaten up is correct, but there was also a ritualistic and performance-like way in which [REDACTED] acted.
76. Because I got up each time, readying myself to get punched again, I was forced to be complicit in the violence I was experiencing, which troubles me even now.
77. The day after I cannot remember any other dorm member commenting on what had happened, most probably because of the code of silence around sneaking and fear of [REDACTED].
78. When myself and other students were hit it was always on the arms or the body, but never the face. It's significant that [REDACTED] punched me in the face multiple times as he must have known that these punches would bruise my face. Hitting me in the face was a way of [REDACTED] showing that he was untouchable. His judgement was not far wrong as he was only suspended for ten days.
79. I went to class the next day as normal and it was excruciatingly uncomfortable to walk around the school and attend classes with a bruised face and a black eye. I stuck out like a sore thumb. Other students asked me what had happened and I said that I'd slipped on the ice. I felt like a circus sideshow exhibit.
80. I felt incredibly vulnerable and ashamed that I'd been beaten up. I felt that I'd brought the beating on myself because of being unable to stop sniffing and then willingly standing up to accept the repeated punches from [REDACTED]. And of course, the next

night I was back in the dorm with [REDACTED]. There was a wall of silence around what happened.

81. Some days after, Mr Lofthouse asked me into his study and asked why I had a black eye and bruised face and I said that I'd slipped on the ice and landed on my face. I'm almost certain I was not sent to the school sanatorium by Mr Lofthouse after he saw my bruised face and fairly certain that I did not go of my own accord. I think it took about a week or so before Mr Lofthouse announced that it was [REDACTED] who had hit me once.
82. Mr Mavor, the headmaster, indirectly referred to me being beaten up by [REDACTED] during his speech at a service in the small Gordonstoun chapel named Michael Kirk, around the time of St Georges day, 1984. Mr Mavor said words to the effect of "Some of us have had our St Georges moment at Gordonstoun already" and he knowingly glanced at me as he said it. Mr Mavor delivered this phrase in a light hearted way as he looked at me.
83. One or two of the other Altyre house students looked at me knowingly right after Mr Mavor said what he said. It was a deeply uncomfortable moment for me being referenced like this and I felt humiliated. Being publicly referred to by Mr Mavor in front of other students as a survivor of violence poster boy was skin crawlingly uncomfortable and I felt used.
84. Carol Lofthouse, Mr Lofthouse's wife, sometime later said to me, "We all know you gave [REDACTED] as good as you got." I just responded at the time by saying "oh," and nodded my head in shock. Carol Lofthouse's statement confounded me at the time as it was so obviously untrue.
85. I have provided the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI) with a copy of '1984 Mr Mavor letter February re [REDACTED]', which he wrote to my mother at the time. In that letter Mr Mavor references my being beaten up and his sending the boy involved home for ten days. For any avoidance of doubt, Mr Mavor is referring to [REDACTED] in his letter.

Mr Mavor never mentions [REDACTED] by name, but it clearly shows that Mr Mavor and Mr Lofthouse were both aware of [REDACTED] historic bullying behaviour.

86. Mr Mavor writes '*The boy involved is on very thin ice anyway and had been involved in the past in some unnecessarily physical behaviour.*' The best lies contain a grain of truth. I was hit by [REDACTED], not once, but six to eight times.
87. Why Gordonstoun did not use this opportunity to expel [REDACTED], I struggle to understand to this day. Not expelling [REDACTED] had catastrophic consequences on another Altyre pupil some time later which I'm still haunted by and somehow I blame myself.
88. Later that same spring term I was walking back to Altyre house from dinner in the refectory and was on the road with the sports centre in front and to the right of me. It was a very cold winter in 1984 and there was thick snow on the ground. It was dark outside apart from the outside lighting. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and a few other students from Altyre jumped me and pushed me into the snow beside the road pretty roughly. They all jumped on top of me and hit me as they put snow down my back and all over my head.
89. I was pretty shocked at the time. I'm fairly sure that I had been walking with them when they all turned on me, which added a particular kind of meanness to what happened.
90. On another occasion that same term, [REDACTED] threw a penknife with an open blade at my foot. It was done in a joyful way by [REDACTED]. The penknife landed pretty close to my toe. A lot of students had different penknife's and knives.
91. Also that Spring term, I was sitting in my shared study on a desk beside the window. [REDACTED] was with [REDACTED]. I am unsure of spelling of his second name, and [REDACTED] was hitting me to see how I would react to pain and to see how much I flinched. I played along like I was okay, but of course it was awful and humiliating.



92. It is hard to explain, but the way in which bullying was done at Gordonstoun was like a sport. We all had to play along when we were being hit and bullied. It was all about taking it and not showing any emotion or being weak.
93. In the Spring or Summer term of 1984, in a house meeting, Mr Lofthouse asked students to stop calling another housemate who was in the same year as me "fucker" and said words to the effect of "Students should respect other people's names". The person's name was [REDACTED] Mr Lofthouse intervened when he chose to and, as I mentioned previously, I am fairly sure that he called me [REDACTED]
94. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1984 Mr Townley letter from [REDACTED] and '1984 Mr Townley letter from [REDACTED] transcribed'. This is a letter I wrote at the time to one of my former teachers at Belhaven, Mr Townley. It took me a long time to find the courage to sit down and read and type out this letter. I have an incredibly mixed emotions reading it including sadness, anger, shock, and surprise that I ever wrote it.
95. It's agonising to read how my 14 year old self puts on such brave face in this letter, knowing that I'd be a student at Gordonstoun for over four more years. As painful as it is for me to read, I'm glad and proud that I wrote this letter and documented my experience as a 14 year old boy at Gordonstoun. The comments about stealing remind me of how much anxiety I experienced at Gordonstoun about having my belongings constantly stolen. My bike getting stolen all the time caused me a lot of anxiety.
96. The constant stealing of my personal belongings eroded the little sense of personal space or autonomy that I had and was the same for other junior students. Whether it was in my shared study, dorm or locker near the shower block, none of my belongings were safe from theft. Only my belongings under lock and key were safe. Writing about never feeling safe or being able to relax and being hit all the time and being beaten up by [REDACTED] really hit home.

97. Referring to the constant hitting makes me shudder, because being hit and the fear of being hit all the time in Altyre house made me permanently anxious and was incredibly traumatic. The constant fear of being hit and verbally abused was as traumatising as the bullying in Altyre house. I was on a permanent state of high alert and this learned hypervigilance is something I still struggle with today.
98. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1984 Altyre House school report Spring term', completed by my housemaster, Mr Lofthouse. I'm lost for words that no mention was made of me being beaten up by [REDACTED] as having an impact on my behaviour or state of mind in my first term. I was in such a state of shock and fear because of the daily bullying and being hit and verbally abused so frequently. I struggled to focus in class and in general.
99. In the Summer or Autumn term of 1984, while I was in In dormitory with the lights out, myself and [REDACTED] were ordered to play Dungeon And Dragons with each other, except there was a twist. [REDACTED] and his friend [REDACTED] each rolled Dungeons And Dragons dice and myself and [REDACTED] were ordered to tweak each other's nipples. We would inflict levels of pain on each other based on the number on the dice roll by each of them. Dungeons And Dragons dice have more numbers on them than regular dice.
100. Even though [REDACTED] bullied me, we both realised early on during this 'game', that it was better if we both pretended to be in pain when we tweaked each other's nipples. We would both grimace in pain and let out sounds of pain according to the dice roll, but without actually hurting each other.
101. I'm still struggling to make sense of this incident today and I'm left wondering whether it had a sexually voyeuristic motivation. At the time and even after, because I had colluded with [REDACTED] and we had avoided hurting each other, I felt that I'd not been traumatised by this incident. However, as I write this now, I feel both disturbed and confused. I am left wondering whether this incident constitutes sexual abuse and I cannot work out if this is the case or not.

102. In the Summer term of 1984, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] muscled in when I was trying to fix my bike handlebars in the covered bike shed beside Altyre. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] pushed me away from my bike and I think [REDACTED] hit me with a plank of wood as he and [REDACTED] were both laughing. I said, "leave me alone", as I was getting really upset. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both laughed at me and repeated my words back to me in a posh accent. I felt humiliated and incredibly distressed.
103. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both experienced incredible joy out of bullying me and others. They bullied physically and verbally as a pair, with [REDACTED] being the violent one and [REDACTED] being the instigator. They were an effective team and [REDACTED] was physically strong and quick.
104. The amount of unadulterated joy and glee that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both experienced when bullying me and others is difficult to describe. My suffering, distress and humiliation brought them incredible joy. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] fed off my pain and others', suffering like in a horror film when the creature gains its strength the more scared and distressed it's victims are. [REDACTED] in particular experienced immense joy hitting and verbally abusing others in his own year group. I know of at least four other students in my year group that [REDACTED] bullied, one of whom was [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [REDACTED].
105. I think [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] got particular enjoyment bullying students in their own year because within the Gordonstoun and Altyre House culture, students were not expected to fight back or complain while being bullied by someone senior to them. This means that there was an added dimension of shame and humiliation being bullied by someone in your own year at Gordonstoun and not fighting back or defending oneself. I believe that the added experience of shame and distress when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were bullying students in their own year such as me, [REDACTED] and others added considerably to their unadulterated joy and glee.
106. In the Spring or Summer term of 1984, I visited Mr Lofthouse's study and told him that I was struggling with the way some people in my year were behaving towards me. He responded by saying that I was a big lad and I could take care of myself and sent me

on my way. In keeping with the anti-sneaking culture I did not tell Mr Lofthouse the names of the other students, but I was primarily referring to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Because the culture of the Gordonstoun was so anti sneaking I cannot begin to stress how significant it was that I went to Mr Lofthouse to ask for his help. Telling Mr Lofthouse that I was struggling with bullying from people in my own year group was a terrifying step for me.

107. I can still picture myself to this day, leaving Mr Lofthouse's study and walking up the corridor totally disheartened and hopeless in a sort of out of body experience. I knew that I was completely on my own from that moment on and I lost all hope and sort of died inside, a bit like a walking dead or a zombie.
108. For the most part it was accepted in Altyre and Gordonstoun culture that if you were bullied by someone senior than you, you were to just take it. The exception to this rule was if the person senior to you was unpopular and had no friends in their own year group to back them up. Culturally it would be expected at Gordonstoun that if you were bullied by people in your own year you would be expected to fight back and defend yourself. I still experience crippling shame and profound self-hatred for not defending myself and fighting back against other students in my own year group. Even now my inner dialogue says something like, how much of an absolutely pathetic, disgraceful, weak and useless piece of shit I am that I did not fight back against the bullies in my own year. I'm not sure if these feelings of self-hatred and shame will ever leave me
109. In the Summer or Autumn term of 1984, [REDACTED] was my house tutor and taught me piano lessons in a room in the main chapel. I really struggled with playing the notes on the piano correctly and reading music. Mr [REDACTED] would hit my knuckles with a ruler in frustration and rage when I kept getting the notes wrong. I did not continue with piano lessons with [REDACTED] for long. Mr [REDACTED] was not respected by Altyre pupils and everyone made fun of him, including me. I wonder if Mr [REDACTED] got out his anger at me for being disrespectful towards him with the knuckle wrapping in a situation where I could not escape from him.



110. In the Summer term of 1984 myself and other students from Altyre house were staying in a hostel during a hiking trip. I was playing a card game with [REDACTED] who was a notorious and violent bully in Altyre house and everyone was terrified of him. [REDACTED] asked me if I wanted a hot drink and I said yes. He asked a fourth former called [REDACTED] to make the hot drink for me. I apologised to the fourth former who was visibly uncomfortable at being asked to make a hot drink for a 3rd former who was junior to him.
111. In the Summer or Autumn term of 1984, [REDACTED] and another pupil from the 4<sup>th</sup> form asked myself and a few other 3<sup>rd</sup> formers to come into the TV room where most of the chairs had been moved to the side. They wanted to use myself and a few other 3<sup>rd</sup> formers to practise their fighting moves. It was like we were their playthings to practise flying kicks and other fighting moves. I don't remember being hurt or it going on for very long. I do remember feeling deeply uncomfortable about it at the time.
112. In the Summer term of 1984, myself and about seven other people from 3<sup>rd</sup> form Altyre house went on an expedition in Skye which included hiking and camping without teacher supervision. Wee Jim, a staff member, put me in 'charge' of the people in my group which at the time made me deeply uncomfortable. I remember being constantly verbally abused and humiliated by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] smoking out my tent with logs from the fire before I went to bed. I remember taking a walk on my own one evening and sitting on a big rock overlooking a beautiful loch in utter despair at being trapped with these people on expedition.
113. A lot of litter was left at our final campsite and one of the staff had checked this campsite. Wee Jim sent all the other students in my group to walk back to the campsite to clear up the litter but asked me to stay back in the van. I felt humiliated that I was asked to stay back. Other members of my group were angry that I had been treated favourably by not going back to collect the litter even though I'd been put in charge.
114. [REDACTED] left Gordonstoun after his first or second term in 3<sup>rd</sup> form in the Spring or Summer term of 1984. He was a bit overweight and got upset and

emotional easily. [REDACTED] was a genuinely kind and friendly guy. [REDACTED] was bullied so badly by people in my year group like [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that he left after a few terms. I'm glad that he left the school when he did. I wonder how he is doing now and I'm haunted by the impact of the bullying on him.

115. In the Summer or Autumn term of 1984, [REDACTED] and his friend [REDACTED] from Bruce house called me [REDACTED] IUH [REDACTED]. They laughed about it in a pitying kind of way. It was a very astute observation and I remember it vividly, because it was such an accurate description of how I was at the time. I walked around the school, often alone and was disassociated and numb a lot of the time. I lived in a permanent state of fear and anxiety. I still struggle with going into dissociative trauma states to this day.
116. In the Summer or Autumn term of 1984, Andrew Keir a physics teacher was speaking to me and few other students after his class. Mr Keir said that at university him and other students would all be in the toilets washing out their condoms on Saturday nights. I thought it was slightly odd thing to say at the time but I didn't think much of it. Mr Keir was very kind and friendly in my experience of him being a teacher. I was shocked, saddened and upset when I saw that he had been sent to prison for sexual abuse at Gordonstoun. It made me reconsider what he said after his physics class.
117. On reflection, thinking back to our classes, Mr Keir was overfriendly to students as a teacher and behaved more as a friend than a teacher. I wonder whether his over-friendliness was a means of grooming students.
118. Throughout 1984, bed tipping is when someone is asleep in their dorm and one or two students lift up their bed from the bottom end and tip it up against the wall. I saw it happen to others a few times in Altyre. It was often talked about in dormitory as something that could happen to anyone and it just added to my general anxiety that it could happen to me, although thankfully it never did.
119. Again throughout 1984, I remember one student, [REDACTED] would sometimes loudly shout the words "Jew hunt", referring to a Jewish student who was a friend of his in the same year. It didn't lead to anything, but even at the time I thought it was



pretty weird. [REDACTED] would also pat another black student's hair in the same year as him whilst calling him "munchkin". As strange as it sounds, it was done in a friendly way which of course wasn't the reality of what was going on for the student whose hair was being patted and who was being called munchkin.

120. I really cannot put into words the daily torment of being at Gordonstoun during my first year in 1984. A friend of mine who was in my year said a few years ago when we met, that he was scared all the time. It wasn't just the being hit, bullied, humiliated and being asked to do different conflicting chores, known as boggie jobs, by seniors. Altyre was a very unsafe environment.
121. In Altyre I spent most of my time in a shared study with up to six other people or in a dorm with up to ten other people. There was literally nowhere in Altyre that I felt physically or emotionally safe. The trauma I experienced was not just about the bullying, but was also about the constant threat of being hit and verbally abused.
122. I was taught squash with other pupils at my prep school, Belhaven Hill, by an external sports coach called Peter Derbyshire. I talked back to him a lot at Belhaven during squash lessons and made jokes a lot, often at his expense. In 1984 Summer term, I did some group tennis lessons with Peter Derbyshire, at the tennis courts beside Cumming House at Gordonstoun. Another pupil, who I was at Belhaven with, who stayed in Duffus House, told me that Mr Derbyshire had told him after seeing me at his tennis session that Gordonstoun seemed to have done me some good and knocked some sense into me. I can only assume it was because I was much quieter and subdued than when I was at Belhaven.
123. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1984 Altyre House Autumn term report', again completed by my housemaster, Mr Lofthouse. It is hard to read this and see that I was capable of some really good academic results, knowing how I massively underperformed and underachieved whilst at the Gordonstoun. I feel deeply upset by my consistent academic underachievement throughout my time at Gordonstoun. I wonder to this day without the bullying and dangerous environment and with a modicum of support, whether I might have achieved much more academically.

124. Still to this day I struggle with feelings of being stupid and get overwhelmed and suffer a lack confidence when learning new things. I can easily go into a state of shock and collapse when learning something new that I find challenging, whether in person or in a public environment.
125. A quote from Mr Lofthouse's report reads '*I still think he should be more assertive in what he believes is right, and attempt to influence some of the negative elements around him which tend to obstruct his progress. He is a big boy now, quite more than capable in his own peer group of looking after himself*'. This part of the report is deeply upsetting. It couldn't be more clear that Mr Lofthouse knew that I was being bullied and by who. He made it abundantly clear he was unwilling to do anything to help me.
126. When Mr Lofthouse refers to '*my own peer group*', he is referring to my own year group, which was other 3rd formers. When he writes '*He is a big boy now quite more than capable in his own peer group of looking after himself*', it is clear that Mr Lofthouse was expecting me to take matters into my own hands, bearing in mind that the bullying I experienced from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] was almost always two against one.
127. Mr Lofthouse sharing this with me and my parents, who would read my school report, was deeply humiliating. I was on my own and Mr Lofthouse was letting me know in no uncertain terms for a second time that he was unwilling to help me, this time in writing. Ouch!
128. Mr Mavor also made a written comment on this report and would, in all likelihood, have read what Mr Lofthouse had written. This is significant as Mr Mavor had written the letter about being me beaten up by [REDACTED] earlier that year and had referenced me indirectly in the St George's day service at St Michael's Kirk.
129. A significant amount of bullying happened in the dormitories before lights out. Mr Lofthouse, the housemaster and house tutors [REDACTED] Chris Barton and Angus McEwan, who lived in a small flat in Altyre house at various times, almost never walked

around Altyre during the evenings, especially after lights out. As well as being Altyre's housemaster, Mr Lofthouse had other significant commitments which included teaching English classes, involvement in Gordonstoun theatre productions and sport. Mr Lofthouse was most probably overstretched in his commitments.

130. Mr Lofthouse must have known of the appalling bullying environment in Altyre that he inherited from the previous housemaster, Mr Fitzgibbon. If Mr Lofthouse and the house tutors had walked around Altyre house at random times, where they could have come in from multiple building entrances during the daytime and evening, I believe this could have significantly reduced bullying.
131. With Mr Lofthouse knowing the historic environment of bullying in Altyre and knowing who were the worst offenders, I cannot fathom why he didn't ensure that there was more of a staff presence in Altyre house.
132. Altyre house created monsters. When monsters are allowed to roam free without being challenged they become stronger and more powerful. I felt incredibly alone and lonely at Gordonstoun. As a teenager I was going through that period of my life as well as having to deal with the tumultuous emotions of the bullying and the dangerous environment in Altyre. There was nobody to talk to about how I felt and nobody to help.
133. Becoming invisible, numb and passive were understandable responses to living in Altyre. It was more of a case of who was willing to hang out with me, rather than having real friends.
134. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1984 Exams report 4<sup>th</sup> form'. Mr Lofthouse commented on these results in his Autumn term report, but to actually see my exam results in this document and what I was capable of is deeply upsetting. I think these exam results were the height of my academic achievement at Gordonstoun.

135. In Mr Lofthouse's report from Autumn 1984 about my exams, he says that not even IUM can explain the results. I'm not sure what Mr Lofthouse is trying to say with this comment, but reading it makes me feel angry and undermined.

*1985 4<sup>th</sup> form*

136. In 4<sup>th</sup> form, in 1985, IUM ordered a bunch of 3rd and fourth formers which included me, to ransack and attack a senior student called IUM in his shared bedsit. Some of us were given cricket bats. I remember standing outside IUM study with a cricket bat with other students milling about. IUM was incredibly angry and distressed and everything kind of fizzled out and we all went back to our dorms.
137. Again in 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> form, 1985/1986, I was in a dorm with IUM who was in my year. He was being verbally abusive towards me from his bed while I was in my bed while the lights were on. IUM, who was a senior, walked in and heard what IUM was saying to me. He said to IUM words to the effect of that it was mean what IUM was saying to me and could he stop being like that. This is the only time I remember any senior pupil intervening while I was being bullied. I was really touched that IUM intervened.
138. I really enjoyed IUM class in 4<sup>th</sup> form, although the teacher, IUM could be pretty mean and sarcastic. One time Mr IUM squashed IUM I was throwing on the wheel making a sarcastic comment. I remember another student commenting that Mr IUM behaviour towards me was mean after they saw what happened.
139. In class one day I was standing up and leaning forward IUM. A tag from my boxer shorts was sticking out. With his fingers, Mr IUM tucked the tag back into my boxer shorts and his fingers touched the skin on my bottom. What he said and the way in which Mr IUM used his fingers to tuck my tag back into my boxer shorts felt flirtatious, although I cannot remember what he said. I vividly remember telling my mum during a phone call after this happened that I wanted to punch Mr IUM in the face. I remember my mum calmly telling to me that punching Mr IUM was not a good idea.



140. I bumped into Mr IUM outside the gates of Green Park underground in London in 2016 or thereabouts. I said words to effect of that there was trouble ahead with everything that was coming out about abuse at Gordonstoun. Mr IUM proceeded to tell me how he had intervened against bullies in Round Square house, where I assume he was a house assistant. A year or so later someone I knew very well from Altyre house in the same year as me talked about how Mr IUM had behaved towards them. I was shocked and it made me realise that the incident I'd experienced with Mr IUM, which had an inappropriate sexual undertone, was not an isolated one.
141. In the 4<sup>th</sup> form 1985, and worked as a pair in their bullying of those younger than them. was both violent and threatening and more verbally threatening. I would often see hitting younger pupils and, although short in stature, he was very strong. He was extremely threatening to younger pupils who were scared of him as was I.
142. I shared a three person dorm and study with and another student. Because we were sleeping and working in the same space he was not violent towards me in that space. However, it was deeply unpleasant to be sharing a work and sleeping space for months with someone who bullied me and who so thoroughly despised me. It was an extremely toxic environment to be in and further crushed my confidence and spirit at the time.
143. Again in the 4<sup>th</sup> form in 1985, stole a catapult of mine and in a rare occurrence another pupil told me about it and I went and got it back from study. The persistent stealing was the icing on the cake of my daily anxiety and distress at Gordonstoun. I'm sure that other students in my year stole my stuff and vandalised my desk to cause me distress, especially as I never knew who had done it, but I could guess who it was. It was humiliating.
144. There was a long walk back from the main school to our house and one time in the 4<sup>th</sup> form I was walking back alone. and a few of his friends were walking

behind me and [REDACTED] threw a short wooden branch at me as they were all laughing. It didn't hit me, but it was humiliating.

145. In the 4<sup>th</sup> form Spring term in 1985, a new boy called [REDACTED] was struggling to fit in, in Altyre house and was not popular with other boys in his form who thought he was weird. He was pretty manic and talked a lot and didn't really play the boarding school game of holding in all his thoughts, feelings and emotions. Mr Lofthouse asked me to have a chat with [REDACTED] and keep an eye on him. I did chat with him and kept an eye on him for a while. He was pretty manic and talked back to seniors a lot. I don't think I had any influence on [REDACTED] at all.
146. Also in 4<sup>th</sup> form, a boy called [REDACTED] who was from India, had been sent to Gordonstoun. Mr Lofthouse asked me to keep an eye on him and look after him a bit. He left after one or two terms and it was said that his mother had a nervous breakdown and that's why he left.
147. I am deeply aggrieved that Mr Lofthouse asked me to keep an eye on these two younger pupils when he was unwilling to help me when he knew I was being bullied. Mr Lofthouse took advantage of my empathetic and caring side, while at the same time refusing to help me. It literally makes me feel dirty.
148. One time in the 4<sup>th</sup> form in 1985, [REDACTED] and one or two other students were throwing a rugby ball between themselves in the front courtyard of Altyre House. After a while of playing, the rugby ball smashed one of my windows. Due to the atmosphere in the house I was pretty shocked when it happened, even though it was a genuine accident and [REDACTED] apologised. I cannot get across the daily impact on my nervous system of the daily torment of being in Altyre house, especially in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and fourth form.
149. On another occasion in the 4<sup>th</sup> form there was a massive food fight in the refectory before chapel, which I took part in. Outside chapel, [REDACTED], a senior from Round Square asked me if I had thrown anything and I said yes. Myself and a group of students were made to run around the lawn in front of Gordonstoun house for a



number of hours as punishment. The seniors involved in the food fight mostly got off scot free, if I remember correctly. I cannot be sure, but I don't remember staff eating with pupils at their tables or there being much of a staff presence in the refectory.

150. A boy called [REDACTED] came into Altyre house late in the 4<sup>th</sup> form and had a serious skin condition, which meant that all the skin on his body was flaky. [REDACTED] was teased mercilessly by everyone.
151. Again in 4<sup>th</sup> form, I was walking towards the exit of the refectory when [REDACTED] from Duffus house, who was in the same year as me, threw a couple of half eaten orange quarters at me while sitting with some older students from his own house. It was humiliating to do this so publicly. [REDACTED] would have known that I was bullied by other students in Altyre house and was an easy mark and that it was unlikely I would fight back. The bullying I experienced in Altyre meant that students from other houses would also make fun of me.
152. Outside the chapel on the Hopeman house side, a large group of girl and boy students, including myself, watched [REDACTED] fight [REDACTED] from Duffus house on an occasion in 4<sup>th</sup> form. I was part of the big circle of students surrounding [REDACTED] and the other student.
153. That same year, [REDACTED], whose nickname was [REDACTED] from Altyre house had his nipples twisted with plyers and was forced to drink so much water that he was physically sick. The perpetrators were [REDACTED] and another student from Bruce House. Both [REDACTED] and the other student were expelled.
154. I was waiting in the Sanatorium and Susan Collis who was, I believe, the senior school nurse, stopped and started talking to me. Susan Collis said that [REDACTED] was put in the Sanatorium before his expulsion and had spoken to her. Susan Collis said that [REDACTED] told her that he didn't know what he'd done wrong in regards to the torture of [REDACTED]. She said words to the effect of that she couldn't believe what [REDACTED] had said to her, whilst shaking her head.

155. I feel somehow responsible for [REDACTED] torturing [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] should have been expelled for beating me up. My hands were tied as I could not sneak, but I still feel responsible.
156. I cannot remember exactly what happened another time in 4<sup>th</sup> form, but at breakfast in the cafeteria on our table, [REDACTED] was verbally abusive to me or threw food at me. [REDACTED] said words to the effect of "are you going to take that from [REDACTED]?" It's ironic that [REDACTED] bullied me mercilessly all the time, yet wanted me to stand up against [REDACTED] as if he had exclusive rights to bullying me. I went to Round Square and [REDACTED] was with another student in his study. We had some harsh words but it came to nothing.
157. We all had tutors who were allied with Altyre house. I had [REDACTED] and Andrew McEwan as tutors during my time at Altyre. On reflection these tutors were tutors only in name and the whole tutor situation was like lip service. Andrew McEwan and [REDACTED] met with me infrequently and I cannot remember at any point either of them providing genuine pastoral care, or their input being of any benefit to me.
158. It has been helpful to me talking to the SCAI and answering general questions about the school. I realised after being asked the questions that there was an unbelievable lack of teacher presence in Altyre house. It left me thinking, was Gordonstoun broke and being run on a shoestring budget? I am genuinely struggling to understand why there was such a consistently limited staff presence in Altyre house. I cannot speak about the situation in the other houses.
159. After first speaking with the SCAI, I got in touch with how alone I felt in Altyre house in the context of there being almost no adult presence most of the time. I'm never going to read the book Lord Of The Flies because I've lived that experience in Altyre.
160. I vividly remember a tutor's report in the 4<sup>th</sup> form by [REDACTED] where he said words to the effect of that I was somewhat more ethical and honourable than those students around me in my year. I remember feeling angry at the time about Mr [REDACTED]

saying this, because at Gordonstoun, me being honourable and decent did nothing to protect me from physical and verbal abuse and arguably made it worse.

161. There was an incredibly anti smart, anti-academic culture in Gordonstoun when I was there, especially in the lower forms. Someone who was smart academically was called a 'neg', which was not meant in a positive way. Smart students needed to not act too smart or too confident in their intelligence. This was especially true in class where it was not okay to act too smart or be too keen to answer questions as this was seen as showing off.
162. After speaking with the SCAI, I realised that there was zero support such as extra tutoring for students like me at Gordonstoun who were struggling academically. It was a sink or swim situation. At one point online I said words to the effect that Gordonstoun was a 'clearing house for morons and sociopaths who couldn't get into other boarding schools'.
163. I have really struggled to make sense of why I didn't stand up to the bullies in my own year in 4<sup>th</sup> form. I was paralysed with fear while experiencing emotional and physical abuse and was unable to get angry or fight back. I experienced intense self-hatred at being paralyzed by my fear and unable to fight back, coupled with utter despair at Gordonstoun. I would hit myself with a squash racket on the legs while playing squash if I was playing badly or made a mistake. Out of sight of others I would punch the side of my own head with my fists or the top of my head when I was frustrated, upset or was feeling like a failure.
164. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1985 July Mr Mavor letter regarding drinking', which the headmaster wrote to my mother following a cruise I had been on with the school. Myself and another pupil were called into Mr Lofthouse's study and after being questioned we both said that we had had a drink. The irony is that I had only drunk a few cups of lemonade shandy on the cruise. This letter shows that Mr Mavor and Mr Lofthouse were willing to harshly punish certain behaviours such as drinking, with a threat to expel me if I was caught drinking again, whilst turning a blind eye to my bullying.

165. The 4<sup>th</sup> form cruise was really challenging for me. [REDACTED] and other students from other houses in the 4th form, as well as at least one other student from Altyre, were on that cruise. I was made fun of a lot by people in my year on that cruise which I found upsetting. It didn't help that [REDACTED] was there as well and his presence undermined my confidence significantly as I was the butt of his jokes.
166. I remember sitting on my sleeping quarters beside another Altyre student who I knew well checking up on me and asking if I was okay. I remember feeling really upset and depressed as I was being humiliated and made fun of by students outside of Altyre as well as [REDACTED]. I was trapped on a boat for a week with these people.

*1986 5<sup>th</sup> form*

167. In 5<sup>th</sup> form, Mr Lofthouse called me into his study and said that I had a phone call from my older brother which was unexpected. I picked up the phone and my brother told me that my stepmother had walked out on my father. Mr Lofthouse brought me a cup of tea with a saucer after the call as I was sitting in his study in shock. Mr Lofthouse said, and I remember it vividly, "these things happen" and that was it. I remember leaving his office completely shell shocked which lasted for some days.
168. I remember being in a chemistry class a few days after and another student, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Altyre, made fun of me and I reacted back verbally when normally I wouldn't, which was really out of character for me. I remember thinking at the time, at least I have a good reason as to why I feel so unhappy and upset.
169. I was put on tuck shop duty in the 5th form and I would take a taxi to buy food from the cash and carry and get a taxi back with everything and stock up the shop. I would open the shop a few times a day, serve pupils and take their money. Obviously I ate some of the stock and I remember that I started putting on weight as I ran the tuck shop. I am fairly certain that I was assigned tuck shop for a second term by Mr Lofthouse.

170. Mail was being stolen over a long period of time in 5<sup>th</sup> form from Altyre house and, I believe, Bruce house, which were joined by a toilet block. There were occasional complete house lockdowns and searches of every study. I remember the three man bedsit I shared with [REDACTED] being searched and having to open my small metal trunk in front of Mr Lofthouse.
171. Mail being regularly stolen did not help the atmosphere in Altyre house at all and caused even more of a sense of mistrust between students. [REDACTED] saw [REDACTED] throwing someone else's rucksack into the loft In Altyre house that had lots of opened mail in it. [REDACTED] was expelled.
172. I really enjoyed playing guitar and before chapel services in 5<sup>th</sup> form I would often play in one of the music rooms in the main chapel building. Some music rooms adjoining a larger room where students from Altyre house congregated before chapel were glass fronted. [REDACTED] in particular would laugh at me practising guitar and occasionally come into the music room and verbally humiliate me while I was playing.
173. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] presence during my time at Gordonstoun was as if I was a plant trying to grow and having poison thrown on the soil every day. It stunted me then and still impacts my confidence today.
174. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1986 December Mr Lofthouse letter to my mum'. I was getting incredibly tired after lunch in class and falling asleep on my hands whilst sitting up and pretending to pay attention. I didn't care about my studies or academic results. I know for certain that it was not an issue with not getting enough sleep as Mr Lofthouse says.
175. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1986 School report Autumn term'. My personal confidence had been destroyed by the daily violence, bullying, and fear of bullying, especially in the third and fourth form.
176. Mr Lofthouse makes comment in that report that 'outside the classroom he has kept reasonably busy, although he has tended to be extremely moody and often dispirited



in approaching many areas of extra-curricular life, not least squash'. He also says 'the impression at this end is that a great deal of [redacted] lethargy is a result of his own occasional moodiness'.

177. Mr Lofthouse says that he is grateful for my help with the house bank and then talks about my financial naivety and carelessness, bearing in mind that he was happy for me to run the school tuck shop. Reading this many decades later it's upsetting to read that Mr Lofthouse described my state of mind using words like, dispirited, extremely moody, lethargy and occasional moodiness.
178. My state of mind was clearly seen by Mr Lofthouse, without him acknowledging that the environment or people around me were having a negative impact on me. I did find an outlet at school playing squash and doing pottery, both of which I enjoyed. Those activities enabled me to do things I enjoyed away from other students in Altyre house.

*1987 6<sup>th</sup> form*

179. [redacted] was junior to me when I was a senior in the 6<sup>th</sup> form. He was much bigger than the other kids in his year and the year below him. I saw him hitting someone much smaller than him in the corridor and I remember having to spell it out to him that it wasn't okay to hit people smaller than him, especially when he was so much bigger than them. I believe he was eventually expelled for bullying after I left the school, but I'm not certain.
180. In 6<sup>th</sup> form, [redacted] kicked my chair from behind in the TV room or hit me from behind. Much to my own surprise something snapped in me and I stood up and wrestled with him which resulted in a draw. This was the first time that I had stood up to [redacted] and he left me alone after that. I remember other students saying that it was a good thing I did.
181. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1987 tutor report and exam results from 6B'. I feel terrified for myself reading these exam results. They are so awful that it was debatable whether I could get into university if I kept on this path.

182. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1987 Altyre house Spring term report', completed by Mr Lofthouse. Reading this report, it's agonising to me how being bullied had so dramatically impacted my self-esteem and self-confidence. By the sixth form, the damage had been done.
183. Mr Lofthouse writes 'I find it sad that IUH is still trying to cope with the minimum and not aware that he himself must be at the centre of any sixth form studies [...] He has been equally casual outside the classroom and I am really quite disturbed by his lack of overall development'.
184. For a significant time in my adult life and to this day I struggle with feelings of apathy and a general feeling of despair and hopelessness. I have explained to my therapist that sometimes I feel like I'm in small boat out at sea without a sail, not really caring which way the waves and wind blow, whether it's out to sea, towards the rocks, or a beach somewhere. I understand that this learned helplessness is a trauma response of being resigned to my fate and being a passive participant in my own life. This learned helplessness and hopelessness is still a significant struggle for me today.
185. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1987 tutor and community service report', within which is a comment IUH did not start his A levels very well. He was far too laid back and apathetic with little effort or application. Despite this his teachers, although despairing at his attitude, remarked that he was certainly not without ability'.
186. It's vindicating for me that it was not only Mr Lofthouse who commented on my attitude and state of mind at Gordonstoun. Mr McEwan and my teachers at the time could also see that something was wrong with my attitude.
187. The line, 'his teachers, although despairing at his attitude,' really hits home for me. My teachers weren't angry or upset, rather they were despairing, which is an accurate reflection of how I also felt at the time. In truth, I was just wandering pretty much aimlessly through my sixth form at Gordonstoun and I didn't really care about my studies or what happened to me.

188. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1988 final school report Mr Lofthouse 6A', which is an incredibly difficult report to read. Mr Lofthouse remarks 'He has proved reliable in positions of responsibility, whether as banker or roundsman. I am sure we will all miss, [REDACTED]'. He also writes 'If he has been a little restricted in his interests and passive in his approach I suspect it has been attributable to a strong sense of insecurity which still appears occasionally. I have been grateful nevertheless for his support in Altyre at a time of considerable change in attitude.'
189. The fact that Mr Lofthouse is grateful for my support when he chose to not to support me is deeply disrespectful. In reading all of Mr Lofthouse's reports what is excruciatingly painful is that he can quite clearly see that I'm struggling. In this report he references my insecurity and me being passive in my approach. His descriptions of me are pretty easily explained by a basic understanding of trauma.
190. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '1988 Mr Mavor final report 6A', within which Mr Mavor, who I had minimal interaction with at Gordonstoun, writes 'I am not sure that he has been sufficiently industrious to do justice to his able mind is pretty galling'. To have that said about me by Mr Mavor, the headmaster, and to have so utterly failed at Gordonstoun, academically and personally is deeply upsetting.

### **Life after Gordonstoun, including Impact**

191. I left Gordonstoun in 1988, when I was seventeen and after I had been there for five years.
192. If, on my first day at Gordonstoun, I'd been shown a vision of my next five years like in the film, 'It's a Wonderful Life,' where George Bailey is shown his future and is asked to decide whether he wants to jump off the bridge, I would choose to jump off the bridge, without hesitation.



193. In trying to make sense of my time at Gordonstoun, I liken myself to a dog that broke it's leg and it never got fixed and I was never able to function properly after that. I was never able to get a firm footing in my entire time at Gordonstoun. In moments when I feel overcome with despair about my time at Gordonstoun I like to think that the epitaph on my gravestone will say, 'Gordonstoun Killed Me'.
194. I left Gordonstoun in 1988 as a broken person, I just didn't realise it at the time. I didn't have enough confidence to look for a job on my own. My mum arranged an interview in London with her friend who was a recruiter so he could help find a job for me without me having to attend lots of interviews. I remember at the time feeling deeply ashamed and uncomfortable during the interview with my mum's friend that I didn't have the confidence to go out and look for a job on my own.
195. Between 1990 and 1994 I went to what would eventually become Sheffield Hallam university. After a few weeks of being there I was struggling to cope and feeling totally lost. I hitchhiked to Paris and back for about a week and then returned. I remember for the first few terms in class I struggled with excruciating anxiety and literally could not speak to other students. I was absolutely tongue tied and incredibly awkward. I felt completely overwhelmed.
196. The other students and housemates in my shared house of six people were from working class and middle class backgrounds and were genuinely lovely people. They didn't have the strange affectations that people have when they've been through the boarding school system. I really struggled to fit in and feel part of university life. In a similar way to Gordonstoun, I didn't really involve myself much in extracurricular activities while I was at Sheffield Hallam University and lived passively.
197. As part of my four years at university I was lucky enough to study and then work in America for my second and third year. I wanted to drop out in the fourth year and I am surprised that I finished my degree. If I had not been in America for two years I would never have completed my degree. During my time in the America, whilst on my university work placement I stayed in shared dormitory accommodation with another person for well over six months whilst living in San Francisco.

198. I just didn't really care about anything in my life at all and it's reasonable to assume that I was suffering from depression and complex PTSD although I didn't realise it. I thought what I was feeling was normal and that there was something wrong with me.
199. I have avoided getting a formal diagnosis of complex PTSD, because I'm terrified of doctors and I want to avoid being in a position where an institution or the medical profession label me as having any form mental health issues. I have thought for decades that there is something wrong with me, although now I have come to understand that complex PTSD is most likely to blame for the mental health issues I experience such as depression, addiction, anxiety and panic attacks and feelings of self-harm and occasional suicidal ideation.
200. In my mind, getting diagnosed with a mental health condition, such as complex PTSD makes me terrified that an institution or a doctor could have power over me and institutionalise me against my will.
201. I've had a recurring nightmare about Gordonstoun for decades. I've had the same dream dozens and dozens of times. I'm in the 3<sup>rd</sup> form and I'm arriving at Altyre house for the start of term with all the other students. I'm terrified as I'm walking up the main house corridor towards a small flight of stairs leading to the house notice board. That's where I'll read the noticeboard and find out who I'll be sharing my study and dormitory with for that term. I always wake up in a state of anxiety and distress before I find out who I'll be sharing with on the noticeboard. In the dream I never find out who I'll be sharing with.
202. It's worth adding that the problem of living in Altyre House was not just the violence, bullying and emotional abuse, but the hourly and daily anticipation of it. The crippling anxiety that came with the constant anticipation of being physically hurt or emotionally abused was as devastating as the bullying itself.
203. I have another recurring nightmare about Gordonstoun which started as the noticeboard nightmare became less and less frequent. In the nightmare, I'm a senior



student in a random educational institution that I've been sent to which is different in each dream. I'm always in a long thin corridor feeling very distressed and upset. In the dream there is never anyone else around.

204. Each time in this nightmare I get in touch with an overwhelmingly strong feeling of not wanting to be at this institution and feeling trapped, coupled with immense frustration and anger. I come to realise in my dream that maybe I don't have to be at this institution and can leave. I always wake up at the point that I realise this.
205. I received unemployment and housing benefits from about 1995, not long after I left university, until about 2006. I'm deeply ashamed that after my expensive education I spent such a long time reliant on government handouts. During this time I was unable to work full time, although I would not have not been able to explain why at the time.
206. I'm devastated that from the ages of about twenty five to thirty six I was unable to lay the foundations of a career or start building wealth. I was aimless and had no direction or interest in anything much. My mother even refers to those years as my lost years.
207. In roughly 1995 I moved to London and stayed with friends and then stayed in a hostel with mainly international people for well over a year. I was sharing a dorm with ten men at one point and then with three others later on. The irony isn't lost on me that I recreated the dormitory experience of Gordonstoun in my adult life which is hard to stomach looking back on it.
208. I spent about two years squatting in a few different places in London. I squatted in one large building in South London with a mixture of people who could best be described as people on the fringes. It felt familiar and comfortable to be around these people, some of whom had experienced severe trauma in their lives, including sexual abuse and significant violence. Some people were drug addicts, one of whom when off drugs I stayed with for a few months after I stopped squatting. This person had hepatitis.

209. It took me a good few years before I eventually got my own flat in London. I really, really struggled to get myself together on any level at all in my early years in London in terms of accommodation and work and I lived hand to mouth for years. I remember being so broke at one point that when a friend invited me out for a meal at a cheap diner that I nearly burst into tears.
210. I have suffered from debilitating panic attacks for about twenty-five years where I freeze, become unable to verbalise how I'm feeling and unable to function or speak. I don't feel able to be around people when I feel like this, so it's lonely. I have to go to bed and sleep for a few hours so my nervous system can deescalate and calm down.
211. Relatively small situations can trigger panic attacks as my nervous system is hypervigilant. Thankfully, I only have these panic attacks occasionally these days although I still do have periods of a day or two where I feel shell shocked and cannot function or do anything or verbalise how I'm feeling. In the few months that I have been writing this statement I've had numerous days of feeling totally shell shocked.
212. It has been a long, long road to deal with and understand my hypervigilant and over-sensitive nervous system. I accept that I will have to make an extra effort for the rest of my life to deal with having such an easily triggered nervous system.
213. When I had my first phone call with the SCAI in September 2020, literally the next day I had a reoccurrence of a stomach problem that includes feelings of pain and debilitating nausea associated with producing too much stomach acid. A condition known as gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GERD).
214. One of the reasons that I took nearly a year and a half to begin the formal process of giving evidence after my first call with the SCAI, was that I was extremely concerned about the impact of giving evidence on my overall physical and mental health and stomach symptoms. I felt that my physical and mental health would suffer too much by giving evidence to the SCAI. About six months before my first formal evidence giving session I was able to significantly change and improve my lifestyle and living situation.

215. I blame myself for the bullying I experienced at Gordonstoun and not being able to stand up for myself and fight back. I'm not sure if I will ever stop blaming myself for what happened to me at Gordonstoun and this leads to intense feelings of self-hatred and feelings of wanting to harm myself.
216. I could never have dealt with the stress of a job in the corporate world or been able to manage a team of people effectively. That avenue was always closed to me after the trauma that I experienced at Gordonstoun. Thankfully, since about 2006 I have been able to work for myself and run my own consultancy business.
217. I was definitely suffering from complex PTSD during and after my time at Gordonstoun, but it took me decades to realise this.
218. I also struggled with smoking weed on and off in my twenties and thirties, which gave me temporary relief from anxiety and calmed me down in some ways. However smoking weed led to me overeating and a further lack of focus, making it harder to get my life together. Because I struggle with disassociation, weed can be problematic for my mental health. Smoking weed means that I am less in touch with what I feel which is not helpful for me. Smoking weed and overeating were both effective ways to numb intense feelings for me.
219. The trauma I've experienced at Gordonstoun has greatly impacted my ability to form long lasting friendships, particularly with men. The trauma has also impacted my intimate relationships a great deal. I experience tremendous terror and anxiety being physically close in intimate situations and this had an extremely negative impact on my marriage, which ended in divorce.
220. I dissociate in intimate situations and feelings of terror are often triggered. It's almost impossible for me to experience a feeling of safety in intimate encounters.

221. It's unlikely that I will have children. I think this is for the best as I don't wish to pass my trauma on to my offspring. I also understand this fear from the point of view of intergenerational trauma and epigenetics.
222. I have discussed with my therapist about an entire, all over, body sensation which I sometimes experience. I described it as skin crawl. If you see something which you find so disgusting as to be shocking that's the level of self-disgust I experience which I describe as skin crawl. In my case, intense feelings of self-disgust are not generated from external events, but are internally self-generated. When I experience skin crawl it's extremely distressing for me and it's almost impossible for me to calm my nervous system down. My whole body and skin feels so full of self-disgust that I go into a state of shock.
223. I have struggled greatly with forming male friendships my whole life. In May 2022 I was being mentored in person by an older man for a creative project and I found it extremely challenging. I remember sitting with him and thinking, am I in an abusive relationship? I was unable to determine whether I was the target of abusive and disrespectful behaviour or not.
224. My therapist helped me understand that while this man was uncompromising and demanding, he was not abusive. He chose to stop working with me unfortunately.
225. As I'm completing writing my witness statement, I am left with a profound sense of grief at so significantly underachieving in my adult life and not fulfilling my potential at work, in creative projects and in my personal life.
226. Although I had some challenges at my prep school, Belhaven, during the two years that I was there, I don't feel traumatised by my experience. I was able to hold my own and there was no bullying and the staff were ever present. At Belhaven I was in the school choir and sang solo in front of church audiences of hundreds of people more than once. At Gordonstoun I didn't have the confidence to be involved in theatre or singing.

227. It's much easier for me to feel intense rage about what happened to me at Gordonstoun, than feel the underlying grief of Gordonstoun's impact on my life. This underlying grief still feels at arm's length for me. I think it will be years before I can fully feel and release the grief about the negative impact Gordonstoun has had on my life.
228. As a man over 50 years old, dealing with the loss of a life not fully lived and having been unable to manifest more success across all areas of my life has been one of the hardest parts of writing my witness statement.
229. Some years ago I spoke to a female former Gordonstoun pupil who had given evidence to the SCAI. She told me that from the men who went to Gordonstoun she knows, those that don't have to work because of inherited wealth do nothing. Her comment has really stayed with me and I can very much relate to what she's saying. In my view there are hundreds, if not thousands of ex-Gordonstoun students who have been somewhat broken by their experience at Gordonstoun. My father told me that he was badly bullied while he was at Gordonstoun in the mid 1950's.
230. Writing my statement over the past few months has brought me in touch with feelings of apoplectic rage and tears nearly every time I have sat down to write. I have experienced periods of feeling shell shocked for days and unable to do much of anything at all. It has felt like a personal exorcism of sorts, but overall I feel that I am reclaiming parts of myself that I have lost.
231. As I have written my statement, I have also had days where I feel unwell and exhausted with headaches and mild nausea and stomach pains.
232. During the roughly three months of writing up and doing final edits on my statement, I've been unable to focus on my business, and my financial situation has been impacted.



233. In writing this statement it has helped me come to terms with having complex PTSD. I do feel that I hide from life somewhat and have not found a way to be more honest with others about the impact of complex PTSD on my day to day life.
234. I rather feel that I still hide from the world, especially with regards to friendships and intimate relationships. I have still not found the words to say to friends that I suffer from complex PTSD and some days I don't want to leave my home, and I feel too vulnerable and emotionally dysregulated to meet for a coffee.
235. Making future plans with friends is challenging because I never know how I will feel on a given day. Because I experience being non-verbal when I am in a trauma state of shock or disassociation it would be uncomfortable to be with someone else. Some days I am absolutely fine and others I cannot function at all. On the bad days I am able to eat, watch TV, send a few emails and have a few chat messages, but that's about it.
236. It does feel lonely often as I am literally unable to say how I feel or listen to another or make small talk. I often avoid social events or going out due to intense anxiety. For instance loud UK drinking pubs are absolutely terrifying environments for me. I feel in danger and very unsafe. I think it's because alcohol can make drunk people behave in a unpredictable manner and that is very challenging for me as I like to be in control of my environment.

### **Self-harm**

237. I remember doing a couple's workshop with other participants including my ex-wife in 2015 which involved various exercises in relating to each other. During one exercise I was emotionally triggered and felt an incredible urge to self-harm which was very distressing, especially in a workshop with other participants.
238. In 2017 a new business that I started a few years before failed pretty badly and I remember for about three months or so, nearly every night as I lay awake in bed I had

an incredible urge to bang my head against the wall and punch myself in the head, because I was so angry at myself for my business failure.

239. For the most part I fought the urge to self-harm during this time but it was incredibly draining and difficult and I felt unable to tell my wife how I was feeling. It's like I have to batten down the hatches and shut down completely in order to not harm myself. It's like I literally have to hide from my own dangerous impulses.
240. This self-harming behaviour, whilst infrequent, would lead me to hit my own legs with [REDACTED] while at university and punch myself in the head and bang my head against the wall, up into my forties. The urge to self-harm is still occasionally there, especially if I make mistakes, but these days for the most part I manage to not succumb to harming myself, even if there is the desire to do it.

### **Treatment/support**

241. I have spent six figures on getting the support I need for my mental and physical health and I realise that I will need to continue having this extra support for the rest of my life.
242. I have done over 12 years of 1-1 therapy, been part of a men's group for a number of years, done family constellations workshops, couples workshops amongst many other modalities, in an attempt to improve my mental health and deal with my trauma. It's fair to say that some modalities have worked better than others.
243. I have suffered from chronic neck and shoulder tension for decades and have regular debilitating headaches that can last for days. I have seen osteopaths and cranial sacral osteopaths for decades to help me reduce the impact of my chronic tension and physical pain.
244. I also see a kinesiologist and other practitioners as well to help with my mental and physical health.

245. It has been helpful for me to also understand the work of (ACE) Adverse Childhood Experiences, especially in relation to my physical health, not just my mental health. When I read about the ten key adverse childhood experiences (ACE) it helped me have more compassion for some of the ongoing and frustrating issues that I have with my physical health. I have no doubt that the trauma I experienced at Gordonstoun has impacted not just my mental health, but my long term physical health as well.
246. Before and during the time of writing my statement I swim most days and do yoga every other day. I do a yoga nidra meditation most days to calm my nervous system.
247. I've been having acupuncture twice a week and Chinese herbs twice a day for my acid reflux stomach condition. I see my therapist weekly and see an osteopath roughly every few weeks. I see a kinesiologist every month or two. I'm glad that I have recognised and respected my own need for significant extra physical and emotional support and have been able to put that in place with practitioners I trust.
248. Through conversations with my current therapist I've come to realise that I have a consistent pattern of somatising my emotions. The way I understand it is that I'm often unable to feel or verbalise my emotions of grief or rage or anxiety. Instead these emotions that I'm unable to feel or verbalise get trapped in my body, negatively impacting my physical health.
249. In about 2012 I did a family constellations workshop with other participants and when I was having my session the therapist said that she could see that I had experienced trauma as I was so frozen with shock and shut down. That was the first time in my life that anyone mentioned I might have trauma. I just thought that I was a failure in life and that I was useless and couldn't achieve anything.
250. I remember during a therapy session, the same therapist said that one of the impacts of trauma is that it can make visualising the future extremely difficult. Even now, I'm unable to visualise a positive future for myself, either in my personal or business life, although lately I've been able to focus on improving my physical health which has been a real blessing.

251. During my twenties and early thirties I attended various 12-step meetings which I did find useful at the time, such as overeaters anonymous. I would overeat in response to upsets, distress and anxiety which also caused a problem with me gaining weight. I did find it useful to talk about how I was feeling in these 12-step meetings and being witnessed was really important for me at a time when I was not in therapy. Ultimately I found the semi-institutional vibe and group thinking in 12-step meetings an issue and stopped attending.
252. Over a decade of therapy and other treatments and modalities have been very helpful in supporting and improving my mental health, but it has been a long-term process and is ongoing.

### **Future Pathways**

253. I spoke to Future Pathways in 2021 who could have potentially offered me financial support towards psychotherapy. However, when I spoke to them, they could not guarantee that they would provide financial support for the therapist that I was already seeing and had already built a strong relationship with. Furthermore and more importantly for me, Future Pathways would also have been involved directly through getting semi-regular updates and reports from my therapist.
254. For reasons I'm sure that the SCAI can understand, I did not want another institution, even a benign one, to have any involvement in my therapeutic process whatsoever. I chose not to move forward with Future Pathways with regards to support for paying for therapy. However, in August 2022 I got on touch with Future Pathways again to see if they can help me with some form of financial support, as my ability to work has been greatly impacted by writing my statement for the SCAI. I think this impact on my ability to work is likely to continue for some time after I have submitted my final statement.

### **1996 and other dates [REDACTED]**

255. I saw [REDACTED] who, as well as [REDACTED], bullied me mercilessly, after school in London a couple of times in the late 1990's.
256. I recommended [REDACTED] for a job as a hospital porter in London after I left my position, which [REDACTED] successfully got. I even invited [REDACTED] to my home in Scotland in about 1987 during the holidays while we were still students at Gordonstoun and helped him catch a salmon.
257. In about 1996 I went to a friend of [REDACTED] house, [REDACTED], who was staying in Clapham at his parents' home. As I was leaving out of the front door at the end of the evening, [REDACTED] picked up a poker from the fireplace and hit me with the poker a few times on the back saying "Did you like it when I used to hit you at school". [REDACTED] said words to the effect of that it was mean what [REDACTED] was doing and I left in complete shock. I never saw [REDACTED] again.
258. It's difficult for me to come to terms with the fact that I allowed [REDACTED] into my life after Gordonstoun after being bullied by him for such a significant period of time. Putting myself in a position where I became a victim of assault by [REDACTED] as an adult was a profoundly humiliating, shocking and upsetting experience. I blame myself for allowing this to happen.
259. My behaviour speaks to how incredibly low my self-esteem was and how incredibly poor my judgement was after being bullied at Gordonstoun. My behaviour reminds me of someone suffering from Stockholm Syndrome, which makes me shudder.

### **School reunion March 2010**

260. During a school reunion for our entire year group, I chatted with [REDACTED] who was in Cumming House. [REDACTED] said words to the effect of "I'm surprised you survived Altyre". He specifically mentioned [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as being



noteworthy bullies. As strange as it might sound at the time I was surprised to hear [REDACTED] say this.

261. I had not realised how much worse the bullying was in Altyre, compared to other houses at Gordonstoun. In my mind I had thought that the bullying was bad in all the other boys houses, especially Duffus and Round Square. At the time I was genuinely surprised that another pupil would view Altyre House as having a reputation for significant bullying.

### **Social media**

262. In 2013 my then wife and I had dinner with a female school friend from the same year as me and she mentioned that there was a Gordonstoun school 'Facebook' group. I joined the Facebook group the next day. This was a Facebook group started by an ex-Gordonstoun student called [REDACTED] and was not officially affiliated with Gordonstoun.
263. I was scrolling through the Gordonstoun Facebook group and an ex-pupil who I knew of called [REDACTED] from Duffus house, made a comment of words to the effect of "Whatever happened to [REDACTED]?" I immediately started talking about being beaten up by [REDACTED] and how he was a notorious bully and things just snowballed from there and never stopped.
264. Making posts and responding to comments on the Gordonstoun Facebook group was an unbelievably stressful time for me during 2013 and in many ways all-consuming. Some ex-Gordonstoun pupils were supportive of me discussing bullying and others were incredibly angry at bullying being discussed on the Facebook group.
265. I received numerous Facebook messages from other students which were for the most part positive. In the heat of the moment I made comments and posts on that Facebook group that I deleted as did others as there were so many emotions flying around from everyone.

266. Over time, more and more ex-Gordonstoun and Aberlour students came out of the woodwork, sharing about experiencing bullying and abuse on the Facebook group and in private Facebook messages with other students. Because the Facebook group was so polarised it was not a safe space for people to share openly about the abuse or bullying they had experienced or witnessed. The question of whether to name abusers or bullies on the Facebook group was particularly contentious.
267. Those pupils from Gordonstoun who had not witnessed bullying and loved the school and their time there, understandably found it very challenging to hear that such abominable things had happened at Gordonstoun. They wanted to share about the good times and memories they had while at Gordonstoun, so talk of bullying and abuse was not what they wanted to hear.
268. The culture of secrecy that surrounded bullying and abuse at Gordonstoun and the Fight Club rules of 'what happens in Fight Club stays in Fight Club', cannot be overstated enough. For anyone to talk about abuse or bullying they'd suffered at Gordonstoun on the Facebook group, or to tell another student privately, was an act of immense courage and vulnerability, especially in such a polarised environment.
269. Eventually ██████ handed over the running of the Gordonstoun Facebook group to ██████. At one point ██████ shared a post on the Facebook group about how he had fond memories of a winter term at Gordonstoun where he fashioned a ██████ and got a bunch of juniors to pull him around on the sled. I commented on ██████ post that maybe the juniors did not enjoy the experience and this caused a huge uproar with ex-Gordonstoun pupils splitting into those who berated me for what I said and those who agreed with me. I named this Facebook thread, ██████.
270. CCN ██████, who was very active in the Gordonstoun Facebook group talking about bullying and supporting me and many others, ██████ new group on a software platform which didn't take off. CCN ██████ 'G2', another Facebook group aimed at supporting ex-Gordonstoun students who had experienced bullying

and abuse. This meant they could have a safe space to be supported in sharing, rather than being challenged.

271. It made sense for CCN [REDACTED] G2. On the main Gordonstoun Facebook group there were a number of ex-students who undermined and challenged ex-Gordonstoun pupils who shared about bullying or when they criticised the school.
272. It's reasonable to assume that some ex-Gordonstoun students on the alumni Gordonstoun Facebook group were feeding back information to Gordonstoun about what was being said on the Facebook groups. For me, worrying about this made sharing on the main Facebook group even more nerve wracking. This underlines how incredibly important the SCAI is in creating a safe and supportive environment in which Gordonstoun pupils can share their experiences anonymously and be heard, without judgment or challenge.
273. Eventually, a therapist I was working with at the time said that in the best interests of my mental health I should leave the Gordonstoun Facebook group completely, which I did.
274. Being part of the main Facebook group had a huge impact on my stress levels and caused a lot of dysregulation of my nervous system. My wife at the time, whilst extremely supportive, found the amount of distress and shock that I was experiencing on a daily basis while interacting with the Facebook group difficult to deal with.
275. In the vacuum of moral and practical leadership by Gordonstoun, I carried the burden of what Gordonstoun was not willing to do in terms of supporting students of bullying and abuse, particularly when things first started coming out.
276. In October 2013 I reached out to someone who was also in my year in Altyre house. He said during a phone conversation words to the effect of me only doing what I was doing around Gordonstoun because I was blaming Gordonstoun for not having created a successful life for myself. He also said that it was only in his mid-forties that he had gotten over his time of being Altyre house.

277. I was irritated by his comment at the time, but I realised that the trauma I experienced at Gordonstoun has had a hugely negative impact on my life overall. I'm proud that I was the first person to speak out about bullying at Gordonstoun on the Facebook group and that I never backed down while I was on the group.
278. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2013 ██████████ Facebook Messenger conversation', which is a thread of Facebook messenger chats between me and ██████████ ██████████.
279. The entire conversation thread between ██████████ and myself is included without editing or removing any text, as I think it does an important job of showing what was going on in the Gordonstoun alumni Facebook group. It highlights the types of issues that ex-students were grappling with in the vacuum left by Gordonstoun's absence of any leadership or input.
280. The Facebook messenger conversation illustrates the significant rift between those at Gordonstoun who experienced abuse and/or bullying and wanted to share about it and potentially name perpetrators, versus those who did not want perpetrators named or abuse and bullying information to be shared in the group.
281. I was deeply shocked by what, at the time, I would have described as veiled threats from ██████████ within that Facebook messenger conversation, however reading this today my reaction is more nuanced.
282. ██████████ did not bully me, however he was a violent bully in Altyre. It's ironic and heartbreaking that a bully who is haunted more by his own bullying than the bullying he experienced, is involved in a Gordonstoun alumni group.
283. It's also unsurprising that ██████████ is loyal to Gordonstoun and wants to protect those who were bullies from any repercussions for their actions. I have attempted to resolve my trauma by fighting against Gordonstoun and ██████████ is attempting to



resolve his trauma by protecting the school. I'm mindful that these are both responses grounded in trauma.

284. I think [REDACTED] was communicating with me just how unbelievably angry a significant number of people were about what was being said on the Gordonstoun alumni Facebook group and I'm shocked by the absence of Gordonstoun, or anyone officially associated with Gordonstoun, communicating on the alumni Facebook group.
285. Gordonstoun school could have easily asked that a pinned post, always visible at the top of the Facebook group, asking that if anyone had experienced bullying or abuse at the school to please get in touch with Gordonstoun directly so that Gordonstoun could support them in any way that they could. Gordonstoun could have given an email address so that it could have been sent to someone in a direct Facebook message who had shared about a traumatic experience at the school. This person could have then contacted Gordonstoun school directly to get the support they needed.
286. It's reasonable to assume that Gordonstoun governors, staff and senior people within Gordonstoun were aware of what was being discussed on the alumni Facebook group and the G2 Facebook group. Lisa Kerr was a Gordonstoun governor during this time. In my view Gordonstoun consistently does everything it can to protect its reputation rather than provide support for victims of abuse and bullying. Gordonstoun has become accountable because outside forces have forced it to be accountable. I cannot stress this enough.
287. It was extremely costly to my mental and physical health to take the position I did on the Gordonstoun Facebook group. With Gordonstoun's initial non response to allegations of historic abuse surfacing, it's understandable that I wanted to talk about my own experiences. By speaking out I desperately wanted to support others sharing about their negative experiences, knowing how unbelievably brave and challenging it is for ex-Gordonstoun students to talk about what happened to them.



*2013 Altyre House Student Redacted Facebook Messenger Conversation*

288. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2013 Altyre House Student Redacted Facebook Messenger Conversation', which was from a more senior student than me in Altyre house. His support really touched me and also shows the impact that Altyre had on him.

*Allegations of abuse made on Facebook and elsewhere*

289. I cannot impress enough how traumatic it has been to hear about the abuse and bullying, especially sexual abuse at Gordonstoun, where perpetrators were both teachers and pupils. I have been deeply disturbed by what I've heard over the years. I feel that I have experienced vicarious trauma listening to and finding out about so much abuse and bullying.
290. Amongst other things, I have heard of a teacher raping a female student. I have heard of inappropriate sexual touching by a very senior member of staff at Gordonstoun. I have heard of an attempted male rape in one of the boys houses. I have heard of inappropriate sexual touching by a member of staff during a class. I have heard of a member of staff raping a female student. I have heard of multiple boys attempting to rape a female student.

*2017 Eve Poole email regarding Twitter*

291. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2017 Eve Poole email regarding Twitter', within which Eve Poole mentioned that she would like me to take part in the CELCIS consultation. However I did not wish to speak to her as I did not trust her, as from my point of view Gordonstoun staff always put loyalty to Gordonstoun above supporting victims of abuse, regardless of what they say and their polite and helpful manner.

*The Gordonstoun Twitter account*

292. Gordonstoun blocked me from their Twitter account which is at '@Gordonstoun'. I talked openly on Twitter about my experiences and thoughts about the school and I didn't hold back.
293. I asked Lisa Kerr for an explanation as to why the school blocked me on Twitter and I have provided the SCAI copies of the emails, entitled '2022 Lisa Kerr email thread 1' and '2022 Lisa Kerr email thread 2'. Reading between the lines of the explanation I received, I believe that my Tweets about Gordonstoun interrupted their carefully crafted PR image that is designed to attract future children to the school.

### **Gordonstoun's response**

294. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2018 Lisa Kerr email thread'. I don't think I need to add a great deal to what I said in my emails to Lisa Kerr, the school Principal. My responses to her are what I still feel now. It's astonishing that Gordonstoun did not employ a medically trained expert in trauma such as a psychologist, or at least someone with awareness of PTSD, from 2013 onwards to be a support or contact person for victims of abuse and bullying who came forward.
295. I know that in 2014 Gordonstoun was employing a psychologist for current pupils at the school, which shows that the school understood the value of professionally trained mental health support for students.
296. I have no doubt that a very heavy burden has been placed on Lisa Kerr who has a business background as opposed to an educational background. I find it incredibly strange that the Gordonstoun school management and governors put Lisa Kerr, whose job is already demanding as it is, to be the main point of contact for historic victims of abuse. Surely Lisa Kerr has enough on her plate already.
297. Again, I emphasise the point that Gordonstoun always chooses the path of protecting its reputation over doing everything it can to support victims of historical abuse. I believe that Gordonstoun is only motivated to do the minimum as required by law

rather than showing leadership and moral courage in helping victims of abuse and bullying.

298. Successful businesses grow through focusing on their ideal customers. Gordonstoun's focus is squarely on its current and future potential student intake, rather than on historic victims of abuse.
299. My view is that Gordonstoun has made an incredibly short sighted miscalculation by focusing on its current students and future potential students. The way that Gordonstoun treats victims of abuse and bullying is something that anyone considering sending their children there should pay close attention to. If Gordonstoun is unable to do the right thing in supporting victims of historic abuse it doesn't deserve to be an establishment that parents send their children to.
300. I wish that Gordonstoun was more proactive in calling alumni students from Altyre house just to ask them if they were okay. I cannot understand why the school could not employ someone with some training in trauma to reach out to students to check that they are okay. This is also in the context that it's very challenging for ex-students to share about bullying and abuse. A call from Gordonstoun could literally save an ex-student's life. In contrast I have received a few fundraising phone calls from Gordonstoun students over the years.
301. Although it may be dysfunctional behaviour on my part, I feel I have had little choice but to consistently challenge Gordonstoun over the past decade because it's response to historic abuse has been so disgraceful.

██████████

302. In September 2018 there was a Gordonstoun reunion in London of many year groups which I decided not to attend. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2018, ██████████, who had attended that reunion, reached out to me on Facebook and asked if I wanted to meet up.

303. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2018 [REDACTED] and myself met for a coffee at The German Gymnasium, beside Kings Cross station, in what I can only describe as an incredibly surprising meeting. [REDACTED] primarily apologised for his part in the incident when [REDACTED] beat me up and apologised for bullying me in general.
304. [REDACTED] was, and still is, haunted by his own bullying. [REDACTED] was very keen to right the wrong that had happened with regards to being a witness and partial instigator in me being beaten up by [REDACTED].
305. For [REDACTED] to reach out to me and apologise after thirty-four years, as much as it was surprising, was very vindicating and has helped me come to terms with what happened. It validated that it was okay for me to still be haunted by [REDACTED] beating because [REDACTED] was haunted by it thirty-four years later. Another person bearing witness to what happened to me and being willing to apologise and support me in any way he could means the world to me. I have huge respect for [REDACTED] coming forward like this in a remarkable act of bravery and courage.
306. It's taken me a long time to realise that Gordonstoun not only failed to protect me and so many others from bullying and abuse, it also failed to protect bullies and abusers from the worst of their own impulses. I've been left thinking, how does Gordonstoun and potentially the SCAI support bullies who are haunted by what they did while at Gordonstoun?
307. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2021 April Lisa Kerr email re appearance at Inquiry'. I appreciate Lisa Kerr reaching out to me unprompted. I am fairly sure that she is referring to [REDACTED] coming forward and sharing with her about the incident with [REDACTED].

**2021 July email thread to Lisa Kerr**

308. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2021 July email thread to Lisa Kerr'. I understand the legal position of Gordonstoun and the importance of confidentiality, but I feel I'm left carrying a burden, even if Gordonstoun is not to blame. Lisa Kerr makes significant reference to the CELCIS report which feels like a red herring in the context of this email exchange.
309. I do appreciate Lisa Kerr making an effort to confirm the identity of [REDACTED]. I still have no idea about the welfare of [REDACTED] or if Gordonstoun has reached out to him. I am still left carrying the burden of whether I should make an official report to the police regarding [REDACTED].
310. I think there is an extremely small chance that [REDACTED] presents a danger to the public, but nonetheless my mind would be put at rest knowing that the Scottish police can at least perform a background investigative check on [REDACTED]. Someone on the Gordonstoun alumni Facebook group said that [REDACTED] works as an occupational psychologist. I cannot confirm whether this is true.
311. Knowing about [REDACTED] torturing [REDACTED] and hearing from another student who has completed giving evidence to the SCAI about [REDACTED] significant violence and bullying of other students before I arrived at Gordonstoun, I do feel, on balance, it's my moral duty to make a formal report to the police about being beaten up by [REDACTED].

### **2022 CELCIS Gordonstoun Final Report**

312. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2022 CELCIS Gordonstoun Final Report', within which many of the recommendations are sensible and reasonable. However, they are only recommendations and not actions that Gordonstoun has committed to implement.
313. I'm not sure why the Gordonstoun Association was advising CELCIS as this is a case of a student marking their own homework. The Gordonstoun Association represents



the schools interests and not those students who experienced abuse and bullying at Gordonstoun.

314. In multiple emails from Lisa Kerr and one from Eve Poole they both make a huge deal about the CELCIS report. When I read the CELCIS report in 2022 I nearly fell off my chair.
315. I spoke to a few ex Gordonstoun pupils who had experienced abuse and bullying and they had no interest in participating in the CELCIS report.
316. The sentence from the CELCIS report that reads '*Participants were also recruited through two alumni Facebook groups who have a particular interest in non-recent abuse*', is deeply troubling. I can think of no reason to include this cohort of ex-students as, by this definition, students who had neither seen nor experienced bullying and abuse at Gordonstoun could be included in the CELCIS survey.
317. This means that there may have been people included in the CELCIS survey that were motivated by loyalty to Gordonstoun, rather than having experienced or witnessed abuse and bullying. How this definition was included in the CELCIS survey is beyond my comprehension.
318. The final participant number of nine people is so small that I'm surprised that Lisa Kerr made such a big deal about the CELCIS report. It is a laughably small number.
319. The Gordonstoun CELCIS report is a whitewash because of its combination of faulty methodology and the minuscule sample of Gordonstoun students surveyed, even though it's findings and recommendations are reasonable.
320. I believe that Gordonstoun used the CELCIS organisation and the CELCIS report for its own ends so that it could publicly proclaim how much it was doing and how proactive it was in dealing with historic abuse and bullying. However, when you pull back the curtain on the methodology and the sample size, the CELCIS report is built on sand.

### **Gordonstoun's response to the CELCIS consultation**

321. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2022 CONFIDENTIAL – Response to CELCIS recommendations'.

322. On 9 June 2022 I sent Lisa Kerr the following email:

*'Dear Lisa,*

*I hope you are well.*

*Do you have a document that outlines what specific actions Gordonstoun will take as a result of the CELCIS recommendations?*

*If the document/action plan is not complete, can you give an indication of when it will be completed or if there are no official actions that have resulted, or will from the CELCIS report?'*

323. On 25 June 2022 Lisa Kerr emailed me her response:

*'Dear IUH*

*Thank you for your patience. I have attached a copy of an extract of an internal document which summarises our response to CELCIS and hope this is helpful.*

*This was shared with the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.'*

324. I am unsure when this document was created and it's an extract, so there is more information I am not privy to. I asked Lisa Kerr if I could share the document with the SCAI and reference it, as it's marked confidential. In her email Lisa Kerr said that it was okay to do so.

325. Sections 1-4 of the document are specific actions that Gordonstoun will take with regards to procedures for dealing with students wanting to report abuse and signposting to helpful organisations and services. Sections 1-4 seem to be about following best practise and being legally compliant.

326. It's unfortunate that the Barnardo's Making Connections service to Gordonstoun ex-students was suspended during COVID. I'm unsure whether Gordonstoun is working on an alternative service to the Barnardo's one, considering COVID is a long term pandemic.
327. I am disappointed with the points numbered 5-12 as they are all phrased 'should' in their titles, as opposed to specific commitments. I assume that some of the 'shoulds' in sections 5-12 have been actioned, but the woolly language of using 'should', as opposed to specific commitments, does not sit well with me at all.
328. I'm unsure when this document was written, but I cannot help wonder if it was primarily created as a response to Gordonstoun being part of the SCAI. This underlines the importance of the SCAI in holding Gordonstoun to account. It is notable that the school is only providing an extract of a larger document. In my view this document extract that was given to the Inquiry is lip service, a bit like a student whose goal is to pass an exam and nothing more.

#### **Barnardos Making Connections website page**

329. I looked at the Barnardo's Making Connections service information on their website. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of a screen capture of that page, entitled '2022 Barnardos Making Connections website page'.
330. I found the website page confusing and off putting. I cannot imagine many ex Gordonstoun students taking up this service. What Making Connections says they offer on their webpage is very different to the service that Gordonstoun has arranged with them.

#### **Gordonstoun Historical Child Abuse Policy**

331. On 30 June 2022 I was sent a link to Gordonstoun's historical child abuse policy and I have provided the SCAI with a copy of this document, entitled '2022 Gordonstoun Historical Child Abuse Policy Autumn 2020'.
332. This policy details specifics of how Gordonstoun should behave in relation to allegations of abuse. It is clear that the school now has solid procedures in place for Gordonstoun students who have experienced abuse and bullying. However, there is very little mention of specific support for historic victims of abuse. This policy is about legally doing the right thing in my view and little more.

### **Mr Lofthouse email conversation**

333. In the email threads '2022 Lisa Kerr email thread 1' and '2022 Lisa Kerr email thread 2', I also intimated that I would like an apology from Mr Lofthouse, my housemaster in Altyre, however she stated that the school do not hold contact details for him and so are not in a position to forward any messages from me to him. I was surprised that Gordonstoun school had lost touch with Mr Lofthouse considering Altyre's reputation for bullying. I know of a number of ex-Altyre students who are giving statements to the SCAI.
334. I found Mr Lofthouse on Facebook after about fifteen minutes of searching. I sent Mr Lofthouse a Facebook message but he did not respond. I found his email on one of his Facebook posts after a few hours of searching on Facebook.
335. After finding Mr Lofthouse's email, which Gordonstoun informed me they did not have, I decided to email him to ask for an apology myself rather than doing it through Gordonstoun. I have provided the SCAI with a copy of '2022 Mr Lofthouse email conversation'.
336. As I have written my statement and read Mr Lofthouse's school reports, I came to realise just how profoundly he let me down. I have experienced the most incredible rage and sadness reading Mr Lofthouse's reports. There is something very important

to me as an adult representing and advocating for the young boy that I was and taking the time to write to Mr Lofthouse. I cannot change the past but I can stand up for the struggling and terrified boy that I was back then.

337. Asking for an apology from Mr Lofthouse was much more about me saying what I needed to say as opposed to getting the response I wanted from him. As I chose to email Mr Lofthouse myself, I acknowledge that I must accept responsibility for the emotional consequences of his responses. I was in a state of profound shock for about a week after reading Mr Lofthouse's first email response which I received much sooner than I expected after sending him my initial email.
338. The level of obfuscation and what felt like random responses and an overall defence of himself and his behaviour without addressing what I had said directly was shocking for me. To have Mr Lofthouse say that I was a delightful member of the house after what I had emailed him felt like the same gaslighting that I experienced from him at Gordonstoun and in his house reports.
339. Mr Lofthouse's second email where he apologises on behalf of himself and his wife Carol about the comment she made about my giving ██████████ as good as I got was appreciated and strange at the same time. Mr Lofthouse apologised for what his wife said and attempted to explain the reason for what she said. The apology felt rather like somebody who pushed a person off a cliff and then apologised for creasing their jacket. Whilst the apology itself was genuine, Mr Lofthouse avoided apologising for the main incidents that I shared with him.
340. Mr Lofthouse's third email descends into the territory of farce where he is questioning the facts of what I am saying. I could not have been clearer in my email about the incidents I was referring to, what happened and what was done.
341. This feels like more gaslighting and obfuscation by Mr Lofthouse of the highest order. I realised after reading all his emails that as a child at Gordonstoun I was not only up against bullies and a dangerous environment, I was also up against Mr Lofthouse. I



had absolutely no chance. In a way his non-apology and obfuscation are validating for me.

342. Mr Lofthouse's email responses are consistent with his school reports. The way he behaved towards me as a child feels pretty much the same now as a fifty-one year old man. It will take me some time to come to terms with the shock and upset of his responses. Nonetheless I am glad I had the courage to email him and do not regret doing so.
343. As enraging, shocking and deeply upsetting as Mr Lofthouse's email responses are, the positive thing is that as an adult I am clearly seeing his behaviour. Considering the tone of my emails and the seriousness of what I was communicating, his tone deaf responses, full of obfuscation, are an absolute disgrace.

### **A singing lesson**

344. At the start of July 2022 I attended a singing lesson. The lesson took place in a dance studio so there was a full length mirror on the wall. For the entire lesson of one hour, myself and the teacher both faced the mirror so she could see what I was doing.
345. I found it very challenging to look in the mirror during the session and closed my eyes quite a lot of the time, rather than look at myself. A few hours after the session I went into a state of complete shock. I returned home and experienced involuntary shaking of different parts of my body which happened even when I woke up that night. I experienced an internal feeling of unbelievably intense self-disgust and shame after looking at myself in the mirror.
346. I felt I looked fat and old and disgustingly and ugly. I have never been comfortable with looking at myself in the mirror or having my photo taken. I find it distressing. Afterwards I felt that I was such a disgusting creature that I felt surprised that anyone would ever talk to me or be my friend. The shell shock and feeling non-verbal along

with significant anxiety lasted throughout the next day along with fleeting suicidal ideation during the night.

347. I was not born feeling this way about my body, how I look and how I feel about myself. I have discussed whether I suffer from body dysmorphia with my therapist and as a psychotherapist he said that his job is not to diagnose conditions. However, he said that in 90% of sessions with him I talk about my body and how I am feeling about it into my sessions.
348. I believe these feelings about my body are related to the profound psychological damage done from years of unrelenting physical and emotional abuse at Gordonstoun.
349. My faulty trauma based narrative is that if I was hit and verbally abused so many times by others for so many years and nobody intervened then I must be a disgusting and unlovable person. These feelings and bodily trauma based responses make dating and intimate relationships a significant challenge to this day.

**2022 August impact of completing the writing the first draft of my Inquiry statement.**

350. I think that the email exchanges between me and Mr Lofthouse in the last two weeks of June 2022 caused a significant flare up of my acid reflux symptoms (GERD) over the subsequent two months. I was almost symptom free in early June. I was in a state of significant shock when I received Mr Lofthouse's various emails and for some time after. The absence of a specific apology from Mr Lofthouse, considering the gravity of what I said to him was profoundly upsetting.
351. It was incredibly frustrating to experience stomach pain, nausea and mental exhaustion again after being nearly symptom free. This worsening of my physical health also had a significant impact on my mental health. Feelings of being a failure at life and profound self-hatred at my body for failing me and not working properly caused a vicious downward spiral in my mental and physical health.

352. I have experienced intense feelings of thoughts of self-harm, particularly at night in bed where I have looping thoughts of wanting to stab myself all over my body repeatedly. I have also had suicidal ideation thoughts. These feelings of self-hatred feel similar to how I was unable to get angry or defend myself at Gordonstoun from being bullied by people in my own year group. It's a feeling and internal dialogue that my body let me down and this causes a vicious spiral of self-hatred.
353. I am grateful that I do not act out on these thoughts, but they are extremely distressing and the mental anguish undoubtedly makes my physical stomach symptoms worse. As mentioned previously I have multiple professionals who support me through therapy and differing health modalities. I am ashamed that at fifty-one years old I am still experiencing these feelings of wanting to self-harm.

### **Final thoughts**

354. I think it is fair to say that, whilst the education in many boarding schools might be exceptional, the fact that you're not in your home environment creates the potential for damage and a potential negative long-term impact on one's mental health. I believe that is particularly the case when a child first goes when they are younger. I knew some people who went to Gordonstoun from age sixteen and they loved it, but despite that, even if a boarding school has an exceptional record for its education, that education comes at a cost, even at a school that has no bullying.
355. Being supported at every step in creating a witness statement and having the acknowledgement of the SCAI is an amazing step in my process of healing and attempting to put my Gordonstoun experiences to rest.
356. I am very grateful that the Scottish government has created this abuse inquiry and included Scottish boarding schools. Another Scottish institution stepping in to support so many people is very poignant for me, because Gordonstoun is a Scottish institution that failed me.

357. For those in the Scottish government and all the people involved in the SCAI I am grateful beyond words. Setting up the Inquiry was a visionary, brave and bold action to take and will create a lasting legacy. Thank you to every single person who has been involved from the bottom of my heart.

358. In all my dealings with the SCAI I have been consistently impressed with both the absolute professionalism and empathy and care from every person I have dealt with. The Inquiry has forced Gordonstoun and other institutions to be accountable and has empowered victims of abuse.

**Other information**

359. 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.....IUH.....

Dated.....05 September 2022.....