

1 Tuesday, 8 January 2019

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. Welcome back and a good New Year
4 to everyone here.

5 We turn this morning, I think, to some oral
6 witnesses who are people who have worked with some of
7 the organisations we're interested in in this case
8 study; is that right?

9 MR PEOPLES: Yes. Good morning, my Lady. There is one
10 witness set down for today and that is John Rea and
11 I propose to call him next.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 JOHN REA (sworn)

14 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable,
15 Mr Rea.

16 We need you to use that microphone: it'll help you
17 to speak and help you to be heard by everyone, including
18 the stenographers who have to hear you through the sound
19 system.

20 Are you happy if we use your first name?

21 A. Yes, indeed.

22 LADY SMITH: John, I'll hand over to Mr Peoples and he will
23 explain what happens next.

24 Questions from MR PEOPLES

25 MR PEOPLES: Good morning, John.

1 A. Good morning, Jim.

2 Q. Today we're going to ask you some questions, both about
3 your time in a senior capacity with Barnardo's and also
4 a period that you had in a senior role in Quarriers.

5 You have in front of you, John, a red folder and
6 you'll find within that folder a copy of a statement
7 that you have provided to the inquiry. That folder and
8 that statement is for your use today and you can refer
9 to it at any point if it assists you in giving evidence.

10 Your statement and any other document that might be
11 referred to will come up on a screen in front of you as
12 well, so you're also free to use that if it is more
13 convenient. Before I begin, can I, just for the benefit
14 of the transcript, give the number which we have given
15 to your statement: it is WIT.003.001.8100. That's the
16 number on the top right-hand side of the page on the
17 first page of your statement. You don't need to worry
18 too much about that, but it helps us to refer -- to
19 identify parts of your statement that are being
20 discussed.

21 Can I ask you to begin by opening the folder and
22 going to the final page, which is page 8108 of our
23 reference, page 9 of your statement. Can you confirm
24 that you have signed your statement on that page?

25 A. I have.

1 Q. Can you confirm that you have no objection to your
2 witness statement being published as part of the
3 evidence to this inquiry and that you believe the facts
4 stated in your statement are true?

5 A. I have no objection and I believe them to be true as far
6 as I could remember.

7 Q. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Perhaps I should assure you, John, that I do
9 appreciate that we're asking you to cast your mind back
10 a long way and I fully understand that with the busy
11 professional life you have had, it'll not have been an
12 easy task to try and remember details, so please don't
13 worry about that.

14 A. Thank you.

15 MR PEOPLES: If I do ask you a question and you feel you
16 can't remember or it's not something you can provide an
17 answer to, just please say so.

18 Can I begin by looking at the first page of your
19 statement, John, and ask you to confirm that you were
20 born in the year 1944?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. On that page you give us some information about your
23 professional qualifications and employment history,
24 including the fact that you, in the 1960s, obtained a BA
25 in social studies from Durham University.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Thereafter, I think you tell us you were employed in
3 various posts before taking up the role of Divisional
4 Director of Childcare in Scotland with Barnardo's;
5 is that correct?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. I think that those roles included roles as a teacher and
8 housemaster in an approved school in County Durham;
9 is that right?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And that after working there -- I think it's Aycliffe
12 Approved School -- you took a further qualification,
13 a diploma in applied social studies and a certificate of
14 qualification in social work, which you obtained from
15 Newcastle University when you were on secondment from
16 Newcastle Social Services; is that correct?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. So you had some experience both in an approved school
19 setting and a local authority social work setting before
20 you took up your role as divisional director of
21 childcare with Barnardo's; is that correct?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. You took up that role as divisional director in the year
24 1976 and you continued in that role, as your statement
25 reveals, until 1991; is that right?

- 1 A. In that role until probably October or November 1990.
- 2 Q. Right.
- 3 A. I spent the last three months doing something different
4 in Barnardo's.
- 5 Q. Okay. But for around about 15 years you were the person
6 in charge of the Barnardo's childcare operations in
7 Scotland --
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. -- in effect?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. During that period, as I think you tell us, you also
12 obtained a further qualification, an MSc in applied
13 social science, at Stirling University; is that correct?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. I'm not going to ask you about the next matter at this
16 stage, but I will come back to it, that you had a short
17 period between about 1991 and 1993 working as director
18 general for Quarriers.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. I'll maybe come back to you and ask you a bit more about
21 that in due course.
- 22 You then tell us about various roles you've
23 undertaken since 1993 in various capacities, and other
24 appointments that you have had during your professional
25 life.

1 Can I just maybe in terms of the appointments -- on
2 page 8101, which is page 2 of your statement, you tell
3 us that you were a founding chairman of Edinburgh
4 Stopover and you held that post or role between 1981 and
5 1985. Can you help me what that involved, that
6 organisation?

7 A. It was a hostel, a short-term hostel, for young people
8 who had become homeless or who were coming out of care
9 and were not yet able to fully stand on their own feet
10 and manage in the open community, so to speak. It was
11 working with them prior to them moving on to
12 independence in one form or another. But often
13 a typical stay was something of six to 12 weeks,
14 something like that.

15 Q. Would the young people who were provided with these
16 facilities, were they a certain age group?

17 A. They were young adults.

18 Q. Were they principally people who had been in the care
19 system or at least a significant number had been in the
20 care system, or not?

21 A. Yes, I think certainly -- I can't remember a percentage,
22 for example, to be helpful. Yes, some of them would
23 have been in the care system and were not fully ready
24 to -- or maybe had been helped to become independent,
25 but it hadn't worked out. So it was a sort of safety

1 net and a bridging facility that didn't exist at the
2 time.

3 Q. That appointment that you had at that time, that was
4 something, was it, separate from your responsibilities
5 as divisional director?

6 A. Absolutely. It was a voluntary thing that I did with
7 the organisation's agreement.

8 Q. You also tell us --

9 LADY SMITH: Sorry, John that's interesting that you say you
10 took these -- Stopover took these young people for six
11 to 12 weeks and that seems to imply that there was
12 somewhere else for them to go at the end of that six to
13 12 weeks. How was that being achieved? Can you
14 remember?

15 A. Well, it was taking young people at a time of crisis for
16 the individual and it was really becoming a supportive
17 broker for them to look at what sort of next, rather
18 more permanent facility or service or help might be most
19 appropriate to them as an individual, and brokering that
20 on their behalf.

21 MR PEOPLES: So essentially was it a form of support service
22 and also a signposting service to a degree, if it was
23 a short-term placement?

24 A. Signposting -- it was a resource-seeking related to an
25 individual's needs and potential and so on.

1 LADY SMITH: What happened to Stopover?

2 A. I don't know the answer to that. It was certainly alive
3 and kicking when I left it and when I finished my active
4 childcare career in Scotland. I don't know that, sorry.

5 LADY SMITH: No, don't worry. Maybe it's my fault,
6 I haven't heard of it. Maybe it's still quietly working
7 away, which sounds as though it would be a very good
8 thing. We can find out.

9 A. I would struggle to believe that the need for it has
10 disappeared.

11 LADY SMITH: It won't have done.

12 A. No.

13 MR PEOPLES: Can I ask about another body that you were
14 a founding member of -- it's Children in Scotland --
15 between 1982 and 1987. Can you tell us a little bit
16 about that, what that body was designed to do?

17 A. I had been previously involved in the Scottish
18 Association of Voluntary Childcare Organisations. It
19 probably grew out of that sort of thing, looking at
20 a wider remit than SAVCO, as it was then known, which
21 focused mainly on residential childcare for children,
22 and it was looking at the whole fairly new, in some
23 senses, advocacy field that was needed for children.
24 And it was an exciting initiative, partly because we had
25 Lord Mackay of Clashfern as chair and we had

1 Bronwen Cohen as our first -- I forget what her title
2 was but the equivalent of chief executive.

3 It got off the ground in quite a healthy manner and
4 it was interesting because it covered the -- it tried to
5 cover the whole range of the sort of issues and needs
6 that impinge on a child or a young adult's life from
7 legal, housing, education, social work, and so on. So
8 it was a rather different sort of umbrella organisation.

9 Q. So it was really set up for children in Scotland
10 generally rather than children that had been in a care
11 system?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Whereas the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations,
14 which you were a committee member of, was more
15 specifically concerned with children who had been in
16 a care environment; is that right?

17 A. Yes. More specifically concerned with the organisations
18 who were providing residential childcare is my
19 recollection.

20 Q. The setting up of the Children in Scotland body, was
21 that in some way a development that was recognising the
22 need for children to have an effective voice and forum
23 that would represent their interests?

24 A. Yes. It started with the children rather than the
25 organisations, if I put it that way.

1 Q. You tell us about some other committees you were
2 involved in apart from the Scottish Council of Voluntary
3 Organisations. That council, by the way, was that
4 something that a number of the major providers would
5 have been members of? Would there have been
6 representatives from Barnardo's, Quarriers --

7 A. Children in Scotland?

8 Q. Sorry, the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations,
9 were there members on that council --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- who were from, for example, Quarriers, Barnardo's --

12 A. Aberlour, yes. National Children's Homes, Save the
13 Children.

14 Q. And what was the purpose in broad terms, in simple
15 terms, of the council? What was its general function
16 and role?

17 A. It looked at ... If you think about two major players,
18 one the local authority, one the voluntary sector, it
19 was a means of the voluntary sector providers sharing
20 information, sharing experience and ideas. Sometimes
21 reflecting on their experience with local authorities in
22 general and sometimes a local authority in particular,
23 both good and bad from their perception.

24 Q. Did it represent organisations in any dealings with
25 local authorities or was it more a discussion body?

1 A. It was more a discussion body, I think, rather than
2 a representative body. It would be represented at
3 probably something like the annual Directors of
4 Social Work Conference or something like that, but so
5 would the major providers, voluntary sector providers,
6 like the ones you have just mentioned.

7 Q. Would the Association of Directors of Social Work have
8 been a kind of equivalent local authority forum to the
9 Scottish Council?

10 A. I don't think they would have regarded themselves
11 in that position at all.

12 Q. No. How, though, did that association fit with the
13 local authorities themselves and the directors in their
14 individual authorities? Did it have any additional
15 powers and responsibilities or authority to determine
16 policy or practice or anything of that nature?

17 A. I don't have a recollection of any agreed role like that
18 or positive outcome being achieved.

19 LADY SMITH: It would be surprising if a body like that
20 could be vested with such powers, wouldn't it?

21 A. Yes.

22 MR PEOPLES: So was it more to some extent representative of
23 the interests of Directors of Social Work and a forum
24 again for them to discuss areas of mutual concern and
25 interest?

- 1 A. Again, I can't remember them taking the initiative to
2 discuss with SAVCO an issue. It was more left to them
3 to broach a matter with an individual voluntary agency.
- 4 Q. So if there was an issue to be discussed between a local
5 authority and a voluntary provider --
- 6 A. That would be a head-to-head thing.
- 7 Q. And if there were any policy issues concerns, such as if
8 in the days of the big regions, a region wanted to adopt
9 a decision or adopt a policy that would affect the
10 voluntary providers that they dealt with, that would be
11 a direct negotiation and discussion if there were
12 matters of that kind in issue?
- 13 A. Or emerge as a fait accompli.
- 14 Q. I think I know what you're saying. To some extent local
15 authorities would have the power to make decisions
16 about, for example, children that they had
17 responsibility for --
- 18 A. Absolutely.
- 19 Q. -- and those could have a serious impact on
20 organisations such as Barnardo's or Quarriers depending
21 on what that policy decision was?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Because I think we've heard other evidence -- and you
24 may not be aware of this -- that, certainly in the
25 1970s, Strathclyde Region took certain policy positions

1 on the use of large-scale residential establishments
2 such as Quarriers, for example, and took a policy
3 decision that they would in general terms not wish to
4 use them, save in limited circumstances. I don't know
5 if you were aware of that.

6 A. I was very aware of that. If I can just make a comment
7 about the Quarriers situation in case I forget it when
8 we get to the Quarriers bit.

9 Q. By all means.

10 A. When I went to Quarriers, one of the major challenges
11 was a financial one because they effectively had sold
12 the family -- all the family silver by that time and the
13 local authority was effectively determining how they
14 spent their voluntary income by the ... How can I best
15 put this? By not being prepared to pay the rate for the
16 job of children and adults who were in the care of
17 Quarriers from that authority.

18 So for Quarriers, looking after those children -- or
19 adults in places like the National Epilepsy Centre, for
20 example -- they were having to pay a considerable top-up
21 per person to look after a Strathclyde child. And that
22 left no spare funding to develop or add on specific
23 voluntary organisation elements to the care that was
24 provided.

25 Q. And I think by the stage that Strathclyde was

1 established, in 1975 or thereabouts, under local
2 government reorganisation, the vast majority of children
3 in the care of voluntary providers would have been
4 placed by local authorities; would that have been the
5 situation by the 1970s?

6 A. I can speak from 1976 onwards: all of them were the
7 primary responsibility of a local authority.

8 Q. That would be the general picture, would it --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- that the voluntary providers, their main clients
11 would be local authorities who were placing children in
12 their care and expecting them to deliver the day-to-day
13 care of those children?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And I think we do know -- and again maybe it's something
16 we can come back to if necessary -- that by the 1970s
17 the mainstream thinking, perhaps, in this area of
18 childcare provision was favouring a move towards foster
19 care and adoption. Indeed, Strathclyde was quite
20 prominent, was it not, in trying to take children out of
21 residential units, however large or however small, and
22 place them in either foster homes or back in their own
23 communities?

24 A. That was certainly the trend.

25 Q. And that would have had an obvious impact on care

- 1 providers who were providing residential care?
- 2 A. Yes. Barnardo's was also very much in the vanguard of
3 that sort of move as well and placing the most
4 hard-to-place children at that time in substitute family
5 care.
- 6 Q. I think just again on this historical context in which
7 things were happening, we've heard some evidence -- and
8 I think Barnardo's perhaps were developing this maybe
9 sooner than some of the other providers -- at least
10 maybe in Quarriers' case at least, that there was
11 a movement from, in the 1960s, smaller group homes
12 rather than large residential homes such as
13 Quarrier's Village or big establishments like
14 Aberlour Orphanage?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. These were out of fashion or going out of fashion in the
17 1960s and there were moves away from those; is that
18 correct?
- 19 A. They were both out of fashion, I think that's a good
20 reflective description, but also they were not the most
21 appropriate for the nature, the broad nature, of young
22 children and young people who were then being referred
23 to the specialist voluntary organisations, childcare
24 organisations.
- 25 Q. Yes. Can you help me on this? Obviously there may have

1 been a policy shift away from residential care in
2 general, particularly in the era of Strathclyde Region,
3 but was there also some recognition, some form of
4 recognition, that children who were being placed in
5 residential care were a particular group with special or
6 complex needs or behavioural difficulties or emotional
7 difficulties rather than simply children who were living
8 away from home for one reason or another? There was
9 more of a recognition that they had particular complex
10 issues that required particular specialist services to
11 cope with?

12 A. There was that dimension to it, but there was also the
13 emerging recognition that quite a proportion of children
14 who found themselves in residential care were there all
15 too easily, if I put it that way. They were there
16 almost by default of something more appropriate being
17 available or thought about.

18 Q. Perhaps historically, once they were in the system they
19 didn't get out again, whereas there was maybe more
20 thought about reviewing it and deciding whether they
21 could go to some --

22 A. For sure.

23 Q. -- either back to their own community or in some other
24 placement that suited their particular needs?

25 A. Yes. That's true, but it's also very much true, for

1 example, in -- if I can just point to two allied fields:
2 one, physical handicap, youngsters with physical
3 handicap having to go away to a residential school when
4 there was a viable family and it was to do with
5 a nervousness or whatever on behalf of the local
6 schooling being able to integrate youngsters who
7 otherwise might be of absolutely normal range of
8 intelligence.

9 It was true as well in some of the long stay mental
10 handicap hospitals throughout Scotland, where there were
11 young children who were placed in hospital settings
12 almost in an out of sight, out of mind approach, or
13 sometimes put out on some of the Hebridean islands or
14 something like that to grow up and have their future
15 there.

16 Q. And I think maybe this is -- I think we might hear some
17 evidence from other witnesses, but one of the things,
18 I think, that Barnardo's did during your stewardship, if
19 I'm correct, and you'll correct me if I'm wrong, was to
20 set up the Fred Martin project.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. I take it that's something you can recall, at least in
23 general terms. My understanding is -- and I think we'll
24 hear some evidence about this from one of your former
25 colleagues, Hugh Mackintosh -- that that was a project

1 which was established during his time and your time,
2 which would take long-stay residents of hostels, such as
3 Glennis(?) Castle, and place them in more of a community
4 setting --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- through this project? That's one example of a change
7 of thinking?

8 A. Yes. That was one example in Strathclyde. There was an
9 example here in Lothian Region at Ravelrig at Balerno,
10 and there was an example of it in Dundee on Tayside as
11 well.

12 It was trying to -- frankly, it was a cupful in the
13 ocean of what could and should happen because there were
14 remarkable changes in youngsters' activity and abilities
15 just by a change of environment from a long-stay
16 hospital setting to a smaller community-based situation.

17 And also, we were trying to demonstrate that with
18 support to families at home through community-based
19 family support teams in places like Bathgate and Dundee
20 and so on that families could be helped to be really
21 positively committed and happy about continuing to look
22 after their own child rather than see that child go by
23 default into care, whether it's hospital or community
24 care.

25 Q. And I think perhaps today -- and I know you haven't been

1 associated with Barnardo's for some time now, but
2 I think today a lot of their services are designed as
3 support services for children who remain in their own
4 homes and projects of that type, rather than services
5 which involve the provision of residential childcare.
6 I think we'll probably learn that there are actually
7 very few residential units in Scotland now that are run
8 by Barnardo's and they're fairly small, specialised
9 units. Is that your understanding?

10 A. Yes, absolutely. The families are the best resource
11 there is for a child growing up. It's the normal
12 resource for a child growing up and it's one where
13 there's a long-term mutual commitment, if you like, and
14 advantage, rather than an episode in a child's life.

15 Q. Just following through some of these changes over your
16 professional life, at one point there was perhaps
17 a preference, so far as residential care was concerned,
18 for small group homes scattered across the country
19 nearer communities than the large, traditional homes
20 such as Aberlour or Quarriers, which were in more rural
21 locations. That was a fashion for a time: I think it
22 perhaps started maybe in the late 1950s, early 1960s,
23 and to some extent fell out of fashion maybe by the
24 1990s, by the time you were completing your stewardship
25 of Barnardo's. Would that be a general period in which

- 1 the group homes concept was maybe at its height?
- 2 A. I think if you look at it as a series of stepping stones
3 from the village concept with all the sort of in-built
4 options and so on there to a family group home, smaller
5 setting. But if I just go back to what was then known
6 as the mental handicap model, bringing youngsters out of
7 long stay mental handicap hospitals into -- how can
8 I describe it? -- a mothership unit like Ravelrig, for
9 example, where within one large rambling old house there
10 were four purpose-built adapted units that would have,
11 maybe, five, six youngsters in each. So you still have
12 20, 24 youngsters in the overall setting. But the step
13 from that was to look at natural pairings that
14 occurred -- and I don't mean opposite gender pairings,
15 but look at natural pairings and potential for
16 independence that could be further developed by taking
17 an ordinary council house in an ordinary street in
18 somewhere that was a satellite unit to Ravelrig and,
19 with support, establishing a couple or sometimes three
20 youngsters in that sort of setting.
- 21 Q. A sort of supported independent living type unit?
- 22 A. Yes. And also, the other development, which was
23 exciting -- well, there were two other developments.
24 Another development, which was exciting, was helping
25 those individual youngsters who had the potential to be

1 placed in a family, a substitute family, or return to
2 their own family with support, maybe a natural family
3 that had seen them go into a long-stay hospital setting
4 or a -- a decade before or something. It was really
5 quite an interesting but important option to explore
6 that, and some good results achieved. Not everyone,
7 but ...

8 Q. At the time were the -- the group homes concept, was
9 that seen as a temporary staging post to what you have
10 just described as the ideal or was it simply -- it has
11 now to some extent -- childcare provision has moved on
12 from group homes? I think our understanding is that
13 there are a lot less of them these days than they were.

14 A. I think it was part of an evolution of what was
15 happening in residential childcare.

16 Q. But there do exist today small units around the country
17 in Scotland that cater for very specialist complex
18 needs, but they may offer particular specialist services
19 on a residential basis?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is that a recognition that ultimately, however much you
22 might think that the family home is the best regardless
23 of the circumstances, there is a need for residential
24 care provision for some children?

25 A. I think it's a recognition that not all children and

1 their needs can be dealt with in a one model approach
2 once they've left their natural family, for whatever
3 reason, and that for some children with special needs,
4 the level and the quality of staffing and other
5 resourcing that's needed are, in our current economic
6 climate, maybe only available and provided in
7 a specialist unit.

8 Q. Looking also -- you talked about -- there was a time
9 when Barnardo's was involved in the provision of special
10 residential schools. Indeed, I think Quarriers, as
11 we've heard, established such a school in 1978 at
12 Southannan, which became Seafield School.

13 A. Mm-hm.

14 Q. But over time -- and I think your statement perhaps
15 refers to this -- these special schools were closed. So
16 at one point they were seen as an answer for children
17 with emotional and behavioural problems. They were
18 described, I think, historically as maladjusted.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. There was a time when that was the terminology used?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And children were taken from their community to these
23 schools, such as Thorntoun. I think Craigerne was
24 another example and Southannan would be an example
25 in the case of Quarriers or Seafield.

- 1 A. Mm-hm.
- 2 Q. Therefore, they were established for a particular
3 purpose. But why did these schools eventually close?
4 Because you were involved in a programme of closure.
- 5 A. I was, very actively. Local authorities' own services
6 were evolving too. if we talk particularly about their
7 normal day education services for children, it became --
8 you used the word -- the fashion to try and integrate
9 youngsters with various sorts of difficulties into
10 mainstream day education. And Barnardo's worked quite
11 hard in relation to the children that it was caring for
12 in these residential school situations to try, on an
13 individual basis, to support the return of or the entry,
14 re-entry of individual youngsters back into day
15 schooling, normal day schooling, by supporting the
16 school and staff and almost providing a call-out service
17 in the event of operational difficulties thereafter.
- 18 Q. Is this something that's described as sort of
19 a principle of inclusion, that you have children with
20 particular needs who should be accommodated in the
21 general educational system, albeit they will require
22 special needs support and so forth? Is that essentially
23 what this did, this was the thinking behind it, that you
24 don't put them in a specialist school away from other
25 children, you put them in the same school but you simply

1 provide additional support that is required?

2 A. Well, I have to agree with your choice of words because
3 they came to Barnardo's through a process of exclusion
4 because in a number of instances they had been excluded
5 from a number of schools and there was nowhere left that
6 would give them a chance, sort of thing. Not only was
7 there the chance to reintegrate some of them, some of
8 them easier than others for sure, but in Central Region,
9 for example, we set up an alternative education project,
10 where these youngsters, a group of these youngsters who
11 were being excluded, serially excluded from ordinary
12 school provision, came to a day unit where there were
13 maybe a dozen of them, and were worked with and educated
14 in that day setting, but at the same time there was work
15 going on from that day unit's staff with the excluding
16 school staff to help gently reintegrate them back into
17 that day school setting with support.

18 So if you like, that's trying to turn the tide, if
19 you like, on that sort of group of youngsters. These
20 were mainly demonstration projects. As I said earlier,
21 it was a drop in the ocean.

22 Q. One of the things you were involved in in your time as
23 divisional director was strategically establishing
24 projects that would perhaps be innovative and look at
25 different ways and look at different ways to provide for

1 children with complex needs and perhaps take them away
2 from the traditional form of residential care or even
3 the group home setting; is that part of what the
4 strategy was in your time?

5 A. Very much so. If I go back to 1991, when I joined
6 Barnardo's, one of my --

7 Q. 1976.

8 A. Sorry, I beg your pardon. 1991 was when I left,
9 thank you.

10 When I joined in 1976, a major attraction, not
11 without some trepidation, was coming from a local
12 authority where I'd been part of a working party looking
13 at the future of some of the youngsters in residential
14 care who really shouldn't have been there and should
15 have been easy to place in substitute families, and
16 things like that.

17 But the local authority -- Newcastle at that time
18 had the highest proportion of children in care of any
19 authority in England. It was overwhelmed with it, with
20 that challenge, shall we say. And coming to Barnardo's
21 offered the opportunity to put some of those
22 recognitions and those ideas into practice. For
23 example, some of the best thinking, again going back to
24 the children with what was then known as mental handicap
25 issues and community-based services for them, some of

1 the best thinking was coming from America and Holland
2 and being able to take those ideas and think about how
3 they could be adapted to get ahead of the game in
4 Scotland in terms of establishing another stepping stone
5 or something of a service and demonstrate it was
6 a real -- it was a challenge but it was also a big
7 privilege.

8 Q. Could I just ask you this also: historically, the
9 large-scale residential establishments such as Aberlour,
10 for example, or Quarriers, my impression from what we've
11 heard of some of the evidence is that historically they
12 would simply be general residential childcare provision
13 without recognising that within the group that they were
14 admitting there were children that had particular needs
15 or special needs or particular difficulties that would
16 be best catered for by some form of specialist
17 provision. When latterly, in your time, were the
18 children that were in care -- did they tend to be
19 more the children in the specialist group than simply
20 children who their parents had separated, historically
21 may have separated, and the father was a breadwinner and
22 so the children were put into care unless the father
23 remarried or if he was widowed or the mother had TB or
24 something? We've heard background stories and accounts
25 of that nature that resulted in children being in care,

1 not because they had any particular circumstances other
2 than the loss of a parent for one reason or another,
3 they were put in care, but there must have been a lot of
4 children who did have emotional and behavioural
5 difficulties and that's why they were taken into care,
6 but was there any recognition of the distinction between
7 the two types historically? Is that something you can
8 comment on?

9 A. If I make my comments specifically to the Barnardo's
10 situation to start, because I could answer it from
11 a number of angles. Barnardo's had its own large
12 children's villages in the past, but they had largely --
13 they had finished by the time I joined the organisation
14 in 1976.

15 It was certainly not the case in Scotland -- I mean,
16 if I remember the sort of hallmarks of Barnardo's in
17 Scotland when I joined it, leaving out one or two
18 one-offs like a residential school for physically
19 handicapped or whatever, it was mainly noted for working
20 with maladjusted children and their families and that
21 being a combination of specialist residential units of
22 varying sizes with Barnardo's family social workers
23 attached so that you could take a rather more holistic
24 approach to a youngster in his or her own right, but
25 also looking at whether there was a viable family or

1 a family that could be helped to be viable or not and
2 working ahead with that as part of a treatment plan for
3 an individual youngster.

4 On a wider front, that sort of reliance on large
5 institutions, including the village concept, was
6 possibly later in happening, and the local authority was
7 tending to take the shallower end of the bath in terms
8 of children in residential care, and it was only when
9 that population evolved that voluntary organisations
10 were being increasingly asked to take on some of the
11 more difficult youngsters and either had to shape up to
12 do that or vacate the pitch.

13 Q. Were some of the more difficult youngsters, as you put
14 it, the ones being left in the system, but then people
15 like Barnardo's or organisations were providing services
16 that would cater for those children because to some
17 extent the local authority didn't have that provision
18 and found these services of some value to them?

19 A. Judging by the level of referrals that were made to
20 Barnardo's, that would probably be true.

21 Q. What about the other providers? You've said that there
22 would be these specialist services catering for the
23 maladjusted child that, to some extent, Barnardo's was
24 operating both before your time, I think, and during
25 your time. But what was the situation with other

1 providers? Are you able to say whether they were as
2 focused or as specialist as Barnardo's or were they
3 playing catch-up?

4 (Pause)

5 You may not feel able to comment, but if you can --

6 A. I'm thinking -- because don't forget I was quite new on
7 the pitch at that time in Scotland and in Barnardo's.
8 I also quite quickly got to know the heads of three or
9 four other major voluntary sector residential care
10 providers for children in Scotland and I think it's fair
11 to say that there was a difference between getting ahead
12 of the tide that was coming your way, or even
13 recognising the change that was happening, or feeling
14 that you'd done a cracking job in the past and --

15 Q. Why change?

16 A. Why change, thank you, yes. And without attributing
17 that to specific organisations, I think I was conscious
18 that, again, it was -- Barnardo's had chosen to try and
19 contribute to the development of good childcare practice
20 in Scotland through things that were sometimes
21 pioneering and not without their risk. There was no
22 guarantee.

23 Q. I think it was said by one witness, Mr Robinson,
24 Phil Robinson, who you'll know quite well, that when he
25 joined Quarriers, for example, that he felt that at

1 least some of those that had been in charge before, who
2 knew the large-scale traditional concept, found it
3 difficult to believe that they no longer had a place in
4 childcare provision and indeed were, as he put it at one
5 point, burying their head in the sand and they couldn't
6 recognise that those days were gone and wouldn't be
7 coming back and they almost thought that, well, they'll
8 come back into fashion so let's stick with what we have.

9 Now, I don't know whether that sense came across to
10 you in your early days in Scotland and thereafter or
11 not. Did it?

12 A. Very much so. It wasn't just former members of staff
13 who had been part of a concept that had started in the
14 Victorian era and had had a long and, for them, happy
15 life. It was very much there in the Quarriers -- not
16 all, but the majority of trustees of Quarriers as well
17 on the Quarriers council, which was part of the
18 challenge that I inherited to try and ... Because
19 coming in as somebody who was expected to sprinkle magic
20 dust and make it all better, sort of thing, when you
21 knew that in some respects the only way to have a future
22 involved some really quite painful surgery and radical
23 pruning and change and so on, it was very difficult as
24 a chief executive to be able to make a great deal of
25 progress, if any, on that if you didn't have -- have

1 a board of trustees, whether they trusted you or not,
2 who were fighting against that because they thought: it
3 was grand here 10 minutes ago, what's this, what's the
4 heck's happening?

5 LADY SMITH: John, a few minutes ago, when you were talking
6 about part of Barnardo's work with what were then called
7 maladjusted children being to look at whether or not
8 there was a viable family that the child could be helped
9 to reengage with, you referred to working with that as
10 part of a treatment plan. Were you referring to
11 Barnardo's devising its own individual plans for
12 children or are we talking about the sort of care plan,
13 for example, that we became familiar with as an aspect
14 of Children's Hearing work for children? Do you see
15 what I mean, the concept of a specific plan per child?
16 Is this something Barnardo's did off their own bat?

17 A. The local authority, in referring a child to Barnardo's,
18 let's say a child with maladjustment, would often refer
19 the whole situation to Barnardo's, not just for
20 residential childcare but because there was the
21 potential to do any recuperative or restorative family
22 work as well because there were either one or two family
23 social workers, Barnardo's family social workers
24 attached to the residential setting.

25 So let's say every six months if there was a sort of

1 normal case review or review of the treatment plan or
2 whatever it was called --

3 LADY SMITH: So that would be a review between Barnardo's
4 and the local authority?

5 A. Yes, but it would mean the involvement of a local
6 authority social worker or senior social worker as them
7 fulfilling their primary responsibility but without --
8 how can I put this? -- having to be guided by
9 a childcare staff and family social worker who knew
10 intimately and could present a very reasonable case or
11 picture of progress being made by a child, the
12 up-to-date situation with the family if anything had
13 changed there, and what they were proposing as the next
14 steps in helping a child develop their talents or grow
15 or move or whatever.

16 So it wasn't a rubber-stamping, but it was an
17 involvement that was the primary partner not being
18 in the strongest position so that the treatment plans
19 were largely shaped by the Barnardo's end of the
20 partnership.

21 LADY SMITH: That would make sense because they were the
22 ones that were directly involved with the child on
23 a day-to-day basis.

24 A. It would make sense and I think as long as there was
25 trust in the professional competence of the caring agent

1 from the local authority, that was not interfered with
2 or countermanded, or whatever the right phrase is.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you. That's very helpful.

4 Apart from anything else you seem to be describing
5 a situation where the local authority social worker
6 wasn't marching in and just directing Barnardo's what
7 they had to do, but there was good professional
8 interaction. Is that what you're trying to explain?

9 A. Certainly I would readily agree to the first part of
10 what you've just said. Also involved in these
11 six-monthly case reviews would be the local teacher for
12 the child from their class. If there was a local
13 authority psychologist or sometimes a psychiatrist
14 involved from the health side of things, they would be
15 involved there, or at the very least if it wasn't
16 a critical situation, there would be a report from them
17 which would be shared at the meeting.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you, that's very helpful.

19 Mr Peoples.

20 MR PEOPLES: Can I just be clear about something? We talk
21 about large-scale residential provision and we've
22 discussed this morning very large scale, such as
23 Aberlour Orphanage would be an example,
24 Quarrier's Village would be an example, then we've also
25 discussed group homes, which would be large buildings

1 with a significant number of children, but not on the
2 same scale as the orphanage or as Quarrier's Village,
3 because we've heard of the numbers historically that
4 were accommodated there.

5 So far as Barnardo's was concerned, and looking
6 purely at the Scottish position, my understanding
7 is that they really came to Scotland during the war and
8 they had their evacuation centres, which were catering
9 for children who were brought from south of the border.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then, subsequent to the war, some of these places
12 and others were established, but albeit on a much
13 smaller scale than places like the orphanage and
14 Quarrier's Village for housing children and were used as
15 children's homes or perhaps subsequently residential
16 schools.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Would that be a distinction between the models, the
19 Barnardo's model, even with group homes, was never on
20 the same scale in Scotland as, say, the orphanage at
21 Aberlour or the village at Bridge of Weir? There was
22 never anything equivalent in Scotland, was there?
23 Can you tell me if there was?

24 A. There was never anything equivalent in Scotland, and if
25 I can speak with the authority of somebody who was 2

1 at the time when that process started in Scotland,
2 that's broadly my understanding of how it came to be.

3 Q. But there was an equivalent in England because I think
4 we heard from other evidence, probably Mr Robinson, but
5 I could stand corrected on that, that in England
6 Barnardo's ran what might be called a village concept at
7 a place called Barkingside.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. But at some point there was a recognition that perhaps
10 that model was past its sell by date and that
11 Barkingside changed its approach to become a different
12 model, which was taking in different activities,
13 different employments, moving away from a lot of
14 children in one place. Was that what Barkingside did,
15 they changed its concept?

16 A. That process of dismantling the village, as it
17 originally was, was already very well underway, if not
18 probably two thirds through when I joined Barnardo's in
19 1976. Although I don't have detailed knowledge, I know
20 there was the sort of idea about helping dissipate the
21 village, which was in a heavy urban area, so that the
22 community could come into the village as well as there
23 being some specialist needs catered for in units that
24 then were part of the wider community but were the
25 original building, one or two of the original

1 buildings --

2 Q. To some extent did Quarrier's Village, by the time that
3 Mr Robinson and yourself became involved, was it moving
4 towards a not dissimilar model to Barkingside, to sell
5 off properties, create other activity and industry and
6 employment in the village itself to make it more broadly
7 based, less closed, in terms of being a community for
8 simply children in a closed environment? Was that
9 modelled to some extent on the Barkingside approach?

10 A. I think that had probably well started to happen in the
11 1980s, judging by the fact that -- I'm trying to think
12 back. I think there were only two of the former family
13 group home units on the site which were probably still
14 being used for childcare purposes.

15 Q. I think Mr Robinson said when he joined in 1992 or
16 thereabouts -- when he joined Quarriers there were only
17 two cottages operational for childcare services, and
18 quite specialist provision by that stage under special
19 arrangements with the local authority.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. That's your understanding too?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Can I also ask you this: there was a move away or
24 a movement against large scale residential provision.
25 I think Mr Robinson rather vividly described it as that

1 by the 1980s, or late 1980s, large-scale residential
2 provision was seen as toxic, I think one was word he
3 used. Whether that's a proper description or not, the
4 fact is that there was a movement away from that type of
5 provision and therefore organisations had to change or
6 perhaps go out of business, as it were, and Quarriers
7 did change and Barnardo's, I think you've told us, had
8 changed before then in some respects to recognise that
9 trend.

10 Can I ask you this, though: this change in thinking
11 about the merits of large-scale residential provision,
12 was that in any way influenced by some view that
13 children were safer or more protected in a smaller group
14 home setting than in a large residential institution?
15 Can you think whether that was in any way part of the
16 underlying thinking or do you think that wasn't
17 addressed or considered?

18 A. I don't know that I can answer that. I could make some
19 assumptions but I don't know if they've got any validity
20 whatsoever.

21 Q. I'd welcome your thoughts.

22 A. I'm trying to -- if you remember, I came through
23 Newcastle, which already was built to family group homes
24 and had a lot of them and they were spreading youngsters
25 all round the north-east and even down into North Wales

1 at that time, just because of the sheer volume of
2 children who were in care. I came to Barnardo's because
3 it was contributing to the development of childcare, not
4 just -- I saw it was really interested in a pioneering
5 role, being a privilege that could be available to
6 a voluntary organisation if it earned it. And that
7 prospect I found exciting, particularly because I'd
8 finished up with some fairly rudimentary ideas based on
9 my Newcastle experience, but without the chance, the
10 encouragement or support to put them into practice.

11 I remember something as simple as trying to get the
12 Social Services Department to look at rather more
13 hard-to-place children than were currently the blue-eyed
14 4-year-old, et cetera, et cetera children.

15 LADY SMITH: When you say "privilege", are you talking about
16 the privilege that a voluntary organisation has to
17 formulate its own policy and drive it in a way that, if
18 you're working for a local authority, those same
19 freedoms may not be there?

20 A. Very much so. It's there in potential for any voluntary
21 organisation to decide what its role and contribution is
22 going to be, limited by all sorts of factors, not least
23 available funding, its own available funding. It's not
24 just a handmaiden of a local authority to be used as
25 part of a ... I don't know.

1 I think a voluntary organisation and ones that are
2 set up can spot or can decide for themselves that there
3 is an issue or a need to be tackled that's an
4 outstanding one, either at the time or in a particular
5 area or whatever, and to address the challenge of that
6 challenge and garner the sort of funding and expertise
7 and resourcing that it needs to do that. And even if it
8 has to set off doing that without any statutory
9 financial support or recognition, in theory and in
10 practice it's possible to earn a recognition that might
11 be, albeit grudging -- it can become a valued part of
12 the services that are thereafter available to a local
13 authority and supported. That's how children's hospices
14 in Scotland started, for example.

15 LADY SMITH: Yes.

16 MR PEOPLES: Can I perhaps explore again this question of
17 why traditional large-scale homes fell out of fashion.
18 Can I put to you this point. The point I'm really
19 trying to get to is that if one was making the case for
20 group homes as a better model than a large-scale home --
21 and I don't know if this was the way the case was put --
22 it's possible that people putting forward justifications
23 for this move would say -- for example, one reason might
24 be that children would achieve a better outcome because
25 of the respective merits and demerits of each model, or

1 they might say that the children might be safer in
2 a group home than a large home or vice versa, or they
3 might say that you move to that because the
4 organisation's got a better chance of survival because
5 you have to be in tune with what local authorities want,
6 because they're really the paymasters, or it might be
7 some other reason.

8 What I'm trying to get at, if you're able to help
9 me, is whether any of these reasons were being put
10 forward at a time when the large-scale homes were
11 falling out of fashion, the group homes were in vogue
12 and if so, to some extent, was safety a consideration or
13 protection, better protection, a consideration? I'm not
14 sure whether you're able to answer that or whether you
15 can say that these sorts of justifications or any of
16 them were being advanced as the argument.

17 Because if I was one of these people that was
18 running the large-scale institutions as a member of
19 their board and I said to you, "Well, John, why are you
20 telling me that I should close the orphanage and move to
21 a group home? What is the reason or what are the
22 reasons?" I'm just wondering whether there was any
23 articulation of reasons and if safety was a factor
24 in that process.

25 You lived through some of these changes, so I'm just

1 wondering whether these reasons or any of them were
2 prominent.

3 A. None of the various reasons -- I'm sorry, Jim, this is
4 not a helpful answer to shine a light to the one true
5 facts of the thing. None of the reasons you've just
6 suggested come as a surprise and were quite possibly,
7 depending on the particular setting or organisation,
8 uppermost. I would also say -- I mean, I only saw
9 Barkingside in Barnardo's and the Bridge of Weir village
10 for Quarriers after the tide had gone out on them, so to
11 speak.

12 But talking to some of the previous staff from both
13 settings, they were like a campus federation of family
14 group homes. The fact was they weren't in the
15 community, though, as isolated family group homes, which
16 the Newcastle ones were -- I mean, they were ordinary,
17 maybe two council houses in a terrace knocked together
18 in one family group home with a dozen or 15 youngsters
19 in, that sort of thing, and four staff or something like
20 that there.

21 So where there was a village, the village would
22 develop its own social programme, activities programme,
23 school perhaps, church in Quarriers' case, and it would
24 be an enclosed life rather than a life where you went to
25 the local school from a family group home, you played

1 out with youngsters who were your mates from school, and
2 it was rather less isolated than a village was.

3 I was never responsible for a large home. The
4 largest was probably Tyneholm or Glasclune, which were
5 large in my book.

6 Q. How many children are we talking about, about 20, 30, 40
7 or more?

8 A. Probably about 20, 18, 20, 24. That sort of --

9 Q. Not in the hundreds?

10 A. No, no. That's the limit of -- apart from the approved
11 school setting where it was a classifying school for the
12 north east, the first bit I worked in, and I was asked
13 to take on a group of 24 youngsters in my experimental
14 unit for my last three years.

15 Q. You may not be able to answer this question then. I'm
16 seeking a personal view, I suppose, but based on
17 experience, and maybe you don't have the experience to
18 answer it, whether as a personal view you would consider
19 a child in residential care in a smaller home to be
20 safer from abuse from any quarter than a child in
21 a larger residential home living away from home?

22 A. Not at all. I wouldn't think that followed naturally.

23 Q. You don't think -- so it's not a given that the smaller
24 the institution, the safer the environment or the less
25 likely the risk of abuse?

1 A. One could say there's a heightened opportunity for that
2 to happen.

3 Q. In a smaller setting?

4 A. Yes. I could paint a scenario where that's perfectly
5 possible or as possible as the worst of what could
6 happen in a large children's home.

7 LADY SMITH: Tell me about that. Give me a scenario that
8 makes you think that.

9 A. Right. Let me take the situation where I was describing
10 moving maybe a couple or three youngsters with a severe
11 or profound mental handicap into an ordinary council
12 house, where let's say there were two or three of them
13 and there were two or three staff who, between them,
14 worked around the clock with those youngsters. That
15 would mean that there was only one member of staff on
16 duty at any time. Part of what they would be doing with
17 one of their fellow residents would be to try and
18 integrate them in naturally available things in the
19 community so that they might go to a swimming class on
20 a Monday morning or they might go with a group doing
21 such-and-such on a Monday afternoon or they would go to
22 a day centre.

23 There would be occasions when there would be one
24 young adult and one member of staff in that setting. If
25 the member of staff had that inclination, it would be

1 very easy to abuse that young person.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you. I can see that.

3 A. Sorry, it's not a very helpful example.

4 LADY SMITH: One thing -- and Mr Peoples may be going to
5 come to this -- that you haven't mentioned as an element
6 in decision-making about what type of care could be
7 cost. Did there come a time that cost was raising its
8 head as driving decisions?

9 A. Absolutely.

10 LADY SMITH: It would have to have done.

11 A. I can remember the councillor's name, Charlotte Toal,
12 from Strathclyde, going to the Daily Record and getting
13 front page headlines, "Barnardo's, £100 a week
14 childcare". And it was very interesting to be
15 interviewed about that from a reporter who was really
16 looking for a lot of juice out of that headline. And to
17 try and say in a way that wouldn't absolutely burn off
18 your relationship with the largest authority in Scotland
19 or the Social Work Department part of it, that, well,
20 these are youngsters that the local authority is unable
21 to provide a facility for because their facilities
22 aren't either adequately staffed or staffed with enough
23 experience and expertise at that time. And that's why
24 they are referred to Barnardo's and if we are going to
25 try and achieve something positive with that youngster

1 who's been referred to us, we have to tool up to do the
2 job.

3 Sorry, that's a bit of a shorthand way of describing
4 an episode. Cost certainly was a factor.

5 LADY SMITH: I can see that. Thank you.

6 MR PEOPLES: Just pursuing that a little bit more, it might
7 be said then that when local authorities looked at their
8 policy on childcare and whether they should maintain
9 substantial residential care provision for children
10 under their charge or seek to foster them or find some
11 other alternative, such as a community-based support,
12 it's highly probable, is it not, that they would look at
13 the economics of the situation and, if they thought that
14 specialist provision of care in a residential setting
15 was very expensive, and that it might be cheaper to find
16 an alternative, then it's not inconceivable that that
17 would be a driver of the change of policy? Is that not
18 the reality in the real world --

19 A. Yes, but --

20 Q. -- particularly if resources are limited?

21 A. I said but. It could be a driver to continuing with the
22 economies of scale that were possible in a large
23 children's home as opposed to smaller family group
24 homes, as opposed to independent living units or
25 whatever. So it's one of a number of factors that lie

- 1 alongside the other ones that you were --
- 2 Q. But I suppose to provide a high quality specialist
3 service for children with particularly complex needs,
4 let's not beat about the bush, it's expensive to provide
5 that service --
- 6 A. It is expensive, yes.
- 7 Q. -- if you want to do it right?
- 8 A. Yes, absolutely.
- 9 Q. It's one thing to provide large scale provision, but if
10 your provision has unskilled people who don't have the
11 requisite qualifications or experience and they simply
12 look after children's material needs without an
13 understanding of their complex emotional and
14 psychological needs, then, yes, they'll be cared for in
15 one sense but not necessarily developed and they may in
16 fact suffer long-term effects.
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. You wouldn't find any difficulty with that sort of --
- 19 A. I would agree with you 100%.
- 20 Q. Just going back to -- you've said clearly it's not
21 possible simply looking at the model, looking at
22 a large-scale model rather than a small-scale model, to
23 necessarily say that one might be a safer model than the
24 other because, as you say, you can conceive of scenarios
25 where one might end up being more risky for a child than

1 another. There's all sorts of possibilities.

2 But I suppose it might be said that
3 Quarrier's Village, although it was a large
4 establishment in the sense of being a village for
5 children, run by an organisation, it was ultimately,
6 I think the evidence seems to be suggesting,
7 a collection of group homes --

8 A. Yes. That's why I used the ... federation model on one
9 campus.

10 Q. -- with a high degree of autonomy of management of the
11 individual homes by those who were in charge of them?

12 A. Yes, I would be sure of that.

13 Q. To some extent it might be said if you go to the
14 Aberlour Orphanage, where I understand there were
15 a number of houses run by house parents, the same could
16 be said, that they would be run to some extent as
17 independent units by those in charge and therefore they
18 might also be seen as a collection of small group homes
19 or units --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- albeit in one place?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And the only difference between those and the other type
24 of group homes that Barnardo's may have had is that they
25 were both in rural locations, they weren't group homes

1 within a wider community. They were closed communities.
2 They weren't the large council house in Kirkcaldy or the
3 large house in the middle of Aberdeen or whatever, they
4 were in their own grounds.

5 A. They were independent enough units in what is a closed
6 community, yes. But one could say that Glasclune and
7 Tyneholm and Craigerne School and Thorntoun School and
8 Coltness House were also not in the community.

9 Q. They were closed communities as well in a sense because
10 of their location?

11 A. At Glasclune and Tyneholm, the youngsters went to the
12 local schools and would have pals from the local
13 schools. I don't know how much further it went than
14 that.

15 Q. So there would be some cross-fertilisation there because
16 Glasclune was in North Berwick.

17 A. Tyneholm was in Pencaitland.

18 Q. A much smaller place?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. But they would have gone to school outwith Tyneholm?

21 A. There was no education facility on the premises, no.

22 Q. Whereas in the case of Quarriers, at least historically,
23 most of the children went to school in the Quarriers
24 school.

25 A. On the campus, yes.

1 Q. Although that did change, I think, over time and there
2 was more of a movement towards sending them to
3 mainstream schools, latterly at least.

4 A. I think it had been -- by the time I got there in 1991, I
5 think the school had been closed for quite some time.

6 Q. Can I take you back to your statement now. Going back
7 to your specific role as divisional director with
8 Barnardo's, if I go back to your statement at page 8101
9 at page 2 of the statement, you tell us at paragraph 2.7
10 that:

11 "[You were] responsible for all aspects of the
12 leadership, direction and development of the
13 organisation's pioneering child and family care work in
14 Scotland, which latterly involved 22 projects,
15 360 staff, 400 volunteers, and a revenue budget of
16 £6.8 million."

17 That was the sort of scale of the operation you were
18 in charge of --

19 A. Mm-hm.

20 Q. -- at that time? So far as --

21 A. That was at the end of my time.

22 Q. I see.

23 A. That's where it got to.

24 Q. That's where it got to?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. You say that so far as organisational policy is
2 concerned, one difference between Quarriers, Aberlour
3 and Barnardo's is that Barnardo's was operating
4 throughout the UK and elsewhere, whereas I think
5 Quarriers and Aberlour were very much Scottish
6 organisations.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Am I right in thinking that in your time, although maybe
9 not to the same extent as historically, Barnardo's was
10 very much run from headquarters in London?
- 11 A. Yes. That's where the headquarters were and one of the
12 interesting challenges was helping headquarters
13 recognise or understand, even, that Scotland was quite
14 different in terms of its history, culture, systems,
15 needs, et cetera.
- 16 Q. How did that bear specifically on childcare provision,
17 including residential childcare provision? What were
18 the differences did you perceive between the position
19 south of the border and north of the border?
- 20 A. Can I just take you back a step?
- 21 Q. Yes, by all means.
- 22 A. Barnardo's had eight divisions, which were the sort of
23 size of Scotland, so Barnardo's was itself a federal
24 organisation, but a centralist hierarchical one. When
25 it came to professional experience and expertise and

1 policy and all that sort of thing, it had got the
2 benefit for quite a long period of time of eight
3 Aberlours or eight Quarriers or whatever in terms of
4 being able to draw on that sort of range of senior
5 staff, that range of coalface staff experience, the
6 range of experiments that were going on, the sort of
7 pioneering initiatives that were going on in different
8 parts of the country where warts and all things were
9 shared, to learn from and so on.

10 So it was an interesting organisation to be part of
11 in terms of acquiring and understanding an experience
12 that was far wider than just your own bailiwick.

13 Q. But it was an organisation -- and I don't know if this
14 still was the case in your time -- that did seek to be
15 quite prescriptive in one sense about how individual
16 establishments should be run and there were quite
17 strict, I think, reporting arrangements so that
18 headquarters in London was well aware of not only how
19 the Scottish division was running but how individual
20 establishments within the Scottish division were running
21 and there was direct interest in matters of recruitment
22 and so forth. Was that still the situation when you
23 were divisional director or did it change?

24 A. No. I mean, policy guidelines and practice guidelines
25 and things like that, although they might have been

1 contributed to from various divisions or a division or
2 whatever, they became binding on all of us to try and
3 uphold. One of the positive spin-offs of that was --
4 and if you think about it from the point of view of
5 a large, high-profile childcare organisation in the UK
6 setting, because your reputation is only as good as your
7 work today, because bad news spreads far faster than
8 acquiring a good reputation sort of thing, one of the
9 ways that it cleared -- sorry, this is my
10 interpretation. One of the ways that it cleared the
11 space to allow, if I use that loaded word, experiments
12 to take place that were not without risk. A pioneering
13 initiative was to try and put as much structure and
14 guidance and clarity of expectations in place as was
15 responsible and helpful.

16 Q. I can see the point you're making and I suppose, though,
17 that the centralised system and model that was operated
18 by Barnardo's, and indeed continued to operate in your
19 time, at least in theory, would perhaps give a greater
20 likelihood of consistency of service and consistency of
21 approach, if you tell each establishment, "This is the
22 way things are done", you would expect perhaps, or you'd
23 hope, that there would be a reasonable degree of
24 consistency of standard and service and care, would you
25 not? Was that not the theory at least, that if you tell

1 them what to do with the expectation that they will
2 listen and adhere to it, you'll get a uniform and
3 consistent standard of treatment and care? Was that one
4 of the underlying theories of this type of management
5 approach?

6 A. I'm sure it was, but what the written word says doesn't
7 mean a thing.

8 Q. I will come to that -- and I will probably do it after
9 the break -- that theory doesn't necessarily translate
10 into practice.

11 A. Not at all.

12 Q. But at least if the alternative model is autonomy and
13 local discretion and judgement, perhaps even to the
14 point of local autonomy at group home level, whether
15 it's a group home in Quarriers or a group home that
16 Barnardo's was running, then that has inherent risk that
17 you'll have variations in practice and inconsistencies
18 in treatment in the same situations if you allow
19 autonomy to be the central concept, which I think was
20 William Quarrier's philosophy.

21 A. Right. Again, I wasn't around at the time.

22 Q. But I think we've heard that that was a key opponent of
23 the model, that he wanted to set up something akin to
24 family homes, which were run by people who were
25 effectively like parents of a lot of children and left

1 to get on with things as good parents and to do the
2 right things as good parents, and to some extent that
3 model just continued.

4 A. Well, in fairness, some of them did just that: they
5 provided a good experience for youngsters and helped
6 them fly, and some of them didn't.

7 Q. I'm not suggesting otherwise because I think we have
8 heard evidence that there were good experiences and bad
9 experiences under that model and no doubt that is to be
10 expected. But that is one of the inherent risks of that
11 model --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- that you will not get consistency, whereas if
14 you have a model that at least in theory says, "I'll
15 tell you how you do things", then you're at least
16 seeking to introduce standard responses, standard
17 methods of treatment, standard approaches to situations
18 that arise in practice. Is that not what that model
19 does?

20 A. If you're making your expectations clear, that's
21 an important first step. If you're helping, at the very
22 most important, your senior staff or your heads of care
23 or whatever to understand what those expectations mean
24 in practice and to provide appropriate training or
25 induction or whatever for them and their staff, it also

1 feeds into things like your recruitment process. For
2 example, what are you looking for in somebody who's an
3 prospective head of care or project leader, or whatever
4 it is? You're looking for them to display their
5 thinking and ideas and experience and in a sense you're
6 measuring it up against the yardstick of what your
7 organisation is expecting and seeing whether there is
8 a match, a healthy match, on that sort of score.

9 So it's a bit like part of the key structure and
10 support and foundation of the work you're doing.

11 MR PEOPLES: I will maybe pursue that, but I think it's
12 probably an appropriate time to have a break and we can
13 look at some of the practical application after the
14 break.

15 LADY SMITH: John, we always take a break at about this time
16 in the morning for about 15 minutes. If you're ready to
17 start again after 15 minutes, we'll do that. If you
18 need a bit of a longer break, just let us know.

19 (11.32 am)

20 (A short break)

21 (11.50 am)

22 LADY SMITH: Are you okay for us to resume now, John?

23 A. Yes, indeed.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Mr Peoples.

25 MR PEOPLES: John, if I could continue in relation to your

1 statement in relation to the heading of "Policy" on
2 page 8101.

3 As I think you were telling us before the break,
4 under the centralised system that Barnardo's operated,
5 organisational policy essentially was made at UK level
6 and applied across the country; is that right?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You tell us at paragraph 3.2 of your statement that
9 during your time at Barnardo's, there was a committee
10 known as the Central Child-care Committee, or
11 colloquially known as the Four Cs, of which you were
12 a member, which was responsible for developing policy
13 that governed the organisation's work, including the
14 provision of residential childcare.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So in that way, as the divisional director for Scotland,
17 one of eight divisional directors, you would have
18 a input on policy and policy matters?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. In relation to what might be seen as areas of policy --
21 and I don't expect you to be conversant at this juncture
22 with the detail of some of these matters, but as
23 a generality, if I could just ask you one or two things
24 about policy issues -- if we were looking at, say,
25 a matter such as the recruitment processes for the

1 organisation, both for senior staff and basic grade care
2 staff in establishments, in broad terms would the
3 process itself and the policy, recruitment policy, be
4 determined at national level as part of this
5 policy-making function of the Four Cs? Was that the
6 situation when you were divisional director in terms of
7 the recruitment process?

8 A. I can't give you a specific answer to that.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. But I would be reasonably confident that there was
11 a guideline to do with staff recruitment and that it was
12 in existence way before my time.

13 Q. I think it's true to say -- and I think there's
14 a statement by the organisation to this effect -- that
15 the headquarters would have at least the final say
16 in the approval of certain appointments. The process
17 itself might take place at divisional level, it may
18 involve you or others having some participation in that
19 process by interviewing or making other assessments or
20 report, but am I right in thinking that certainly at
21 least for some positions the general procedure meant
22 that some form of report was submitted to headquarters
23 after, say, a probationary period or after a person was
24 appointed, it had to be approved by a particular central
25 committee in London, albeit it might simply rubber-stamp

1 your recommendation or what your report might say? Was
2 that the way it operated in your time?

3 A. I think the practice varied at different levels. For
4 example, there would be a direct active headquarters
5 involvement in the appointment of a divisional director
6 such as myself and in the appointment of an assistant
7 divisional director ...

8 Q. What about a project leader or a person in charge?

9 A. That's why I'm hesitating now, because ... During the
10 last half-dozen years that I was with Barnardo's, one of
11 my colleagues, who had been divisional director for the
12 Midlands for almost the same period that I had, took on
13 a role of psychiatric testing for -- sorry, psychometric
14 testing for senior appointments. He would certainly be
15 involved in the senior appointments that I've just
16 mentioned, but also in the equivalent of project leaders
17 or heads of care at that time. So he would be
18 a visiting member of what was then -- he would then be
19 part of the head office team sort of thing.

20 Q. If we take a practical example: if in, say, the final
21 five or so years of your time as divisional director,
22 a project leader post came up in Scotland for an
23 establishment, would this individual have had some
24 direct participation in the process of appointment?

25 A. Yes, within the division.

1 Q. And if it was a project leader that was being appointed,
2 does it follow that, at least during that period, that
3 particular appointment was in part based on some form of
4 psychometric assessment as well as maybe more
5 traditional methods such as interview and paper
6 applications and other paperwork, like references?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. So that was maybe a change, perhaps latterly, was it,
9 in the way that at least some senior staff were
10 appointed?

11 A. Yes. And a very positive change. Our experience --
12 this was a person who'd had responsibility for
13 considerably more than the number of staff that I had
14 in the Midlands division because they had a couple of
15 large approved schools and some very interesting
16 pioneering projects there.

17 But I'm just recalling that for the appointment of
18 an assistant divisional director, there would be an
19 initial recruitment process in the division and then
20 a recommendation would go to Barkingside, where
21 Barnardo's headquarters were, and that person would have
22 a subsequent interview with the director of childcare
23 and the deputy director of childcare there before they
24 were offered the post. That wasn't done with project
25 leaders; that was in Scotland that that took place with

- 1 the assistance of the person from head office.
- 2 Q. Although there was perhaps more direct involvement from
3 headquarters in an assistant director's appointment for
4 example than a project leader's appointment, in the case
5 of a project leader, at least latterly, there was -- the
6 process included psychometric testing as part of the
7 process?
- 8 A. Yes. That was a very positive addition to the process
9 because it recognised the shortcomings of an interview
10 situation, it recognised the shortcomings of references,
11 and it was a very healthy addition to a number of other
12 aspects that come into a final judgement when you are
13 appointing somebody to -- not just a key position like
14 that but even -- sorry, I didn't mean that --
15 a residential childcare member of staff.
- 16 Q. It sounds as if you are indicating that this change
17 in the process for project leaders and more senior
18 appointments was something that perhaps was
19 a recognition of the, as you put it, shortcomings of the
20 traditional processes of interview, references and
21 looking at the paper applications and forming a view,
22 perhaps based on that alone. Was that the underlying
23 thinking that may have caused this change in the
24 process, that there was a recognition that that was
25 a process that would not necessarily identify either the

1 most suitable persons or persons that were not suitable
2 or persons who had the requisite qualities and
3 characteristics? Was there a recognition of that?

4 A. I think it was driven by a positive spin on that of
5 wanting to strengthen --

6 Q. The process?

7 A. What you got to know about a person at the outset and
8 their fit for what you believed you were looking for and
9 what sort of beginning help could be given to them, what
10 sort of beginning experience could be given to them to
11 help them match up more fully to the challenge they were
12 taking on.

13 For example, if I just take it back to a member of
14 residential -- a prospective residential childcare staff
15 member. There would be the process of giving them a job
16 description, a person specification, a background
17 information sheet about the unit. They'd be offered the
18 opportunity to visit the unit in advance if they wished,
19 and that wasn't obligatory.

20 Then there was the interview and then later on,
21 sending for references. On occasion, had they not
22 visited beforehand, they would be asked to visit the
23 unit and meet with the person leading the recruitment
24 for the vacancy afterwards to get an understanding of
25 their judgement, their insight, their ideas, et cetera,

1 et cetera, as part of filling out a picture of the
2 individual. Sometimes, if there was a degree of
3 uncertainty about an individual as to whether it might
4 be quite a big jump for them, they would be offered the
5 opportunity to go and be in the unit and brigaded with
6 an experienced member of staff, say, for 24 or 48 hours,
7 to see whether it suited them and whether --

8 Q. To what extent though was this process then, as you've
9 described it, measuring not paper qualifications or any
10 other factor, but suitability for the particular role,
11 such as a role as leading a care establishment for
12 vulnerable children? To what extent was it devised as
13 a measure of suitability of the person, given the nature
14 of the role and the perceived characteristics that were
15 required of the person who was asked to perform the
16 role? To what extent was it --

17 A. That was an important element of it, but another
18 important element, which is rather more subjective, is
19 to do with a judgement about personality and integrity
20 and things like that.

21 Q. Going back to psychometric testing, for example, some
22 might say that the whole purpose of that is to introduce
23 some expertise to find in a measured way, using some
24 sort of recognised test that has respectable credentials
25 that will measure things like aptitude or skill for

1 particular situations, how one handles things,
2 temperament and so forth that may be required for
3 a particular job --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- than simply a subjective judgement of you or one of
6 your colleagues sitting face to face with a prospective
7 applicant and making a judgement on the basis of an
8 interview? Was that perhaps seen as a step forward?

9 A. Yes. It wasn't definitive in its own right, but it
10 added a very valuable dimension to arriving at
11 a judgement about an individual.

12 Q. Because I suppose -- and I'm not giving any particular
13 examples -- people might say that we all know people who
14 could perform well at a job interview, but they might be
15 appalling when they get into the job and they may not
16 have the temperament -- they may have all the paper
17 qualifications in the world, but if you were to put them
18 in the -- at the coalface, they are not going to perform
19 appropriately.

20 A. Or the reverse: people who are brilliant in practice and
21 leadership and all sorts of things, but perform
22 appallingly on the day.

23 Q. Would this sort of testing, at least for project leaders
24 and more senior people -- we'll maybe stick to project
25 leaders because they are actually involved in the

1 day-to-day care and operation of a unit. Would this
2 testing involve testing them in what would be seen as
3 real life situations and how they would handle those?
4 Would that be part of the psychometric tests that would
5 be embarked on, giving them scenarios and questionnaires
6 or asking them how they would handle ... Was it as
7 sophisticated as that or was it less sophisticated?

8 A. There were a number of elements to it. For example, an
9 in-tray exercise where you were faced with and had
10 various quite challenging issues mixed up in it and some
11 requiring urgent action and some easier to tackle and so
12 on to see how people responded in situations like that.
13 There were some paper situations and, for example,
14 in the interview situation, there would be questions
15 like: can you describe for us a difficult situation to
16 do with X, Y and Z that you've handled in the past and
17 how you dealt with it? That sort of thing that gives
18 you --

19 LADY SMITH: John, even that can be vulnerable to the
20 interviewee's imagination.

21 A. Absolutely.

22 LADY SMITH: You have no way of validating whether the
23 account they gave you of tackling a difficult situation
24 is actually what happened.

25 A. Or even grounded in any truth whatsoever.

- 1 LADY SMITH: No.
- 2 A. I said rather broadly at the beginning that psychometric
3 testing was a valuable addition in relation to the
4 shortcomings of interview and references and so on and
5 so on.
- 6 LADY SMITH: In-tray exercises, I think, are recognised
7 nowadays as being very helpful because the person,
8 normally in a limited amount of time in advance of the
9 interview, is shown for the first time some problems,
10 imagine themselves in the job, "What do you do if" --
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 LADY SMITH: -- and it can help give you a picture of what
13 sort of person this would be at work.
- 14 A. And also there were things like Myers-Briggs and so on
15 which were part of the bundle --
- 16 MR PEOPLES: This has been described, at least in the
17 evidence before, or perhaps evidence to come as well, as
18 an assessment centre approach. Does that term or
19 expression mean anything to you? This use of testing
20 people for appointments by going beyond mere interview
21 and references. Is that not an expression that you've
22 come across, that Barnardo's had adopted at some point
23 an assessment centre approach, at least for more senior
24 appointments within the organisation?
- 25 A. Yes. Don't forget my very first UK job was in an

1 assessment centre for approved schoolboys, so if I leave
2 that way out --

3 Q. Maybe that is --

4 LADY SMITH: John, if you can just get nearer to the
5 microphone. If I could just explain: it becomes
6 particularly challenging for the stenographers if you
7 drift away from it.

8 A. Sure.

9 MR PEOPLES: I just wondered if you had heard this
10 expression or if that was you would have labelled this
11 process?

12 A. When you talk about an assessment centre approach, I get
13 an image in my head of an organisation delegating that
14 to a recruitment agency. There's a real difference in
15 this in that the people who are going to be line
16 managers are already line managers of the project or the
17 residential setting are involved in the selection. So
18 they have a belief they know what they're looking for,
19 or if they don't have that accurately, at least they've
20 got it a sight better than an external recruitment
21 agency. And they're looking for somebody that they
22 would feel confident to invest in or work with in the
23 future in relation to what the project or the unit is,
24 its stock in trade is.

25 Q. This process, though, that you have described -- leaving

1 aside the expression I asked you about -- this process
2 involving some form of psychometric testing as part of
3 the process for certain appointments, you have said your
4 recollection is that it would be applied in the case of
5 a project leader post, certainly in the latter part of
6 your period as divisional director in the 1980s, maybe
7 the mid-1980s and beyond.

8 What about the front line residential care worker,
9 the basic grade? Were they in any way recruited other
10 than through the traditional processes at any stage in
11 your period as divisional director? Or did the old
12 methods still apply?

13 A. I can't say with any confidence whatsoever that it was
14 down to that level. I can't remember and therefore it
15 probably wasn't.

16 Q. You wouldn't personally have been involved in the
17 recruitment process for basic grade residential care
18 workers at particular establishments in Scotland? Your
19 post was too senior for that, was it not?

20 A. It was, but maybe a couple of times a year, two or three
21 times a year, I would, either because there was -- say,
22 the deputy head of the unit was out with flu and they
23 needed somebody to make up the interview panel, or
24 I would occasionally use that as a means of just what
25 I've called in my document quality control, to cut

1 a slice into a unit's life and the operation of the head
2 of care there and so on.

3 Q. If we take a typical recruitment situation --

4 A. I wouldn't be involved, not at that level.

5 Q. If we see somebody who's coming in as a front line
6 residential basic grade care worker in your time who's
7 applying for a job, then would we still be back to, "We
8 want some references, we'll do some checks on you",
9 perhaps checking the references, I don't know if there
10 were disclosure checks in the early days of your --

11 A. There were latterly, yes.

12 Q. And presumably there would be a process of interview --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- of those selected from the applications. If
15 applicants were successful in getting to the interview
16 stage as basic grade applicants, basic grade residential
17 care workers, how many people would interview them?

18 A. Three.

19 Q. Three?

20 A. Three, usually.

21 Q. At a single interview?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And typically, would that be the project leader at the
24 establishment?

25 A. It would be the ADD and the project leader and often the

- 1 deputy.
- 2 Q. For a residential care worker post, a standard or basic
3 grade?
- 4 A. Yes. Not for ancillary staff. That would be a sort of
5 project leader and there would be an informal -- more
6 often than not, a prospective residential childcare
7 worker having been offered the opportunity to visit --
8 having been encouraged, but it was not obligatory to
9 visit the unit, somebody like the third in charge would
10 take them around and would be quite interested not just
11 in what they made of what they were seeing but finding
12 out a bit about them and their background in a more
13 informal situation, and that would be fed into the
14 process as well.
- 15 Q. Because the interview panel, to take the typical
16 example, would conduct the interview and perhaps take
17 any information fed in --
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. -- in the ways you've described. Presumably they would
20 compile a report and that report would go to London, for
21 example?
- 22 A. Not for a basic residential --
- 23 Q. Would it go to you?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. For approval or endorsement?

1 A. No. It would go to me for information. But it would be
2 brought to me if there was an uncertainty about a person
3 and did I have a view and so on.

4 Q. Typically, the decision would be left to the panel?

5 A. To the ADD.

6 Q. To prepare a report --

7 A. The ADD responsible for that unit would be the most
8 senior person taking the decision.

9 Q. In the case of project leader you would be involved in
10 the appointment process routinely?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Because his immediate line manager was the assistant
13 divisional director, ADD?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And his line manager was you, the ADD's line manager?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is this what's called the grandfather principle?

18 A. I'm not as old as I look, you know!

19 Q. I think we will hear evidence --

20 A. Yes, it is.

21 Q. -- there's something called the grandfather principle
22 that was used in Barnardo's for appointments.

23 A. Sorry, I didn't mean to be facetious.

24 Q. I just wanted to clarify that this was part of the
25 process at least. Was that a part of the process

1 throughout your time or just something that became part
2 of the process during your time?

3 A. It was part of the process throughout my time. I had
4 quite a number of grandfathers when I was appointed.
5 But from my point of view as divisional director, one of
6 the most important functions for me was to ensure that
7 I was getting good, relevant key staff in post as
8 project leaders, as heads of care or as ADDs, principal
9 training officer or training officers, and fieldwork
10 teachers.

11 Q. Do I take it from what you're saying there that, so far
12 as recruitment is concerned, if one is focussing on key
13 roles within the organisation to ensure a high quality
14 service and the best care, the role of assistant
15 divisional director, who's the line manager of the
16 project leader and the role of project leader, are very
17 key posts --

18 A. Absolutely.

19 Q. -- to the success of the care operation --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- and the standard of care --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and whether children have got the appropriate
24 protections and --

25 A. Yes. For example, with a new piece of work or a new

1 concept, it's the project leader who's going to take it
2 from imaginary design or whatever you might call it,
3 into reality. They put their mark on it through their
4 staff as well.

5 Q. Just again on issues of policy and at what level these
6 matters would be determined. If I could take one
7 example, we've heard evidence that at a particular
8 establishment, South Oswald Road, in the 1980s, the
9 night-time arrangements were such that there was
10 a waking night-time care assistant on duty, only one,
11 who might be on duty between 10 at night and 7 in the
12 morning.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. There was a sleeping member as well, but basically there
15 was a single individual who was awake and had the run of
16 the place between 10 and 7 --

17 A. Mm-hm.

18 Q. -- where there were young vulnerable children.

19 You'll know where I'm going with this. We explored
20 with that witness the inherent risks of an arrangement
21 of that kind, a situation where there's one individual
22 with access to vulnerable young people.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I think you can see that there is an inherent risk
25 in that situation. Can you not?

- 1 A. Absolutely.
- 2 Q. That individual, when asked about that, as I recall,
3 said that that arrangement would not have been one that
4 would have been left to the judgement of the project
5 leader, it would have been decided at a higher level.
6 Is that your recollection of how that might have come to
7 be, that there was only one person awake at night in the
8 1980s at South Oswald Road between 10 and 7, looking
9 after a number of vulnerable children that were residing
10 there?
- 11 A. That would be an arrangement that wasn't uncommon in
12 Barnardo's and would have been deemed acceptable by at
13 least the ADD.
- 14 Q. How high in terms of decision-making would this
15 arrangement have had to go to be discussed and approved?
16 Would it have gone beyond ADD level to your level or to
17 UK level, to the Four Cs?
- 18 A. Certainly I can remember in the Four Cs meeting
19 discussions taking place about, for example, night cover
20 in units where there was a particularly lively mix of
21 children or a troublesome mix of children or children
22 with night-time needs that might be medical or whatever,
23 where we all had shared with us a presenting situation,
24 which was real and looked at sort of solutions and what
25 we could learn from it. Because occasionally, providing

1 what Barnardo's deemed to be an appropriate responsible
2 level of cover was paid for by Barnardo's; it wasn't
3 negotiable into a local authority fee or whatever.

4 I'm using that as the sort of highest level that
5 I can recall it. It wouldn't normally come to me as
6 divisional director because it would be an exercise that
7 was -- sorry, it would be a judgement that was exercised
8 by the ADD as to what they felt was appropriate for
9 their unit at a point in time.

10 The aspect of a single waking member of staff ...
11 If you think about the situations where if a member of
12 staff is inclined to abuse or ... It can happen in so
13 many situations.

14 It can happen during a car drive to the doctor if
15 they're intent on it, that sort of thing, and there's no
16 thorough, foolproof safeguard against that abuse.

17 Q. I follow the point you're making, that it can still
18 happen, but it might be said there is less prospect of
19 it happening if there are two waking people: one can
20 keep an eye on the other and they can do things together
21 and in that way there's a safeguard against anything
22 that might be said against them and equally a safeguard
23 in case one of them was minded to do something they
24 shouldn't do. What do you say to that?

25 A. That's an arrangement that has been eroded with the

1 breakdown into smaller units, for example, of
2 residential childcare. If we take the situation, say,
3 in Glasclune or Tyneholm, there would be a number of
4 members of staff who lived in the unit and were around
5 and not far from children's bedrooms. That was
6 something of a safeguard against mischief going on, so
7 to speak. But there would be one member of staff who
8 was designated to be on waking call, on waking duty, and
9 one who was designated as back-up in case a youngster
10 was sick during the night or something like that and
11 there still needed to be an awareness.

12 If you break that down into small group homes and
13 down into independent living units, there are no longer
14 members of staff living in, they are members of staff
15 who are sleeping in at night. For example, I described
16 an independent unit with maybe two or three young people
17 where you had three staff whose responsibility that unit
18 was, who did around the clocks things, seven days a week
19 between them. That would mean that one of them would be
20 on duty sleeping during the night. You're not inured
21 against abuse taking place in foster care or almost any
22 arrangement that a child might find themselves in apart
23 from their natural family -- and even in their natural
24 family there's no absolute safeguard against abuse
25 taking place, whether it's from a natural parent or

1 a step-parent or whatever.

2 Q. But from a risk reduction point of view, I'm still not
3 sure, other than perhaps it might be more costly and
4 require more resources in terms of human resources to
5 have an arrangement where there were at least two people
6 who are awake and vigilant for all situations and
7 eventualities, what was the problem with that in
8 principle?

9 A. Apart from the cost element, which was a real factor and
10 would always be a realistic factor, your best safeguard
11 is against -- is in relation to the recruitment and
12 support and development and supervision and all that
13 sort of thing that you've got going on with the setting
14 and its leadership and the external involvements and so
15 on.

16 But there is no absolute guarantee, Jim. Even if
17 you had two waking night members of staff as an apparent
18 safeguard against each other, I'd certainly readily
19 agree with you it might cut down the incidence of it,
20 but for somebody who is determined, there are still ways
21 and means.

22 Q. But if you're trying to reduce the risk and reduce the
23 incidence, then presumably what I have described would
24 be one way of doing that?

25 A. It would.

- 1 Q. It could make an appreciable difference?
- 2 A. I have to agree with you but all I'm saying is it
3 doesn't give you a cast-iron guarantee or safety net.
- 4 Q. I'm not saying there's necessarily a way to achieve
5 that. But this issue of a situation of a member of
6 staff alone or a situation where a member of staff's
7 alone with a resident, either in the unit or elsewhere,
8 is a real issue --
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. -- because it provides an opportunity to do the right
11 thing or to do the wrong thing.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 LADY SMITH: John, you keep coming back to recruitment. Can
14 I at this stage take you back to your own recruitment.
15 On your CV it looks quite interesting. You were
16 appointed to a very responsible role as divisional
17 director at just the age of 32, I think; is that right?
- 18 A. 31.
- 19 LADY SMITH: It was before your birthday?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 LADY SMITH: That was as a result of you being sought out,
22 not applying for the job?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 LADY SMITH: Can you tell us a bit about it?
- 25 A. Roger Singleton, when I was at Aycliffe School he was

1 one of the deputy headmasters, and we will have worked
2 together for about, I think, probably six years in that
3 setting. He would have been aware of me as an
4 individual. Then I moved on to Newcastle, and six years
5 later, he rang me up and asked what I was doing and how
6 were things going in Newcastle and where were they at as
7 an authority and all sorts of innocuous things like
8 that, before sharing that they had a vacancy, this
9 vacancy in Scotland, and they had run a recruitment
10 twice and I think not been suited -- well, he used the
11 phrase -- I was hesitating there because it was either
12 once or twice -- and would I like to find out more about
13 it.

14 So they paid for a trip down to London to find more
15 about it and I met with him and Mary Joynson, who was
16 the director of childcare, and I was aware that I was
17 being informally interviewed because Roger knew me and
18 Mary didn't, and they said as a consequence of that,
19 quite a long session, a good two hours, would I like to
20 go up to Scotland and visit and meet the outgoing
21 divisional director.

22 LADY SMITH: What age group was the outgoing divisional
23 director?

24 A. He was -- he'd only been doing it for about two years.

25 I think he had -- yes, for about two years. He would be

1 probably late 30s or just turning 40. I remember
2 feeling very young to be even talked to about this
3 at the time. I wasn't thinking to move or move on, I'd
4 got my work cut out with challenges and opportunities in
5 Newcastle and I certainly wasn't seeking it. But the
6 more I found out about it, the more the excitement sort
7 of balanced out the anxiety and I think it was probably
8 a good year in post before I felt more comfortable and
9 starting to earn my keep.

10 LADY SMITH: So that was Barnardo's recruiting for a very
11 senior role as the divisional director of childcare for
12 Scotland. How far down the hierarchy do you think an
13 organisation like Barnardo's could be able to go in
14 using that sort of, if you like, bespoke arrangement for
15 finding the person that they want?

16 A. I think if ... Well, let me give you an example, if
17 I can. When I went to Quarriers and found that I was
18 marvellously alone in terms of management and
19 professional experience and so on, I pulled over
20 Phil Robinson from Barnardo's, who I knew well and had
21 been aware of a very interesting project leader for
22 quite a while, and I recruited Gerard Lee from outside
23 Scotland to be the Director of Social Work and hopefully
24 my successor because I knew I was there for a time
25 limited episode.

1 I'm aware elsewhere in Barnardo's -- just let me
2 think if there were any other instances in Scotland.

3 (Pause)

4 I think being around in Scotland, which is quite
5 a small place, people get reputations for good or
6 evil -- sorry, I didn't mean evil -- good or bad -- and
7 Romy Langeland, who went from me as an assistant
8 divisional director, when she went to Aberlour, she took
9 one of the Barnardo's project leaders, Kelly Bayes, as
10 a key member of staff for her. In a sense, it's an
11 additional safeguard or an additional investment if
12 there is somebody who you feel sure of their experience
13 and their integrity and their worth and all that sort of
14 thing.

15 Without getting too hung up on robbing Peter to pay
16 Paul, you've got a bigger challenge than just ruffling
17 feathers elsewhere or whatever, and Roger Singleton, for
18 example, had also worked at Aycliffe School with a man
19 called Mike Jarman, who was a fellow deputy head in the
20 training school -- sorry, that's like a List D school
21 proper -- who at some later point went to the Midlands
22 division to be headmaster of an approved school in the
23 Midlands division run by Barnardo's, and then went on
24 from there subsequently to take Roger Singleton's place
25 of deputy childcare director for the UK when

1 Roger Singleton went on to become senior director and
2 director of childcare.

3 So there's a bit of that has gone on, and how far
4 down it went ... (Pause). I don't know that I can
5 answer that in any authoritative way.

6 LADY SMITH: Don't worry. That's helpful, thank you.

7 Mr Peoples.

8 MR PEOPLES: It sounds like you're saying that at least one
9 tried and tested method is to bring in your own people
10 that you have trust and confidence in, a bit like the
11 football managers who, when they change jobs, bring the
12 team with them if they can. Is it something like that?

13 A. Yes. Sorry, I'm grinning at this because since
14 I retired, my wife and I have worked for four years in
15 Papua New Guinea as volunteers and they call it the
16 wantok system there, "one talk": people who speak the
17 same language group as you who are known because they're
18 from your area and therefore they can be trusted and
19 you have some affinity with them and posts get filled
20 through the wantok system. Yes, it is a bit like that
21 and it is a very fair comment that you have
22 made: somebody you already know and perhaps trust.

23 Q. Going back to staffing more generally, because clearly
24 I think you see, and I think it's been evident from what
25 you've said, that recruiting the right people for all

1 positions, including the most basic level, is a critical
2 matter for the safety of children, for the success of
3 their experience in care and so forth, and you've
4 explained some of the improvements you thought were
5 introduced for certainly more senior posts.

6 A. That's the priority, Jim, but also for the reputation of
7 the organisation.

8 Q. I see that too. Clearly if they don't recruit the right
9 people and that comes to light and things happen, then
10 the reputation will suffer.

11 A. Mm.

12 Q. Just on staffing, though, leaving aside for the moment
13 the recruitment process, another aspect of staffing and
14 perhaps another ingredient of having a care operation
15 that works effectively and perhaps with appropriate
16 levels of safety and protection is determining the right
17 staff/resident ratio, the staffing levels at
18 institutions.

19 Just help me there. In terms of the issue of
20 determining staff levels for establishments, was that
21 a policy issue that was determined at national level,
22 and if not, who made the determination as to what the
23 appropriate staff/resident ratio was? Was there any
24 formula or any method and who decided this?

25 A. More often than not it was determined centrally and

1 there'd be guidelines on that, if you like, and there
2 would also be national pay scales and grade scales and
3 things like that. When you were developing a brand new
4 piece of work, not just for the organisation but maybe
5 a brand new piece of work full stop, you'd have to
6 negotiate what you thought was needed to stand
7 a fighting chance of coming good on the project and you
8 needed to negotiate that successfully to have confidence
9 that you could deliver the goods on what was an
10 initiative that was -- because it hadn't been tried
11 before, not without its uncertainty and risk, sort of
12 thing.

13 That in turn started then to roll over into the
14 policy. So it was something that came from the centre
15 by and large, but was contributed to through
16 cutting-edge initiative out in the divisions.

17 Q. But if you were looking at a situation of a particular
18 establishment, whether it was a new initiative or
19 a traditional group home situation, in your time as
20 divisional director, who decided how many staff and how
21 many residents?

22 A. There would be guidelines in relation to that because
23 there was a very broad stock of knowledge and experience
24 in Barnardo's UK about what it took to do the job in
25 certain different sort of constellations and settings

- 1 and so on.
- 2 Q. When you talk about guidelines, I take it you're
- 3 describing organisational guidelines?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Perhaps formulas -- were formulas used for staffing
- 6 levels in residential schools?
- 7 A. Yes, they were not set in stone but if you were needing
- 8 to argue for a variation on it, you needed to have
- 9 a good case and justification.
- 10 Q. Was there a formula for establishing the appropriate
- 11 levels of staff in children's homes as opposed to
- 12 residential schools?
- 13 A. I'm sorry, I was meaning residential establishments
- 14 overall.
- 15 Q. Generally?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. So there was a formula that was in general use and was
- 18 a way of determining the levels that would apply at
- 19 a particular place?
- 20 A. Yes. But where an ongoing situation -- let's go back to
- 21 your South Oswald Road example of one waking night staff
- 22 and one on duty. If, for example, at a point in time
- 23 there was a particular set of difficulties with
- 24 youngsters during the night-time period and it was
- 25 deemed necessary for there to be both staff on as waking

1 people, that would be decided in the division and would
2 be paid for out of the division's budget rather than it
3 needing to be reflected in the local authority fee per
4 child.

5 Sometimes, because of the changing nature of
6 children being referred, that would become a permanent
7 feature and then it would be negotiated or an attempt
8 would be made to negotiate it into the local authority
9 fee.

10 Q. I take it what you're describing there is a situation
11 where there is a formula but it's not rigidly applied
12 and it may be disapplied in certain circumstances and it
13 may be that more staff will be assigned or allocated to
14 a particular place if the need arises. Are you saying
15 that's the way the system in general terms operated?

16 A. That's my recollection, yes.

17 Q. I suppose at the end of the day, there are cost
18 considerations to keep in mind. Ultimately, if your
19 paymaster is the local authority and will only pay
20 a certain amount, that must have a bearing on how many
21 staff you'll put into a particular establishment because
22 you won't run it on a loss-making basis, will you?

23 A. More importantly than that, you won't run a residential
24 establishment within a responsible level of staffing
25 that you don't feel confident there's a fighting chance

1 you can do the best thing for children or be helpful to
2 children in that setting.

3 Q. I suppose one point -- and this might go back to the
4 Quarriers situation of trying to balance the books and
5 the finances when you came in. If you've got a finite
6 source of income from local authorities and donations,
7 but you need a certain amount to produce a service, if
8 the surplus you need or the reserves you need to provide
9 the additional resources are not there because the
10 income doesn't provide for it, you just have to make do
11 with what you have and you just have to say, "Well, I've
12 only got so much money, I can't top it up" -- like in
13 the example you gave, "If we need an extra person.
14 We'll find it from the divisional budget". Well, if the
15 divisional budget didn't have the money, then you're
16 stuck, are you not? Is that not the reality?

17 A. That's one outcome. Another outcome, if I just go to
18 the Quarriers situation, was that wasn't a sustainable
19 situation running any further forward on the income that
20 was coming in from local authorities. I had an
21 interesting six months with the then Director of
22 Social Work, Fred Edwards, on in, and two particular of
23 his deputy directors, essentially saying, "We're over
24 a barrel of our own making".

25 If I just take the epilepsy centre. I can't

1 remember the exact proportion, but I would be surprised
2 if Strathclyde were paying us half the cost of looking
3 after a person with severe epilepsy there. And they had
4 no provision. And the only leverage you had -- in
5 a sense they were ... At that time I think there was
6 limited confidence in the managerial or professional
7 competence of Quarriers. So you had no beginning
8 bargaining point other than saying, "If we're going to
9 go on providing proper care for these hundred and
10 whatever it was adults in this centre, you've got to pay
11 the rate for doing that job and at the moment you're not
12 doing that. So you either agree to move towards that or
13 else I have to give you notice that in a year from now
14 you're going to have found provision for all of those
15 hundred-and-odd adults", knowing darn fine that they
16 would struggle to find the first ten.

17 Q. Did you win that argument?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So you managed to improve the rates for the epilepsy
20 centre, for example?

21 A. Yes, not just the epilepsy centre but absolutely. I had
22 to share with them why it was so important because they
23 were very effectively determining how Quarriers spent
24 any of its voluntary income and it was on subsidising
25 their children and their adults and I had to say,

1 "There's only one inevitable outcome of this going on
2 because there's nothing left in the bank and it's going
3 to be that the organisation closes and/or it has
4 a future and we get proper management, we get good
5 quality professional care going on", and that's going to
6 take a lot of work, as you would readily recognise. But
7 if you want to dig in and say, "I'm sorry, but you're
8 getting what you're worth", then you're going to have to
9 take back responsibility for people who we can no longer
10 afford to pay for and that includes children. It was
11 a very unpleasant, robust but necessary set of
12 negotiations, that.

13 Q. We've heard some evidence that Fred Edwards, maybe
14 before your time, was likening Quarrier's Village to
15 something you'd find in a Third World country.

16 A. SOS villages, yes.

17 Q. You're aware of that kind of comment being made
18 publicly?

19 A. Absolutely.

20 Q. It seems from what we understand to be the background to
21 these changes that were happening and the
22 diversification that took place in your time and began
23 before it, that in some ways Strathclyde would have been
24 happy not to use Quarriers at all. But they were
25 perhaps faced with -- they had no alternative because

1 they don't have the provision for some of the people you
2 were looking after, therefore they had to engage with
3 you and continue to do so. Is that what in reality was
4 happening?

5 A. That was my recollection of the situation and that was
6 the only bargaining point I had to get away from us
7 being bent over a barrel of our own making.

8 Q. What's your alternative?

9 A. Well, the alternative is helping an organisation die
10 with dignity and say, you know, for an episode in time
11 it tried its best and it helped some children and
12 adults.

13 Q. But did you say to Fred Edwards and his colleagues that
14 if you don't recognise the need to put more money in for
15 these services, for these groups of people that we're
16 still looking after, then we will simply fade away and
17 die as an organisation?

18 A. Absolutely.

19 Q. And so --

20 A. There was no alternative to it, Jim. You had to say:
21 you either square up to paying the rate for the job --
22 I started with the epilepsy centre because that was over
23 100 adults there and that was a big, big drain on
24 resources, year after year after year, sort of thing.
25 That was the biggest bargaining thing I had to start

- 1 the -- them stepping up to a responsibility.
- 2 Q. There was no alternative for Quarriers other than try
3 and find this extra money or perhaps close the doors,
4 but equally are you saying ultimately, through
5 discussions, it would have been dawning on Fred Edwards
6 that there was no alternative but to keep you going
7 because they didn't have an alternative provision for
8 the people that you were looking after --
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. -- who were costing a lot of money to maintain?
- 11 A. Yes, and there was no alternative money to what came
12 from Strathclyde. There wasn't even the chance to get
13 together a little pile of development money because week
14 in, week out, it was going to subsidise the people you
15 had in residence or in your various projects.
- 16 Q. At that time, when you were in these discussions, who
17 was perhaps identifying what was considered to be
18 managerial and professional competence issues that
19 existed prior to your involvement with Quarriers? Who
20 was it that was raising that as an issue? Was it
21 Fred Edwards, Strathclyde, the organisation itself,
22 Social Work Services Group, Mike Laxton? Who was it?
23 Who was questioning the competence of the previous
24 leadership and management?
- 25 A. Well, the senior leadership of the organisation was

1 Jim Minto as director general, who died. Joe Mortimer,
2 who I think was director of childcare, maybe.

3 Q. Yes, I think he went through various guises, but he was
4 number two, but he was in overall charge.

5 A. That's right. Then you got down to somebody, down to
6 somebody who was at senior social worker level -- I
7 can't remember his second name, but Alf somebody.

8 Q. Alf Craigmile?

9 A. Thank you. Gosh, I couldn't have recalled that, yes.

10 You quite quickly ran out of alternative senior
11 resources there. You had a board of trustees who really
12 were hoping you'd bring the Victorian era back. Not all
13 of them, but probably a good half of them. You had
14 organised labour in Quarriers, a union, that I had a lot
15 of sympathy with as a safeguard against management
16 absence or uncertainties, that sort of thing.

17 You had a former boys and girls organisation that,
18 to my knowledge, hadn't really been used as a resource
19 to learn from and to contribute to the future of
20 Quarriers. I'd not had the opportunity to do that
21 before and I had some -- not in the first week or two
22 for sure, but I had some interesting discussions,
23 exploring how they might contribute from there on --
24 I don't mean financially -- to the organisation's
25 resurgence if that happened -- resurgence is

1 wrong: development -- and so on.

2 You'd also got this leviathan of an authority that
3 was doing very nicely out of Quarriers --

4 Q. Were they getting care on the cheap, to put it that way?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Basically, they weren't paying what was the appropriate
7 rate for the service?

8 A. They were getting care on starvation rations and, even
9 then, complaining about why things were starving.

10 Q. And putting the organisation's future viability at risk?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And you had some hard talks with them in the period when
13 you took over?

14 A. Yes, as a priority, working to close it down with ...

15 Q. One issue I was asked to raise with you, and maybe now
16 is as good a time as many. In terms of this issue of
17 managerial and professional competence of those who
18 preceded you and those who were leading the organisation
19 of Quarriers at that time, the individuals you've
20 mentioned, what form was the issue of competence
21 presented as? Was there an issue of competence as to
22 their ability to look after children safely, to protect
23 them from harm or abuse, to put in place appropriate
24 preventative measures? Was that a form of concern or
25 was it a concern of financial competence or both?

1 A. I don't think before I went to Quarriers or was
2 approached to go to Quarriers I knew either of those
3 things.

4 Q. What was the position once you joined about these
5 matters?

6 A. I want to explain that my contact would have been with
7 Jim Minto, as it was with Jack Church and then
8 Gerald Barlow at Aberlour, who understandably were aware
9 that Barnardo's was better resourced. I don't mean in
10 terms of cash, but better resourced in terms of practice
11 guidelines and all sorts of things like that, and was
12 also making, by comparison, a half decent fist of
13 developing and contributing in a developmental way in
14 relation to various child and family care needs, special
15 needs, in Scotland.

16 I used to meet up with them separately and together
17 on a -- probably on a three, four-monthly basis at their
18 request, really, and I was often between -- "often",
19 that's wrong. I was occasionally between times rung up
20 by one or the other of them, saying, "We're thinking
21 about such-and-such a policy. Do Barnardo's have
22 something that is a helpful thing?" And I would
23 invariably share the Barnardo policy with them, with any
24 personal comments I could make from my own experience.

25 For example, it would be at the back-end of the

1 1980s, I can remember, for example, Jim Minto asked for
2 me to lead a session with his then senior staff about
3 organisational change and what was involved in it and
4 how Barnardo's had maintained the sort of presence they
5 had in Scotland, for example, and I would go through and
6 share a half day of whatever I felt I could do to meet
7 that sort of thing.

8 So -- I'm sorry, I've lost your original question.

9 Q. You've given us some information about how you were at
10 least in regular contact with both Mr Church at Aberlour
11 and Jim Minto.

12 A. And Gerald Barlow.

13 Q. And in some senses you're describing a situation where
14 both were using you at times as a sounding board for
15 ideas and looking for some guidance and comment on
16 certain situation of moving forward. And you were also
17 sharing some policies and other things that might assist
18 the organisation.

19 A. That was no more than a handful.

20 Q. And then things developed from there at some point,
21 clearly, when you were invited to come on board. And
22 that happened via a Social Work Services Group. How did
23 you move from being the person that they had the regular
24 chats with and discussed things with to the point where
25 some sort of request for your services was made. Why

1 was Social Work Services Group involved, can you
2 remember?

3 A. I can remember very vividly. When I left Barnardo's,
4 I wanted time to think about what I did next. And I did
5 one or two short-term consultancies for (inaudible)
6 Here in Scotland. During that three-year period --
7 sorry, three-month period. During that time I had two
8 approaches from Social Work Services Group. One was
9 a very low-key one. It was the time of the
10 Orkney Inquiry, asking if I could be available just in
11 case there was a leadership crisis in Orkney Social
12 Services.

13 The other one was being sounded out about whether
14 I would go and try and make a contribution leading
15 Quarriers, sort of thing. And literally, the phrasing
16 used was something like to help it ...

17 Q. Is this the expression you use in your statement?

18 A. Yes, it is, I'm trying to remember what it was.

19 Q. I'll maybe read it to you to try and refresh your
20 memory, if I can.

21 LADY SMITH: I think you've already alluded to this, but
22 it is there in quotes.

23 A. "To get the organisation back on the rails or help it
24 die with dignity."

25 MR PEOPLES: You were sounded out, but who was making that

- 1 statement? Was that by a member of Quarriers or the
2 Social Work Services Group?
- 3 A. It was the Social Work Services Group and it was
4 Angus Skinner.
- 5 Q. Who was the head of the group?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. So did he see you as someone that could either achieve
8 one or other of these two --
- 9 A. Or go in and kill it off, yes, presumably.
- 10 Q. He didn't know at that stage which was going to be the
11 outcome?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. Are you able to tell us from memory what the preferred
14 outcome of your recruitment to Quarriers was on the part
15 of the Social Work Services Group? Did they want
16 Quarriers to die with dignity or did they want it to
17 survive and prosper and move into different forms of
18 service and provision?
- 19 A. I have no idea about their preferred option. All I can
20 say is I declined it with -- I declined that approach
21 twice and on the third occasion didn't and went over and
22 met with the chairman of Quarriers and so on.
- 23 Q. So who was being persistent in keeping approaching you
24 then, if you had three approaches?
- 25 A. The Social Work Services Group.

1 Q. So they were keen to get you on board? Well, they must
2 have been if they tried three times.

3 A. Yes, they must have been, but I don't know what their
4 preferred option was for Quarriers.

5 Q. I follow that and you've said that, you made that clear.
6 So they were asking you and they've asked you three
7 times and you finally say yes. One point I hadn't
8 perhaps picked up but you mentioned it earlier is that
9 you had already decided for your own reasons to leave
10 Barnardo's.

11 A. I had left.

12 Q. So it wasn't a case you were headhunted while still in
13 post and you moved from Barnardo's directly to
14 Quarriers? That wasn't the scenario?

15 A. No.

16 Q. You were available if the job was right and if you were
17 willing to take it on, because you were on short-term --

18 A. Theoretically but not in any way as a choice.

19 Q. You weren't looking to take own the reins at Quarriers
20 when you were approached?

21 A. Absolutely correct.

22 Q. And you had grave reservations about taking the job on?

23 A. I didn't know enough about Quarriers to know which of
24 the options might be possible. It wasn't a challenge
25 that I wanted to take on.

- 1 Q. Was it an uncomfortable challenge?
- 2 A. I think out of my whole working career it was probably
3 the most unenjoyable two years of my life, working life.
4 It was very challenging and you were aware that some of
5 the things you were dealing with -- because you were
6 there as a transitory surgeon, in a way, and you either
7 helped the patient die or you helped, through dealing
8 with certain key things, the situation to improve. You
9 were aware that there was a lot throughout the
10 organisation that needed quite serious attention.
- 11 Q. I think, as we heard from Phil Robinson, there was quite
12 a root and branch exercise --
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. -- conducted when you and he and others came on board.
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. The whole organisation was changed and he gave us
17 a number of examples of significant changes, the
18 creation of a human resources department, training
19 centres and things like that, and creation of written
20 policies and so forth. He had a number of them and
21 I don't think I need to go through them with you in
22 detail, but there were quite a number of things that
23 happened in a very short time.
- 24 LADY SMITH: John, you've told me that when you agreed to
25 take the role on, you genuinely didn't know whether the

1 Social Work Services Group had a preferred option. Once
2 you had taken up the role, did you come under any
3 pressure from the Social Services Group to push
4 Quarriers one way or the other?

5 A. No.

6 LADY SMITH: Did they leave you alone?

7 A. As far as I can remember. It was such a welter at the
8 time of trying to see the wood for the trees and
9 slugging it out with Strathclyde and helping change
10 happen in a board of trustees so that things became more
11 possible, and that included getting Sir Graham Hills in
12 as a new chairman, who was interesting: he could have
13 planned very effectively for Hell freezing over, that
14 sort of thing. He was a very competent manager in that
15 way.

16 But the real challenge was trying to get some sort
17 of partnership that was slightly more equal going with
18 Strathclyde Region, that was the main provider, and
19 having very little in your bag to fight that battle
20 with.

21 What happened inside the organisation, a great deal
22 of anything good that happened or for the better inside
23 the organisation would be down to Gerald Lee, who was
24 effectively my deputy, and Phil Robinson, and other
25 people that they brought in subsequently.

1 LADY SMITH: Mr Peoples, it's 1 o'clock now.

2 MR PEOPLES: There are just a couple of things, if I could,
3 just before it escapes me on this topic.

4 The Social Work Services Group, did they take any
5 position in terms of support for Quarriers or support
6 for Strathclyde or were they neutral in terms of who
7 they were backing in this difficult stand-off between
8 Fred Edwards and Quarriers or this problem of costs?
9 Did they have a position?

10 A. I don't have any firm recollection of that. I would
11 have assumed that they thought Strathclyde would well
12 look after themselves and that Quarriers perhaps were --

13 Q. Needing help?

14 A. More worthy of any sympathy or support that they could
15 give. But I don't know that. That's just an
16 assumption. An absolute assumption.

17 MR PEOPLES: I'll maybe come back to that after lunch if
18 I can.

19 LADY SMITH: John, we'll stop now for the lunch break and
20 I'll sit again at 2 o'clock.

21 (1.02 pm)

22 (The lunch adjournment)

23 (2.00 pm)

24 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon, John. When Mr Peoples is
25 ready, we'll carry on if that is all right with you.

1 MR PEOPLES: Good afternoon, John.

2 Can I perhaps concentrate this afternoon on some of
3 the issues that have maybe emerged from evidence we've
4 heard already about establishments run by Barnardo's and
5 I'll maybe explore one or two issues with you.

6 As a general point, during your period of employment
7 as divisional director between 1976 and 1991, did you
8 have any concerns about any of the establishments that
9 you were responsible for or how children residing in
10 them were being treated and cared for? Can you recall
11 whether you had any concerns, either concerns from your
12 own experiences or concerns that were raised with you?

13 A. Specifically to do with children, the treatment of
14 children?

15 Q. Yes. We are clearly dealing with the subject of the
16 care and treatment and also in the context of abuse or
17 alleged abuse that may have happened to children in the
18 care of Barnardo's at various establishments.

19 LADY SMITH: On abuse, John, can I just say one thing you
20 may not be aware of: the terms of reference of this
21 inquiry require me to investigate all forms of abuse of
22 children; you may have already picked that up. But it's
23 not just sexual abuse, it's physical abuse, and one area
24 that we have heard a lot about -- it's been quite
25 striking -- is ways in which children can be emotionally

1 abused and have been emotionally abused in institutions.
2 So it's the widest range of the ways in which a child
3 might be abused when in care that I have to find out
4 about.

5 A. Thank you.

6 (Pause)

7 MR PEOPLES: Perhaps I can ask you this: well, do you
8 feel --

9 A. I was trying to think about ... Having worked inside
10 residential care, I won't say you know exactly what to
11 look for in a wholesome residential child care setting,
12 but you -- there are ways you can form an impression
13 that's a guiding impression. You're aware that probably
14 the character of individual settings can vary a bit in
15 terms of their approaches and so on, but I don't
16 remember being disturbed about any sort of abuse of
17 a child that -- I mean, I've highlighted a couple of
18 incidents which were engaged with.

19 There was a real strong understanding about physical
20 abuse being a no-go area in terms of slapping or
21 whatever, and I don't think I ever ... I can't recall
22 an incident that I came across where a member of staff
23 had lost control or whatever and resorted to any sort of
24 physical chastisement.

25 LADY SMITH: If I can just interrupt you there, that

1 language is interesting to me. You referred to whether
2 a member of staff had lost control and the question that
3 puts in my mind is whether you routinely had in mind the
4 risk of staff losing control with children whose care
5 they were responsible for.

6 A. They were dealing with quite a number of individuals
7 with challenging behaviour, to use the current
8 parlance --

9 LADY SMITH: Yes.

10 A. -- who separately were a challenge in their own right
11 and collectively there was a different dimension that
12 emerged at times. One put a lot of -- I'm not talking
13 about me now, but a lot of investment was put into the
14 support of staff dealing with those sort of challenging
15 situations in terms of being able to take them through
16 or if an individual member of staff in a residential
17 childcare setting was having a particularly difficult or
18 unusual confrontation with an individual child, somebody
19 else who was working on the same team, or one of the
20 senior staff, stepping in and letting them step aside
21 and taking on the dealing with it, the de-escalation of
22 it or whatever.

23 But there are a whole range of options in working
24 with children that are possible and sometimes it's all
25 too easy -- a bit like looking up children in the

1 approved school or List D setting in secure units. It's
2 all too easy for the sake of staff, not the benefit of
3 a child, to fall back on that option.

4 I only ever was asked to witness one thrashing at
5 Aycliffe School and I made a formal complaint about it.
6 I thought it was -- I can still re-run it in my head
7 very vividly. It was barbaric and it was unnecessary.

8 LADY SMITH: That would have been in the late 1960s, was it?

9 You were at Aycliffe between 1967 and 1971.

10 A. Yes, that's right. In fact, it would have been in
11 1967/1968. It was in my first year or year and a half
12 working in the classifying school. I just thought it
13 was absolutely hideous. What sort of trauma, quite
14 apart from the physical bruising to the boy, what sort
15 of legacy it left the boy dealing with in terms of
16 fright and trauma and so on ... anyway. I was glad
17 that, as far as I was aware, in Barnardo's, there was
18 a very real understanding that that was not an option
19 and the tools on the bench, sort of thing.

20 Emotional abuse is rather more difficult.

21 I couldn't say for certain that that didn't happen.
22 Some of what adults, even caring adults, subject
23 individual children to that for some reason or another
24 they don't have a particular liking for can be quite
25 subtle or insidious, yet for the recipient, really quite

1 hurtful and horrid. I can't ... I didn't have
2 enough -- I didn't have a sense of that from my all too
3 infrequent, in this context, visits to units or
4 listening to the way staff described individual children
5 in their reviews or talking to children themselves.

6 I can certainly remember from earlier days -- and
7 this is not Quarriers, but I could imagine it happened
8 at Quarriers -- children saying to each other when they
9 met up, "I wish I lived in your house rather than", sort
10 of thing, "My house mother is a real" ... supply your
11 own words, and you were aware that they were possibly
12 having quite a difficult time.

13 Sometimes it was possible -- this is in the
14 Newcastle days -- to do something about that by moving
15 them but you didn't take another movement for them
16 lightly. But if overall it was going to have
17 a healthier adult/child relationship, it was sometimes
18 a change worth taking.

19 So it's not a very helpful answer on the emotional
20 abuse front. When I came to reflect on the physical or
21 sexual abuse -- sorry, the sexual abuse bit,
22 particularly, I finished up being -- it probably comes
23 through a bit in what I wrote -- surprised that in
24 15 years, what I had registered and what had been
25 formally dealt with was as slight as it was.

1 I just thought -- I didn't have any means of delving
2 further without talking to other people, because I was
3 trying to write things from my own perspective. But
4 I remember, for example, the Thorntoun situation to do
5 with a member of care staff trying -- rather clumsily
6 using a poultice to remove a self-inflicted tattoo from
7 a boy. That was taken very seriously at the time and
8 investigated properly and thoroughly.

9 It wasn't in the same league as the young man who
10 was sacked from Tyneholm. Actually, I missed out
11 earlier to do with the selection of staff, coalface
12 staff and staff at all levels. Checking with the Social
13 Services Group blacklist, which wasn't very lengthy, but
14 nevertheless there were some people on it that you'd not
15 heard of and you didn't want to hear of.

16 MR PEOPLES: Can I maybe then ask you on some of the
17 specifics. In your statement, you at page 8106 at
18 page 7, John, section 16.4, you have a recollection of
19 two allegations of abuse and you tell us about these.

20 One is the one you have just mentioned about the
21 care worker at Thorntoun School in Kilmarnock. I can
22 say that we've already heard evidence about that
23 incident from the individual.

24 A. From the young man?

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Good.

2 Q. I don't think I need to trouble you further on that.

3 I think we got an account of what happened and how he
4 saw it and what happened to the worker concerned. There
5 were legal proceedings, but it didn't result in any form
6 of conviction. I think you indicated he was in fact
7 reinstated after these matters were handled.

8 On the other matter -- and you have just touched on
9 it -- there was a dismissal of a residential care worker
10 who was based at Tyneholm. You have a recollection of
11 that, but you're not sure the police were involved
12 in that particular matter. You tell us at 16.4(a) that
13 the individual concerned was suspended, investigated and
14 ultimately he was dismissed, and his name was added to
15 what you'd referred to as the SWSG blacklist. I just
16 want to ask you a few questions about that matter.

17 Can you remember approximately when this matter came
18 to light? Are we talking -- you were employed between
19 1976 and 1991. Was it in the 1970s or 1980s? Was it
20 early in your period as divisional director or late in
21 it?

22 A. It would be -- I can't remember when Tyneholm closed
23 now. I don't know if I've said --

24 Q. We can probably find out.

25 A. It was whilst John Nesbitt was still the officer in

1 charge, I think he was called then, and Sylvia Massey
2 was the ADD dealing with the unit. I would think it was
3 probably about the mid-1980s.

4 Q. So if we assume it was around about the mid-1980s -- no
5 doubt we can check when Tyneholm itself was closed, it
6 must have happened before then -- this was a residential
7 childcare worker who is the subject of allegations that
8 are investigated. Did that result in a summary
9 dismissal?

10 A. Yes. Sorry, what's a summary dismissal? Just help me
11 in case I'm ...

12 LADY SMITH: It is often referred to as "on the spot", the
13 misconduct is so bad.

14 A. No, he was --

15 LADY SMITH: There was a process?

16 A. He was suspended so he was off the site.

17 MR PEOPLES: There was an investigation?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And that resulted in a dismissal after investigation?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. One thing you don't tell us, and I wonder whether you
22 can help us or not, what do you recall was the nature of
23 the allegation?

24 A. I tried very hard to recall that. I couldn't recall the
25 name of the child involved, nor any substantial nature.

- 1 Q. Was it a male or female?
- 2 A. Pass. I really am sorry about this. It was of a sexual
3 nature.
- 4 Q. A sexual nature? Are you able to help us -- and I do
5 appreciate it was a long time ago -- how this matter
6 came to light? Was it through the child reporting
7 something or did it come to light in some other way?
- 8 A. I dearly wish I could tell you. I can't. The only
9 other bit of hard fact information is I saw that man
10 subsequently out of the blue working as a baggage
11 handler at Edinburgh Airport. That's all I know.
- 12 Q. The man being the care worker?
- 13 A. BLC yes. And I was just glad he wasn't in
14 any way in childcare, because sadly these things can
15 happen, that somebody who's done a bad thing in one
16 place can find --
- 17 Q. This individual that you have named, was he in post for
18 some time before this allegation came to light and the
19 investigation took place?
- 20 A. I would think maybe only a couple of years, but I don't
21 know for sure. That's my ...
- 22 LADY SMITH: You say "only a couple of years", but even
23 allowing for time off, that's probably more than
24 600 days working with children.
- 25 A. That would be the outside of it. It could be anything

1 inside that amount. So you're absolutely right, all
2 sorts of abuses could have happened during that time.
3 But Tyneholm was a relatively healthy unit under
4 John Nesbitt -- I say relatively healthy because nothing
5 can ever be foolproof or absolutely sure, but it was
6 a well and tightly run ship, and I think when
7 John Nesbitt left and his deputy became the officer in
8 charge, I wouldn't have had quite the same confidence
9 about it. But it was heading towards closure within the
10 next year or two anyway as a deliberate, positive --
11 sorry, as a deliberate development.

12 MR PEOPLES: Who was his deputy?

13 A. George Smith.

14 Q. And you didn't have quite the same confidence in his
15 abilities to manage the home?

16 A. John Nesbitt was somebody who -- he was known
17 affectionately -- and I do mean affectionately -- as
18 "Uncle John" by the children. He was a good person to
19 be around. You had the feeling of a good, down to
20 earth, wholesome person, who was much better at what he
21 did than the way he talked or described it.

22 George was maybe a better patter merchant and was
23 okay and nothing untoward that I'm aware of happened
24 under his watch, but he didn't have the same presence
25 and, yes, gravity as John Nesbitt.

- 1 Q. What about [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] ?
- 2 A. [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED], I wouldn't have had the same wholesome
3 feeling about. He was a strange person in my
4 estimation. He was one of these people that, if I'm
5 thinking of the right person, claimed that one of his
6 parents at least was from the [REDACTED] I think the
7 [REDACTED] and I don't know, I never felt 100%
8 sure about him. Yes, I don't have anything concrete to
9 offer, it's just a sort of feeling.
- 10 Q. Don't worry. I can tell you that we'll probably hear
11 evidence about Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] from another witness this
12 week that you worked with called Hugh Mackintosh.
- 13 A. Good.
- 14 Q. My understanding is you may have had some involvement
15 with Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] or some sort of investigation that
16 was carried out into him. Were you involved in that or
17 was that after your time? I think what Mr Mackintosh
18 will tell us is that he received some information about
19 Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] in the 1980s about allegations that he may
20 have abused young boys in establishments down south.
21 But at the time that this information was received by
22 Mr Mackintosh, Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] was employed at Tyneholm as
23 [REDACTED]. Does that ring any bells? Because I think
24 Mr Mackintosh, and I'm not going to dwell on it if you
25 don't remember, seems to recall that Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED]

1 following this information being received was
2 interviewed by you and him and was suspended following
3 further enquiries and investigation. Then Mr Mackintosh
4 carried out an investigation into the matter and indeed
5 he uncovered some indications that he had provided false
6 information to Barnardo's when he applied for a post.

7 A. That rings a bell, Jim, and it's helpful to be reminded
8 about that. Hugh Mackintosh would have conducted that
9 proper investigation as my senior ADD, and when you meet
10 him later this week, you will run into a person who's
11 very thorough and well competent to conduct such an
12 investigation.

13 I certainly remember what you've just described now.
14 I can't remember the nature of the allegations from down
15 south, but I can remember that -- broadly that passage
16 of events -- nor the outcome, sadly, of the
17 investigation.

18 Q. The broad nature and no doubt, as I say, Mr Mackintosh
19 will tell us for himself, was I think information that
20 he had abused young people in his care in some sort of
21 care setting in London.

22 A. What I mean was I can't recall the outcome of the
23 investigation in Scotland.

24 Q. I can maybe help you there again. I think

25 Mr Mackintosh's evidence will be that Mr [REDACTED] BLF [REDACTED] was

1 dismissed on the grounds, as he put it, that he was most
2 likely to have been involved in the abuse of young
3 children in his care in London and his application to
4 work at Tyneholm was based on completely false
5 information. Does that ring any bells?

6 A. Yes, but I feel ashamed that I didn't recall that
7 myself.

8 Q. He was certainly someone who was working at Tyneholm?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. The other person I might ask you about at this stage --
11 do you recall any concerns being raised during your
12 period as divisional director about [REDACTED]
13 at Ravelrig?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. [REDACTED] BKR ?

16 A. [REDACTED] BKR That was to do with bullying staff, if
17 I remember rightly, rather than abusing children.

18 Q. Okay. Was there any suggestion that his behaviour might
19 go beyond bullying of staff, can you recall? I'm not
20 suggesting it was necessarily proved, but were there any
21 concerns or suggestions that that might be the case?

22 A. No. It was quite difficult to get inside -- to get
23 feedback from staff at Ravelrig. They were quite a --
24 I was going to say a close-knit team. They were a team,
25 some members of whom I think were frightened of their

1 [REDACTED] BKR and I was involved in dismissing
2 him.

3 That went to appeal and the evidence to support the
4 dismissal was felt to be not substantial enough and
5 he was reinstated. That was pretty close to the end of
6 my time, I think, as divisional director.

7 Q. Do you happen to know whether subsequently Mr BKR was
8 dismissed?

9 A. I don't know. Am I allowed to ask, was he?

10 Q. You can ask me. I can say I think we'll get evidence to
11 the effect that there may have been some further
12 investigations into Mr BKR and his line manager,
13 David Pomfret.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Which resulted in a decision by Mr Mackintosh -- and it
16 may be that this was when he took over from you -- he
17 made the decision that there was too much concern, as he
18 put it, over a lengthy period and ended the employment
19 of both Mr Pomfret and Mr BKR .

20 A. Right.

21 Q. That's not something that you recall happening in your
22 time?

23 A. No, it wasn't.

24 Q. So we'd have to find out more from him?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You are aware that at least in your time there were
2 concerns raised about, as you recall, his behaviour
3 towards [REDACTED] staff at Ravelrig?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And that there was a reluctance --

6 A. I don't know how much [REDACTED] staff, I can't
7 remember that, but certainly there were members of staff
8 at Ravelrig who had an unacceptable time under his

9 [REDACTED]

10 Q. Do you happen to recall whether any view was formed when
11 this matter came to light in your time as to whether
12 he was being effectively managed and supervised by the
13 assistant director, Mr Pomfret? Or is that not ringing
14 any bells?

15 A. I'm just thinking about David Pomfret, who for quite
16 a long time, was a senior residential officer. That was
17 perhaps a role that he was most competent in. He was
18 certainly ... He was the least able of my ADDs --
19 actually, that's not true, because I had another ADD who
20 had been a very good project leader, who I think
21 probably, after about a year, I dismissed because
22 I didn't have confidence in what he was sharing. Sorry,
23 that's not talking about David Pomfret though.

24 Q. Would you care to name him?

25 A. Yes, just a minute: Keith Livie.

1 Q. Who had worked at South Oswald Road as a project leader
2 as one time?

3 A. No, he ran Cruachan, the unit for diabetic and dietetic
4 children on the same campus or on the same grounds as
5 Ravelrig. When he was dismissed, he went to Jersey to
6 run a children's home there. But there was no --

7 Q. Not one of the ones that's become notorious, I hope?

8 A. I don't know that, but I have no doubt whatsoever that
9 he was a wholesome project leader. He ran a decent
10 project. When he became an ADD, which he did in a sort
11 of open competition situation, the wife of the then
12 Director of Social Work for Lothian Region, who herself
13 had worked in residential care in the past, became his
14 replacement as project leader at Cruachan.

15 Q. Who was that?

16 A. Angela Kent.

17 Q. Was that Roger Kent's wife?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. At one stage was he Director of Social Work at Lothian?

20 A. During that time he was Director of Social Work and from
21 time to time was a very involved volunteer in Cruachan.

22 Q. Okay.

23 LADY SMITH: And again, that's not at Cruachan, that's the
24 one at Balerno, Cruachan, is it?

25 A. Yes. There are two on the same big grounds there.

1 There was the one in the old house, which was Ravelrig,
2 for children with severe and profound mental handicap,
3 and Cruachan was the one that worked closely with the
4 Sick Kids Hospital, and Professor Jim Farquhar, and was
5 a much smaller purpose-built unit.

6 MR PEOPLES: Ravelrig was the one [REDACTED] BKR [REDACTED] and had
7 children with learning difficulties?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What sort of age range would these children be, broadly?

10 A. Probably 7 through to maybe 17 or 18.

11 Q. And boys and girls?

12 A. Yes. Split into four small self-contained house units,
13 with about five or six youngsters in each.

14 Q. I suppose that a general issue might arise about how
15 much would you as the divisional director actually know
16 about what was going on on a day-to-day basis at
17 particular establishments. I'm not putting that point
18 as a criticism of you, I'm just exploring it, so don't
19 take it the wrong way.

20 So far as knowledge of day-to-day life in particular
21 establishments, how confident are you, looking back,
22 that you would have any real knowledge of what life was
23 like for children or particular children in any of the
24 establishments that were run by Barnardo's? How
25 confident would you be?

1 A. I might be forgiven for having a very slanted view of
2 what went on in residential settings because --

3 LADY SMITH: John, can you get a little nearer the
4 microphone?

5 A. It was more often the difficult stuff, the challenging
6 stuff, the bad news that came my way, or the need for
7 change or the negotiation for an additional member of
8 staff, or whatever, than good news.

9 That's why it was really quite a helpful
10 counterbalance for me to chair reviews in each of the
11 residential settings, schools and childcare settings,
12 residential settings, or visit and talk to children,
13 talk to staff, talk to the local teacher, et cetera, et
14 cetera, because you got a more wholesome and rounded
15 picture then. But still very partial. It was like
16 a snapshot on a day or something like that.

17 MR PEOPLES: Would your visits be announced?

18 A. Not always, and deliberately so, but the majority would
19 have been.

20 Q. You have mentioned the key role of assistant divisional
21 director, and each of these positions appeared to have
22 had line management responsibility for particular
23 establishments and project leaders. Can I take it from
24 that structure that to some extent the individuals in
25 these posts would be your eyes and ears for a lot of

1 time because they would be visiting more regularly than
2 you were?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And they'd be expected to liaise with staff, to perhaps
5 speak to children, to talk to the project leader?

6 A. They would be expected -- I mean, if they had four or
7 five projects of one sort or another each, they would be
8 expected to be -- well, to divide their full-time thing
9 accordingly to what was needed at the time, but to
10 spread it across those four or five projects in a way
11 that they had at the very least satisfactory knowledge
12 for their own comfort in what was going on in those
13 settings.

14 Q. Just following that through, for this system to work
15 effectively, firstly you need the assistant director to
16 be doing the job properly?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Secondly, you need the project leader to be doing his or
19 her job properly --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- because they in turn have supervisory
22 responsibilities for their staff?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And it was expected in your day, as I understand it,
25 that staff would receive individual supervision. Was

- 1 that a feature in life of your time?
- 2 A. Yes, all childcare staff would have been expected to get
3 a regular supervision session with their line manager.
- 4 Q. And that would be a principal way in which the project
5 leader and line manager would gain information about the
6 staff and about how things were being run, would it not?
- 7 A. I think that's a formal way, but it's --
- 8 Q. It's not the only way?
- 9 A. It's by no means the most valuable way, I was going on
10 to say, in that whether they were called officer in
11 charge, head of care or project leader, as it finally
12 came to be called, in a residential setting, they would
13 be out and around in that setting and know a lot about
14 the chemistry of it and relationships and thinking about
15 horses for courses in terms of mini staff teams working
16 together and relationships between individual workers
17 and individual children and so on.
- 18 Q. I take it, while I take the point you're making, you're
19 still nonetheless, I take it, not departing from a view
20 that one-to-one staff supervision of the kind that was
21 put in place was an important element of oversight and
22 supervision --
- 23 A. Absolutely.
- 24 Q. -- and a way in which staff could talk over matters?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. You could identify any issues that they had or any
2 concerns, you could address any weaknesses that were
3 evident from these regular engagements?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. So they are quite a key component of the structure?
- 6 A. Absolutely. For both the member of staff who's being
7 supervised and their supervisor.
- 8 Q. It's a form, I suppose, of evaluation and continuous
9 performance assessment and staff development and so
10 forth; is it?
- 11 A. Yes, and accountability as well.
- 12 Q. The reason I mention that is that we heard evidence from
13 one witness, and I don't know if you'd be familiar with
14 her, Mary Roebuck. I think she was known as
15 Mary Lennie.
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. I think she worked at Glasclune between 1976 and 1982.
18 She may have worked at --
- 19 A. Sorry, I'm getting her mixed up with a lady called
20 Isobel. I can't remember who was at Tyneholm.
- 21 Q. This lady, Mrs Roebuck, did work at Glasclune between
22 1976 and 1982 until it closed, following the fire and
23 the short period at St Baldred's Tower. When asked
24 about the issue of supervision, she told the inquiry
25 that the supervision in her time was "a bit

1 haphazard" -- and that was her expression -- and that,
2 especially after Mrs Falconer had left Glasclune a year
3 after she had joined, "It kind of fell by the wayside",
4 was the way she put it.

5 If we accept that evidence, do you accept that would
6 put a serious --

7 A. Indeed.

8 Q. -- dent in the wall --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- and be a serious deficiency in the system?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Because a system has to work in all its parts?

13 A. Absolutely. I have no reason to doubt that comment from
14 her either.

15 Q. Does that go back to one point that you made earlier
16 today, that you made this morning that you can put all
17 the arrangements in place and all the reporting systems
18 and feedback systems, but ultimately they have to be
19 implemented on the ground --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- and they have to work in all their parts to be
22 effective and to do the job they were designed to do?

23 A. Absolutely fair comment.

24 Q. So if they're not working, then the system's not working
25 effectively?

1 A. The system is vulnerable to falling down in one way or
2 another.

3 Q. And that could mean that the children who are served by
4 the system are put at greater risk?

5 A. They could be.

6 Q. Another point: Mrs Roebuck was asked a direct question
7 was -- it was established and I think you've probably
8 told us that Glasclune in your time, and indeed in her
9 time, was seen as a unit for children with behavioural
10 and emotional difficulties, quite significant ones in
11 some cases and the children could be quite challenging.
12 Is that your recollection of the type of profile of
13 child that was there?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Well, she was asked during her evidence whether she felt
16 equipped or skilled to manage vulnerable children with
17 emotional and behavioural problems. In her evidence and
18 reflecting on the matter, because she was quite young
19 at the time, she said that she was not skilled, she was
20 not experienced, she didn't have great life experience
21 when she worked there between 1976 and 1982. So how
22 do you respond to that? She said:

23 "It was quite a young workforce generally speaking
24 and some didn't stay very long."

25 Is that something you were aware of?

1 A. I have to recognise very easily her feeling of being
2 exposed and her feet maybe not feeling firmly planted on
3 the ground in terms of what she was doing and being
4 asked to do. I've had that feeling myself in one or two
5 situations. But, yes, at a time when you're having to
6 recruit or replace staff, you are looking for the best
7 you can get your hands on. And if you're dealing with
8 youngsters who are towards the more challenging end of
9 the scale, people with good experience of that, that you
10 can rely on toeing into the equation -- they are not too
11 easy to come by.

12 Q. Can I just also say, it wasn't just Mrs Roebuck. We've
13 had some evidence from others in different places that
14 there was an absence of training that might have been
15 specifically geared to caring for children with
16 emotional and behavioural difficulties and problems who
17 might displaying challenging behaviour. I think there
18 was evidence to that effect, that they didn't feel they
19 got specific training that equipped them to deal with
20 that sort of child. How do you respond to that? Should
21 they have had such training, first of all, and can you
22 recall there being such training given?

23 A. I can recall training that focused on aspects of
24 behaviour sometimes. Sometimes provided by -- well,
25 often provided from outwith the organisation. I can

1 recall key members of staff who'd be in that sort of
2 position, I'm sure, at times sharing their feeling of
3 not being on top of things in a case review where there
4 were other professionals there from outside or inside
5 the organisation, where really quite practical
6 discussions took place about what might be tried and
7 what additional resources could be brought to bear and
8 so on.

9 I can remember -- I mean, the divisional senior
10 staff team meeting where all the project leaders came
11 together, latterly probably only slightly less than
12 a half of them, 22, less than half of the 22 -- well,
13 much less towards the end -- would be residential care.
14 But there was an interest from the other project leaders
15 to be listening and asking questions in a way that was
16 constructive and so on. And sometimes out of that,
17 because the principal training officer and the two
18 training officers were sitting in on that, they would be
19 asked to respond to a particular need that had been
20 identified. And sometimes they would be asked to do
21 that by an individual ADD, sometimes they would pick it
22 up themselves from an involvement with a residential
23 unit and bring it back to the ADD and/or myself.

24 But that was by no means comprehensive or
25 foolproof --

- 1 Q. I was going to say.
- 2 A. -- and it doesn't surprise me that there were members of
3 staff sharing that sort of experience. It was quite
4 challenging work at every level.
- 5 Q. All the more reason, though, to ensure that they did
6 have the necessary training and skills to handle those
7 situations, particularly where you've already alluded to
8 the issue of you don't want a situation where people are
9 losing control.
- 10 A. No, you do. It's an interesting question back, if you
11 like, which I don't mean. Where do you draw on that
12 expertise at that time in Scotland that is in any way
13 more informed or experienced than what you've got in
14 your own organisation collectively? I'm not trying to
15 in any way diminish what you're saying, I'm sure that
16 was the -- sorry, I'm sure that was the case and true.
- 17 LADY SMITH: John, are you there taking us back to what you
18 were saying earlier about the extent of Barnardo's work
19 in Britain and the amount of skill and experience that
20 could be drawn on within the entire Barnardo's
21 organisation?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 MR PEOPLES: But the point is that Mrs Roebuck at least,
24 between 1976 and 1982, on reflection, basically is
25 telling us that she probably felt a bit out of her depth

1 because she didn't have the skill set to deal with the
2 sort of children that she was being asked to care for.

3 A. She's also maybe commenting on what she perceived as the
4 support that she was getting --

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. -- and that's a very real feeling. For some, it can be
7 a disabling feeling.

8 Q. It sounds as if you're saying you can put all these
9 systems in place, but ultimately you will still get
10 people in Mrs Roebuck's position who don't get the
11 necessary support, skill, training and so forth at times
12 to do the job they're being asked to do, which is
13 challenging in itself.

14 A. I have to say that's a reflection on the real world
15 I know and have worked in.

16 Q. Was that the real world you were working in between 1976
17 and 1991 at Barnardo's?

18 A. Yes. But you tried to ensure that the resources that
19 were brought to bear working with young people were as
20 well supported and appropriate as possible.

21 Just to go back to the formal training thing,
22 Barnardo's ran quite a healthy formal professional
23 training programme where staff were seconded and
24 expected to bond themselves to the organisation for
25 something like two or three years after returning from

1 acquiring a professional qualification. But in a sense,
2 there were limits to how far that further equipped them
3 to do the job. There's no substitute for experience and
4 a good apprenticeship and so on.

5 Q. Can I ask you this: in your time, 1976 to 1991,
6 am I right in thinking that not all residential care
7 workers employed by Barnardo's in the various
8 establishments in Scotland had qualifications in
9 residential childcare?

10 A. The minority would have.

11 Q. In your time as divisional director -- again, I'm not
12 making a criticism, I want to know the factual
13 position -- was there any system of mandatory training
14 in operation at any time?

15 A. By mandatory, do you mean obligatory?

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. No.

18 Q. Was consideration ever given to introduction of an
19 obligatory training programme for all staff who worked
20 in residential care establishments?

21 A. I can't remember. "I don't believe so" is the closest
22 I can come to a firm statement there. I have not
23 a vestige of recollection about even it being suggested.

24 Q. This may touch on something you've said in answer to
25 some of the recent questions I've asked. I did ask you

1 about policy matters like staffing levels this morning,
2 but on a more practical level in the period you were
3 divisional director in Scotland, in relation to
4 recruiting staff, was there difficulty at times
5 recruiting basic grade care staff for establishments?

6 A. For sure. There were times when we were short of one,
7 two staff in a unit, and we would run a normal
8 recruitment drive and we would not be satisfied with any
9 of the people who were shortlisted. We were not short
10 of applicants, but we were short of people who met what
11 we felt were the requirements of somebody who would make
12 an appropriate contribution or have the potential to
13 develop --

14 Q. Did you sometimes have to take what was on offer because
15 you needed resources?

16 A. I'm sure there were times when we compromised.

17 Q. Was there difficulty, at least in the case of some
18 establishments, in retaining staff for any length of
19 time, residential care staff?

20 A. I don't recall one particular establishment where that
21 was obvious.

22 Q. I'm going to put a different point and I'm taking you
23 back now to the early 1970s and you joined Barnardo's in
24 1976. I just wonder whether the situation was the same
25 when you joined and indeed had changed by the time you

1 left.

2 In the early 1970s we heard evidence from a witness
3 called Eric, that was his pseudonym, who was a care
4 assistant then, and he described a state of affairs
5 where he was a care assistant during that period where
6 there was no specific induction, there was no handbook
7 or written guidance given to him, there was no
8 significant in-service training. He didn't know what
9 checks were made by his care provider to see if he was
10 doing his job properly. There was no individual
11 supervision or staff meetings. In general I think
12 he was describing an apparent lack of formal systems,
13 processes and procedures.

14 Do you have any difficulty in believing that was the
15 state of affairs at that time?

16 A. I have to respect that as his experience.

17 Q. In your time, what was done to address that state of
18 affairs if that is a fair description of an experience
19 of a care assistant in the early 1970s? Were these
20 matters addressed in your time, do you think, or some of
21 them?

22 A. In my written contribution, as far as I was able to
23 recall it, I have reflected the elements that I believe
24 were in place and were helped to be in place through
25 ADDs and the heads of units and so on. That's the only

1 positive comment I can make about it. At what point in
2 time it became universal in the residential settings in
3 Scotland, I can't give you a year or two to that. All
4 I know is right from the outset I was working with an
5 organisation and senior colleagues who felt that those
6 were essential basic components of a healthy residential
7 childcare system.

8 Q. Another issue which --

9 A. But you're saying for one member of staff there was an
10 unhappy absence of any of that, and that's concerning.

11 Q. I think we've had other evidence from other people that
12 not everything was done on a formalised basis and
13 specific training on some matters may not have been, to
14 their recollection, given. We've had, for example,
15 evidence that some don't recall getting training in the
16 use of restraint or restraint techniques, which, as
17 I understand it, is something that they ought to have
18 received if they're dealing with children with
19 behavioural difficulties who may lose control and
20 require some form of restraint at times.

21 A. Mm-hm.

22 Q. That should --

23 A. I would expect that that was more fully embraced in some
24 settings and I can't bring myself -- not because I don't
25 want to, but through lack of knowledge in other

1 settings. I mean, there were some settings where it was
2 really quite an important part of one extreme of what
3 staff were called upon to do and there obviously were
4 important safeguards built in so that it was done
5 properly and for as little as possible and so on because
6 it often enraged or inflamed a situation rather than --

7 Q. One point that did come out from at least one, I think,
8 project leader and indeed his assistant who was working
9 in South Oswald Road in the 1980s was that perhaps they
10 did not fully recognise at the time the impact that use
11 of restraint procedures might have on a young person.
12 And in fact, they may be capable of re-traumatising them
13 or bringing back traumatic experiences --

14 A. Yes, absolutely.

15 Q. -- from their perception of the situation, particularly
16 if they were, for example, held face-down on the floor,
17 which there was some evidence that that did happen from
18 time to time?

19 A. Right. But no evidence that it was essential?

20 Q. Well, I think they thought there was a situation where
21 there was a loss of control, but they were describing
22 what action was taken to address that situation but
23 recognising a tension between the idea of doing
24 something to protect themselves or others and the
25 effects that their actions were having on the young

1 person?

2 A. But it's --

3 Q. They said they were even having discussions at the time
4 about the matter, about the difficulty that that
5 requirement of restraint would have in the context of
6 vulnerable children.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did that discussion take place at divisional management
9 team level?

10 A. Certainly I was aware of discussions going on between
11 Sylvia Massey and Sam Craig and Leon Fulcher, I think,
12 was the third in charge there, and interestingly he's
13 gone on to write very significantly about residential
14 childcare and its practice, sort of thing. It seemed --
15 I can't remember much about the sense of it, but it
16 seemed entirely healthy and appropriate that that was
17 being looked at between that staff group because it was
18 a particular issue for them, against a backcloth of
19 recognising that it was all too easy for an adult to
20 overwhelm a child physically and therefore if it was
21 being resorted to, a need to do it, it had to be done
22 very carefully and -- "knowledgeably" is the wrong word,
23 but sensibly or appropriately.

24 LADY SMITH: I think one of the principles we heard about
25 was the need to approach a restraint on the basis that

1 your objective was to make the child feel safe and
2 supported, not being physically punished.

3 A. I would feel confident that there were occasions when it
4 was a need to control that was the driving impulse for
5 the member of staff and not a need to help a child feel
6 safe. Just being aware of sometimes how it can feel to
7 be a member of staff in a situation like that with --
8 yes, faced with a situation that you are increasingly
9 concerned or out of control with.

10 LADY SMITH: Yes. I'm not trying to put words in your
11 mouth, but are you talking about the risk of meeting
12 a child's loss of control with adult loss of control --

13 A. Yes.

14 LADY SMITH: -- which has a high risk of being harmful to
15 the child?

16 A. At the very least it has a high risk of not being in the
17 best interest of the child, but being driven by the need
18 of a member of staff.

19 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

20 MR PEOPLES: We've discussed one of the purposes of having
21 a structure where the assistant divisional director is
22 in regular contact with individual establishments as
23 part of his or her line management responsibilities.
24 Presumably one of the things that that system ought to
25 bring about is disclosure of any concerns that staff may

1 have within the establishment about either practices or
2 the conduct of other staff or matters of that kind.
3 That would be one way -- the system is set up to try and
4 obtain that knowledge and pass that knowledge on
5 appropriately.

6 A. At its simplest, that's one of its functions.

7 Q. If concerns were expressed by a staff member about
8 another staff member to the project leader about their
9 closeness of the relationship they had with a resident,
10 the concern being enough to raise it with the project
11 leader, would you expect that leader to pass that
12 information up the chain?

13 A. I would hope that that was the case.

14 Q. Would it be something you would expect to be made aware
15 of?

16 A. More often than not, yes. I'd rather have shared with
17 me something that turned out to be innocuous or
18 groundless or something like that ten times than miss
19 something that was more concerning, not be aware of
20 something that was more concerning.

21 I had a responsibility to support the ADDs in
22 situations that they sometimes were struggling with or
23 unsure how to proceed with or engage with.

24 Q. We did hear some evidence from Mrs Roebuck, who
25 expressed concerns about the closeness of a relationship

1 of another member of staff, [REDACTED] QFB with
2 a particular boy at Glasclune. She spoke to
3 Eric Falconer about the matter. Is that something that
4 ever came to your attention that these concerns had been
5 voiced for whatever reason? Do you remember [REDACTED] QFB
6 coming up in discussions?

7 A. I remember [REDACTED] QFB as a person. I'm trying to think
8 whether I was aware of any of that sort of concern about
9 him.

10 LADY SMITH: What do you remember about him?

11 A. I remember that he -- if it's the right person I'm
12 thinking about, I remember, I think, that he had been in
13 childcare, residential childcare, as a worker, I think
14 it was in Fife, before he came to us, and that he was
15 a basic residential childcare worker rather than a team
16 leader or whatever with us. But that's about the limit
17 of it.

18 MR PEOPLES: We have heard evidence, not from the same
19 source, by a resident, that he suffered serious sexual
20 abuse at the hands of Mr [REDACTED] QFB .

21 A. Right. And that went unchecked whilst Mary Quigley was
22 sharing her concern with the --

23 Q. I should say the concern she shared was about another
24 boy, not the boy who told us he was abused.

25 A. That's concerning.

1 Q. But the boy who told us he'd been abused, who gave
2 evidence to this inquiry, named Mr [REDACTED] QFB as his abuser,
3 said it concerned at Glasclune and indeed some of the
4 abuse occurred in Mr [REDACTED] QFB's private quarters when they
5 were alone together.

6 I was going to ask you about that: were you aware
7 that in the 1970s at Glasclune children might be
8 spending time alone with staff members in their private
9 quarters? Were you aware that that was happening?

10 A. I wasn't aware of that happening, but nor do I find it
11 acceptable or necessary. I mean, there are times when
12 a member of staff needs to work on -- needs to have time
13 out with a child, but there are all sorts of places in
14 a residential setting where you can go to get space to
15 do that. It's not appropriate to go into your own
16 setting to do that.

17 Q. Was there any -- to your knowledge, was there any
18 policy, position or rule on the part of the organisation
19 that should have prevented that happening or should have
20 been observed by the staff at the establishment and
21 reported if it was not being observed? Can you recall?

22 A. I can't recall any specific policy guideline, but it's
23 the sort of basic that I would have hoped was generally
24 accepted by people who were in positions of
25 responsibility and in a position to prevent it as well,

1 should it come up as an issue.

2 Q. There was other evidence that -- at least one member of
3 staff considered that Barnardo's in the 1970s, at least,
4 were actively encouraging members of staff on occasions
5 to take children to their own homes, and indeed some
6 staff members did, including Mr QFB, I should say.
7 There was evidence to that effect. Would that be
8 accurate to say that the organisation's position was
9 that taking children, a member of staff taking a child
10 unaccompanied to their own home was actively encouraged?
11 Was that encouraged by you as divisional director?
12 Would you have encouraged it, had it been raised with
13 you?

14 A. The answer to the first part of your question there is
15 no. You have just heard what I said about it being
16 basically inappropriate and unnecessary. I'm trying to
17 imagine that the ADDs that I was working with at the
18 time might have varied from that view.

19 I can remember times when arrangements for special
20 one-to-one activities came up, like, for example, in
21 a case review that if we had a youngster who was mad
22 keen on football and we had a member of staff who got on
23 well with him at football that they might start to go to
24 Hibs or whenever Hibs played at home together.

25 As I said this morning, it's perfectly possible for

1 something unacceptable to take place during a car
2 journey or on a lonely road on the way back or the way,
3 those sort of things.

4 Those were built into an individual's programme,
5 intended as a positive relationship building for
6 a youngster who maybe hadn't had an substantial healthy
7 relationship or didn't trust adults or whatever. It's
8 certainly not infallible.

9 Q. I wonder what's changed because we are aware, I think,
10 from information that Barnardo's gave, and indeed we've
11 seen a document to this effect, that there was
12 a circular in the 1950s -- 1953, I believe -- which
13 imposed a prohibition on boys staying overnight with
14 single men outwith the establishment they were residing
15 in. What changed between 1953 and 1970s to lead to
16 a different practice being adopted?

17 A. Presumably, if that was a policy in the 1950s, it would
18 still be there in the policy guidelines when I worked
19 with Barnardo's. What I was saying was it hadn't lapsed
20 then. I couldn't remember there being any policy
21 guidelines. It was something that was so basic that
22 I would have -- I don't think it would have been an
23 unreasonable expectation that it wasn't a go area.

24 LADY SMITH: Sorry, are you saying in effect that you have
25 no recollection of the Four Cs, of which you were

1 a member, addressing this policy issue in your time
2 there? And that's the policy of whether it was okay to
3 take a child to your home if you are a member of staff.

4 A. I think it was taken for granted as part of what wasn't
5 acceptable. I can't remember a specific focus on it
6 during --

7 MR PEOPLES: John, I should in fairness say to you that
8 obviously this circular was 1953 and it was in the days
9 of the Barnardo Book, which was well before you joined
10 Barnardo's. That was a system of, I suppose, issuing
11 rules on various situations. I think by the time you
12 joined, as you told us earlier, you were a member of the
13 Central Child Committee, which would have been
14 responsible for policy-making and I think at that time
15 there was certainly a system as I understand it of
16 circulars and ultimately a system that produced some
17 sort of policy manual, which replaced the circular
18 system. I think that all happened in your time.

19 A. Yes. It wasn't an unfairness to me. What I was saying
20 was in effect, Barnardo's at any point in time, say 1976
21 or 1991, was the -- should have been the product of its
22 experience and should have been building on things as
23 the foundation of its work, of its work with children,
24 of its work with families and so on and so on, rather
25 than the whole slate got wiped clean every now and again

1 and you had to start from no assumption, no starting
2 point.

3 Q. Do you think, though, the concept --

4 A. And that's the basic -- is what I was saying.

5 Q. Do you think the general concept, which we take for
6 granted perhaps these days of some form of risk
7 assessment processes -- was that a concept which in your
8 time, 1976 to 1991, was at the forefront of the minds of
9 those in managerial positions, senior positions, in care
10 organisations that there should be risk assessment at
11 all levels and in relation to basically all situations
12 which might carry a risk of harm or abuse or risk to
13 safety or health? Do you think that concept was less
14 recognised and less well applied?

15 A. It certainly wasn't a term that was used in my
16 recollection at all. It was a question of staff, either
17 individually or collectively, acquiring something which
18 I might best describe as becoming streetwise for the
19 situation that they were working in and that was not,
20 again, starting out from a fresh start every time a new
21 member of staff started; it was something that was
22 partly passed on, passed down, partly added to and so
23 on, through experiences that would emerge in working
24 with children that maybe had not been experienced before
25 but nevertheless were real and needed to be resolved or

1 embraced as positively as possible.

2 Q. Can I move to a different matter, again maybe going back
3 to training? You've told us that you have no
4 recollection of any mandatory training system as such.
5 But clearly, there were training courses, training
6 opportunities. There was training arrangements as part
7 of the organisational arrangements in your time. There
8 has been some evidence already that quite a lot of, what
9 I perhaps could say in quotes, learning of people who
10 came into the care settings consisted of learning on the
11 job and acquiring learning from more senior members of
12 staff at a particular unit.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Historically, was that often the way things were done?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Even in your time?

17 A. I'm sure in the majority of situations, that's how it
18 happened.

19 Q. And is there a danger in that system that you're only as
20 good as the person you learn from?

21 A. Of course.

22 Q. And you can get variations and inconsistencies in
23 practice with all the attendant consequences that that
24 can bring?

25 A. That's one of the many contributory reasons why your

1 choice of a head of care and a deputy head of care and
2 so on is so crucial to what they do, because the way
3 they lead their staff, the way they help their staff
4 develop, is a very key part of the mark they put on
5 their residential setting.

6 Q. Can I go back, again, because I don't think I maybe
7 canvassed this with you, in relation to the issue of
8 restraint, so far I think the evidence we've heard was
9 that there was really no attempt to explain to all
10 children on admission to Barnardo's that restraint might
11 be used, why it would be used, and what form it might
12 take. There was no general policy of doing that so that
13 they at least were educated as to the possibility of
14 something and why it might be done. Is that in
15 accordance with your recollection of how things were?

16 A. Yes, and I would feel quite comfortable about that,
17 you'll be horrified to hear, because for the vast
18 majority of children we were involved with, it never
19 became an issue and why would you introduce it as some
20 sort of foreign aspect when they were undergoing the
21 trauma of yet another move or coming away from their
22 family or coming out of a broken down foster home or
23 something like that. That was far from the -- drawing
24 that sort of -- pointing out that sort of extreme
25 boundary, if I put it as clumsily as that, wasn't

1 a priority.

2 Q. I understand your concerns, but no doubt there are ways
3 of doing that without necessarily traumatising the child
4 by putting that at the forefront of your first
5 conversation with them. Surely giving some education
6 about how things operate in a particular new strange
7 environment is generally a good thing, including not
8 just what might happen if certain situations arise, but
9 also what is acceptable on the part of staff and not
10 acceptable? Was anything of that kind done to tell
11 children, look, if this happens, then we regard that as
12 something that's bad on the part of staff and you must
13 tell us right away? Was anything of that nature put in
14 place to educate?

15 A. I would think the majority of the residential childcare
16 staff were working with individual children to help them
17 get a better appreciation of cause and effect to do with
18 their behaviour, to do with their selfishness, whatever.
19 And for some children, there was a more deep or urgent
20 need for that than others. But to just single out one
21 aspect of that and say, "That's where there is an
22 absolute boundary where you'll win the jackpot", was
23 taking it out of context in a way that would only be
24 relevant and experienced by a small majority rather
25 than --

- 1 Q. What if you have children who come from a lifestyle
2 where they don't know what is acceptable and
3 unacceptable in a civilised society where individuals
4 are respected as individual human beings and treated
5 with respect? What if they come from that environment,
6 how are you expecting them to know whether certain
7 conduct that they may have experienced before care and
8 then experienced in care is something that they can
9 complain about if you don't tell them?
- 10 A. I think that latter connection is a fair comment. But
11 if you are working, as we were, with many children like
12 that who'd come from situations where they had
13 personally experienced a lot of physical abuse or had
14 been told by their ... where they lived, where they went
15 to school and so on, "You're rubbish", you're dealing
16 with building self-knowledge, self-respect, the ability
17 to share, all sorts of very, very basic things that were
18 missing, as well as trusting adults if they'd never had
19 a stable male figure in their life or even somebody who
20 felt they were loved at home, something as basic as
21 that, that's part of the packages. There's no two that
22 are the same, but there are a lot of common needs to be
23 addressed, quite importantly, if they're going to be
24 able to stand on their own feet and be an acceptable, if
25 not even better, a responsible member of society in the

1 future when they are responsible for their own
2 self-management.

3 Q. Also, to be able to look after themselves and respond to
4 certain situations within care before they ever get out
5 of care, are they not entitled to a degree of education
6 that will equip them to recognise situations of danger
7 and to put in place systems which will encourage them to
8 report that?

9 A. Absolutely, and that is going -- that would be going on
10 daily to help them. That's why I used the term "cause
11 and effect": "You've just done that to so-and-so", or,
12 "You have just got yourself in a position where ..."
13 Things, to use popular expressions, like focusing on
14 anger management and how to -- techniques to deal with
15 that and so on are an extreme example of it. But we're
16 talking about things as simple as sharing and respecting
17 other children you're alongside.

18 Q. I suppose I'm talking about something maybe more
19 difficult, which I think a number of witnesses have
20 recognised, the difficulty of speaking up and disclosing
21 a complaint about an adult in a position of authority
22 by, on one view, a powerless, vulnerable young person
23 who's about to make a complaint to the people who employ
24 that person that they've done something bad to them.
25 What was done in your time to try and encourage them?

1 Because you've said you're quite surprised by the few
2 allegations that you can recall coming up in the
3 15 years you worked with Barnardo's. You mentioned that
4 point earlier. So what was done to encourage reporting,
5 to speak up, to be confident enough to say if something
6 wrong was happening?

7 A. There's another element, Jim, to add on to how it might
8 feel to a young person, and that's the fear of making
9 a complaint and there being a blowback that costs you
10 quite seriously because you want a future in that
11 setting rather than -- there are all sorts of ways you
12 could find --

13 Q. If there's fear of the consequences, yet we know that
14 things perhaps do go on and they should be reported but
15 they're under-reported, and I think that is a suggestion
16 that you are alluding to, if you think there were few
17 allegations that came to light in your 15 years,
18 a surprisingly few number, what do you do to change that
19 and what did you do to encourage reporting?

20 A. One of the -- there are a number of opportunities for
21 a youngster to share a concern --

22 LADY SMITH: John, I think what I would like to do is let
23 you think about those for five minutes during an
24 afternoon break. I always have an afternoon break at
25 this stage, partly to give our wonderful stenographers

1 a breather. We'll have about five minutes and then
2 return.

3 (3.16 pm)

4 (A short break)

5 (3.30 pm)

6 MR PEOPLES: John, I don't know whether you're in a position
7 to give me an answer to the sort of general point I was
8 making about the issue of -- the issue we were
9 discussing was trying to instil, in some way, in young
10 persons confidence to report concerns against
11 a background where I think we've certainly heard
12 evidence that there's a recognition that the vulnerable
13 young persons can find great difficulty even
14 disclosing -- well, disclosing complaints about
15 behaviour or conduct of people who care for them to
16 other adults, whether in the care setting or otherwise.
17 It seems to be something that's a recognised problem
18 that many people will just stay silent for one reason or
19 another.

20 You mentioned one reason, I think, the fear of what
21 might happen next.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. There may be all sorts of reasons why it happened, but
24 it does seem to happen and it seems to be something
25 recognised that it does happen. Were steps taken to try

1 and change that state of affairs to your knowledge?

2 A. Despite five minutes' reflection, I can't say that I can
3 recall any initiative taken by Barnardo's to bring that
4 to the attention of children. All I've been able to
5 recall is something that I can only describe as hit and
6 miss, where a concern of a child might come through
7 their involvement in the local village school and
8 sharing it with another child who then went and told the
9 teacher, or sharing it with the teacher themselves, or
10 sharing it with a member of staff in the residential
11 setting who they felt comfortable with, who might have
12 been somebody like the cook or something like that, who
13 always liked them and gave them an extra slice of cake
14 when nobody was looking, that sort of thing.

15 Although they would have a designated key worker who
16 was usually based on who they apparently got on
17 comfortably with and positively and had formed a, as far
18 as it goes, a natural relationship with, I wouldn't put
19 too much emphasis on visitors from outside because, as
20 I was explaining this morning, more often than not it
21 was a local authority social worker who, because of the
22 involvement of Barnardo's family social workers, didn't
23 know the child apart from seeing them once every
24 six months or something like that.

25 But the visiting -- sorry, the attached Barnardo's

1 social worker would sometimes be a source as well and
2 they would have -- it would hopefully go straight back
3 into the unit they were attached to. And if they were
4 not getting -- if they didn't feel they were getting
5 taken seriously there, they would take it up through
6 their own principal social worker, who was part of our
7 hierarchical approach.

8 But that's, if you boil it down, no different to
9 what I've written there, so my apologies for not saying
10 yes, there was --

11 Q. No, no. I'll maybe go back to something that we might
12 hear about again from Mr Mackintosh. I recall that he
13 did say on this matter, I think, that what he called:

14 "A formal complaint system became operational, which
15 involved children receiving individually information on
16 the details which encouraged them to use ... If they
17 had any reason to make a complaint, they were each given
18 a card which would be the means of informing them that
19 something had happened or they were unhappy about their
20 care or how they'd been handled by a member of staff or
21 indeed by anyone. Much emphasis was made on them never
22 to be afraid to use the card."

23 So it seems to be some sort of card system, which he
24 may be putting a date on that around the mid-1980s,
25 there was some kind of system, a card system.

1 I can also say he also says from memory:

2 "I do not recall that the process was much used."

3 So whether or not a system of that kind was brought
4 into play, he appears to think it wasn't a system that
5 was utilised very often by the children to whom the
6 cards were given. So it might have been a nice idea,
7 but it would appear it wasn't working very
8 effectively --

9 A. Nor remembered effectively by the person whose watch it
10 apparently happened on!

11 Q. The other thing he did say -- and I think this may
12 post-date your period -- is that by the time he became
13 director -- I think he was your successor --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- he says:

16 "In the period that he was director, Barnardo's
17 appointed for all our residential establishments ..."

18 And he says he thinks by then there were only three
19 small establishments:

20 "... an independent visitor system to allow people
21 to come who were independent of the organisation to
22 visit, meet with children, report on their visits and so
23 forth, discuss views and concerns."

24 And they could come from different walks of life.

25 I don't know if that was something that was ever

1 contemplated in your time, but it would appear that that
2 was at least an attempt.

3 A. It was a recognition of the difficulties you were
4 describing. Having subsequently met two or three people
5 who had that role, not just with Barnardo's, I have to
6 say that the two or three I met they were good,
7 sympathetic people, who were gentle and insightful and
8 so on, not just an obstacle that was being placed there.
9 But it was an attempt.

10 Q. From your knowledge of that type of arrangement, do you
11 think it was more successful in getting children with
12 some perhaps independent and trusted individual with
13 whom they have a healthy, stable relationship, that they
14 were more willing to make disclosures of the type we've
15 been discussing, or is it still a problem?

16 A. I hope it had some success for some children because
17 that's important in its own right, every single one.
18 But it wouldn't be a panacea. It's just an attempt and
19 it's an additional avenue or opportunity or whatever.
20 Why don't people complain in restaurants when they get
21 a bum meal? We're all grown-up and that sort of thing,
22 and yet -- sorry, I don't mean that to be a red herring,
23 but there are all sorts of in-built obstacles and not
24 just the ones that are peculiar to being in
25 a subordinate or a subservient situation, whether it's

1 in the armed forces or jail or whatever.

2 Q. I suppose one thing you could do is, no doubt -- and I'm
3 sure some organisations do this today -- is to speak
4 directly to children in care to ask them hard questions
5 of, if such things did happen, what would give you the
6 confidence to disclose and who would you disclose to.
7 Was there ever any attempt to in your time at least get
8 the feedback from children to listen to them, to give
9 them the voice and apply their thoughts and views into
10 policy?

11 A. Yes, but just think about the internal chemistry of the
12 organisation. For example, I could say blithely,
13 whenever I visited a unit on a planned or an unplanned
14 basis, I would work quite hard to talk to children.
15 You have to start gently. There's this sort of tall
16 foreboding guy, rocking up to them, and you have to
17 start with, "How are things going at school?" or to go
18 back to what I was saying, "How are Hibs doing this
19 season?" sort of thing or because you know a bit about
20 them, "What's happening with your sister?" and so on and
21 so on.

22 But what you're really wanting to get to is: what's
23 happening for you, what does it feel like, what's
24 changed since I last saw you nine months ago? And
25 you're trying to do that in 20 minutes because you've

1 got maybe half a dozen other youngsters around that you
2 particularly want to meet with. You're hoping that the
3 ADD is doing more than that, but much more than that
4 you're hoping that they have at least one member of the
5 staff team who cares about them as much as they care
6 about any other child in that setting and that might be
7 quite a lot and so on.

8 But you're also glad when it comes up through the
9 school playground or through them talking to somebody
10 who visits the unit and what they spill out or whatever,
11 but it's not adequate.

12 Q. I suppose it might be -- first of all, they might ask
13 you who you are for a start, and if you tell them you're
14 head of the organisation --

15 A. And they do.

16 Q. -- they are not likely perhaps to be necessarily --

17 A. And very occasionally it's helpful to hear that you're
18 the boss man.

19 Q. It is?

20 A. It is.

21 Q. But it might be off-putting as well.

22 A. Absolutely, terrifying.

23 Q. You might be like the headmaster at the school that
24 you're sent to.

25 A. At least as bad, yes.

- 1 Q. Is that a continuing problem then?
- 2 A. Yes, of course it is.
- 3 Q. I think one has to recognise -- we're looking at all
4 sorts of possibilities and initiatives, and yet in some
5 ways you're coming back to the point that, well, yes,
6 they may improve things, but they're not an universal
7 panacea, they are not necessarily addressing
8 effectively, say, a situation of under-reporting, if you
9 like.
- 10 A. Yes. Knowing that it is such a key question, challenge,
11 I would dearly love to have some idea that I could share
12 with you about how it could be several miles better.
13 And after quite a period of working in relation to
14 residential childcare, I don't feel very clever in
15 saying I don't have an idea other than just trying to
16 enable good relationships to take place that are
17 respectful and so on and so on.
- 18 Q. Does that make it all the more essential then, if
19 that is a problem and one that has no easy solution,
20 that prevention is best and therefore all the measures
21 that reduce risk and prevent, so far as possible, abuse
22 or harm to children in a care setting, that that's the
23 first port of call, to put those arrangements in place
24 so far as possible?
- 25 A. Yes, and an important part of prevention is the staff as

1 your primary resource that you take on and how you
2 invest in them and support them and so on and so on.

3 I was just saying to [REDACTED] during the break,
4 sadly -- I don't envy the Chair and you guys, your
5 challenge at the end of this. It will be a sad fact
6 that a number of the most glaringly obvious
7 recommendations that have been made are far from being
8 made for the first time. They've come up in individual
9 abuse cases and all sorts of things and yet somehow not
10 been taken into mainstream activity, into fundamental
11 childcare activity. And that's part of the challenge
12 that we're all tussling with.

13 Some of the lessons that have been most obvious,
14 painful and horrid at the time, 10 minutes later,
15 sometimes practice can go on as though it never happened
16 and we never learned from it and so on. I don't have
17 a clever answer for that either, except not to lose
18 sight of some of what the basics are about and why we're
19 trying to engage with youngsters to give them the best
20 chance we can.

21 LADY SMITH: Just taking you back to the subject of
22 complaints, and of course in the 21st century we're in a
23 "how to complain" era, to use your restaurant analogy,
24 you're almost given the form to fill in to complain
25 before they take your order. But if you think about

1 your understanding of and knowledge of children,
2 I suppose that we know that even in the home setting
3 children very often don't speak up about being abused.
4 And then we know that in the residential care setting,
5 where children may have had traumatic experiences
6 throughout their life, they may think, "Life is just
7 like this", they don't twig that life should not be like
8 that --

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: -- and they don't have to tolerate what we now
11 know and understand is abusive behaviour.

12 Then you have a wide cohort of children that just
13 don't want to talk about what's going on in their life.
14 It's part of their personality, they don't speak up,
15 they keep their mouth shut. Would I be right in
16 thinking you've come across all those in your working
17 life, and they're always going to be there?

18 A. Absolutely. I can very readily go back to my Newcastle
19 days as a social worker where you were aware of a family
20 where father was abusing two or three, sexually abusing
21 two or three daughters, and that was taken as the norm
22 in the family, and until father was lifted and sent to
23 prison, you were actually creating a problem in that
24 family's -- I mean, the daughters were just hoping not
25 to fall pregnant and grow through it and be able to run

1 off to sea with somebody or something like that. All of
2 the things you've described are there in abundance and
3 how many apparently healthy, functioning marriages and
4 families is there abuse going on of all sorts of ways
5 and a child who finds themselves abused in a situation
6 like that feels powerless to do anything about it in
7 a home, and unless they have a trusted adult outside,
8 who might be a neighbour or somebody at school or
9 whatever, it won't come to light, it won't spill out,
10 they just somehow have to grow a carapace over it and
11 travel with it:

12 LADY SMITH: Yes.

13 A. And that's something that can still be taking the
14 stuffing out of them in their fifties and sixties.

15 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

16 MR PEOPLES: Can I just lastly move to a completely
17 different matter. Are you familiar with the name
18 Hugh Bostock?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. What can you tell me about him?

21 A. He ran a boys' hostel in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He
22 arrived during my time and I understand that he had been
23 previously involved at Thorntoun and wasn't discharged
24 from there with full honours. But that wasn't something
25 that we were made aware of, sadly, in Newcastle. Before

1 I moved from Newcastle, I'd had one serious run-in with
2 him and that was to do with -- although his primary paid
3 employment was running this quite demanding boys'
4 hostel, he was running a wine business from it and I --
5 well, I gather that subsequently there were several
6 cases of child abuse came out that were happening within
7 the hostel and he was imprisoned for.

8 Q. When did you have direct dealings with him? Can you put
9 a kind of time frame on that?

10 A. Probably a year or in my time with oversight of the
11 children's facilities. It would be about a year,
12 I think, before I left, which would be ...

13 Q. Before you left Barnardo's?

14 A. No, before I left Newcastle. It would possibly be --
15 this is a guess -- about the end of 1974 or the start of
16 1975.

17 MR PEOPLES: Okay. I think, John, these are all the
18 questions that I have for you today. We have your
19 statement as well. I simply would close by thanking you
20 for your patience over a very long day in answering my
21 questions.

22 I'm not aware that there are other matters I need to
23 cover, but no doubt I'll be corrected if that is wrong.

24 LADY SMITH: Could I check if there are any outstanding
25 applications for questions of this witness? No.

1 John, it simply remains for me to give you my thanks
2 and I think I owe you a debt of gratitude for all the
3 hard work you have put in to providing both your written
4 response and your oral evidence today. You have been
5 very frank and open and have shared so much insight and
6 understanding with us. It's going to be very, very
7 helpful to me as I take forward the work of this
8 inquiry, so thank you for that and I'm now able to let
9 you go.

10 A. Thank you, and thank you for what you're doing as well,
11 because this is so important.

12 LADY SMITH: There is no doubt about that.

13 A. I hope it will have good bearing on things in the future
14 as well as a consequence. Thank you.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

16 (The witness withdrew)

17 LADY SMITH: So, that finishes the evidence for today.

18 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, we start with?

19 MR PEOPLES: A further former employee of Barnardo's.

20 That's the only witness that's scheduled for tomorrow.

21 LADY SMITH: And then one on Thursday?

22 MR PEOPLES: One on Thursday; we're not sitting on Friday.

23 LADY SMITH: Yes, in case anyone here didn't pick it up from
24 the website, we are not sitting on Friday of this week
25 but we are sitting tomorrow and Thursday.

1 I'll rise now until tomorrow morning. Thank you
2 very much.

3 (3.50 pm)

4 (The inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am
5 on Wednesday, 9 January 2019)

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JOHN REA (sworn)1

Questions from MR PEOPLES1

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