

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

### Witness Statement

AAC

#### Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is [redacted] AAC [redacted] My maiden name was [redacted]  
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

2. My date of birth is [redacted] 1936. I am 80 years old. [redacted]  
[redacted]

#### Background

3. I am divorced from my husband [redacted] I have two children - a son and daughter. [redacted] I have never told [redacted] anything about my childhood experiences.

4. I'm not in touch with my son. I don't know where he is. He has had mental health issues and used drugs. [redacted]  
[redacted]

5. I spent five years at Smyllum from 1945 to 1950.

#### Admission to Smyllum

6. I lived in Dundee with my mother, father, brother [redacted] (2 years older than me) and sister [redacted] (4 years older than me). We were in a council house in Dundee.

7. My mother died on [REDACTED] 1945. She was confined to bed. She had had a heart condition and that's what she died of. She was a loving mother. I used to run in the house, jump on her bed and give her all my homework, all the work I'd been doing at school that day. I'd tell her what I'd been doing. Those are happy memories.
8. My mother's friend used to come round all the time. She would bring the Broons supplement from the paper. We loved reading that.
9. My father had a duodenal ulcer. I think it was an excuse really, as he was never a worker. He worked sometimes but not frequently. He didn't drink - he was teetotal. He was not a nice person. I don't remember him being nice.
10. Look at what he did. I was 9, my brother was about 12 and my sister had left school - so why did we have to be put away? There was no reason. But there was, as I found out later that he was having an affair with my mother's best friend.
11. My brother and I had a pet mouse each. I don't know where we got the money from but we had them. One of them escaped. My father found it, and drowned both of them in the bath. You never felt any love from him.
12. One day when I ran to my mother and jumped on her bed, just like I always did, but she was dead. There was a bandage round her head and her knees were up. My father was in the house but he didn't stop me. The door was open. He should have locked the door. That's what I went in to. It is as vivid today as it was then. It is imprinted on my mind. It is not a thing you think about, but it's there.
13. How could anyone face that and then be put away in Smyllum like that? There might have been a glimmer of hope for me to get over that experience if we had stayed as a family, but to add on to that the way you are put away. The Roman Catholic Church has taken that hope away from me but the perpetrator was my father. I try to visualise how a girl of 9 years old would cope with what happened to me. I say to myself about my father "How could you?".

14. I had uncles and aunts when I was a child, but they were not around. I don't remember any grandparents.

15. It was not long after my mother died that my father took us to the social services office in Dundee on Bell Street. It was coming up to Christmas. We were there for ages. I was 9 years old. My brother [REDACTED] was 12 and [REDACTED] had just left school. She would have been 14 years old.

16. We thought we were at the office to get clothes. You go down the stairs to the office. After a long time there [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were taken upstairs and put in a black vehicle and taken away. My father stayed downstairs and didn't say goodbye. We were taken to Smyllum by strangers in this black vehicle. We didn't know where we were going. I was screaming in the back of the car, holding onto my brother and sister.

17. It was not long after my mother's death and coming up to our first Christmas without her. I am desperate to know the exact date. I would love to know. Where would I get records from? It is always round that time that I usually get into a dip. I don't want to. It is a vivid recollection – being taken away. My father was putting us out of the way. Out of sight, out of mind.

18. When we left Dundee it was dark and when we arrived at Smyllum, that horrible, horrible place. All three of us were taken there. My sister was taken there as a helper. There was something definitely not right with that set up there. My father was getting her out of the way too.

19. We entered the main building by the main door and met nuns. There was a big statue of Our Lady with a curtain behind her and two ways around on either side. We were separated on arrival, hurried away from each other. We were just taken away. I think I must have screamed and fought. I remember being distressed and crying and wondering what's happening. I was just 9 years old.

20. I was threatened with being moved to Carstairs. I didn't know what this meant but there was just the fear of it. I have looked it up and it was a place for the

mentally subnormal. That's what they were threatening me with. I didn't know what the threat was. I had to give in in the end because of what they were threatening me with.

21. I was given a number for a cubby hole for my clothes, and was sent up to a dormitory in the main building on the girls' side.

22. The dormitory was a long room with about 30 beds in it. I don't remember the name of it. There were beds up the sides and in the centre. My bed was in the centre. The nun in charge was Sister [BAF] I remember her vividly. I don't remember a lot of that first night. A lot of that is not with me anymore. I was crying and wanting to see my sister.

23. Eventually they let me go to see my sister up in what we called the Tweenies. I have no concept of time so I don't know when this was. I remember sitting with her in a room with a big fire. I never really saw my sister. My brother says the same. She was a helper but we never saw her. She never made any contact with me. I do remember that she was asked to move from working in the Tweenies to somewhere else. She didn't want to move so a nun slapped her. I jumped on the nun's back, but the irony was that my sister then hit me. She said I should not hit a nun.

### **Life in Smyllum**

24. Sister [BAF] was awful. She was there the whole time I was at Smyllum. It wasn't just what they did to you physically, but what they did to you mentally. Your body was filthy. "You don't have a brother and sister here. You were picked up off the streets". "Don't you ever smile". "Don't you ever cry". Sister [BAF] would say this. I would go somewhere on my own and I did cry, but I wouldn't let them see it. I can't remember being shown any love or compassion by these 'Sisters of Charity'. I was made to feel unloved, unwanted and worthless.

25. Sister [BAF] was in charge of the girls' side. Not all the nuns were bad but they saw what was going on and didn't speak up. I think it was self-preservation for them. It seems to be the pattern all over the world. There weren't that many nuns

at Smyllum, and there was only one main nun to each group at the orphanage, but they had helpers. I only remember three nuns – Sister [BAF] Sister Patricia and the nun who did the first aid.

26. Sister Patricia was lovely. She was the cook and a big woman. The other nuns must have known that Sister [BAF] was bad to the children. They must have done. It was done there in front of them. I do not remember one face or one name of anyone, apart from Sister [BAF] Sister Patricia and the first aid nun. I couldn't tell you anyone's name, and I left there going on 15. I just blanked away from it. I can't remember so many things and I think that is because things were just so horrible.

27. I was given a number when I arrived and that number was on my little cubby hole. I wasn't called by the number, it wasn't like that. Sister [BAF] would call me by my own name. Frank Docherty says, when you think about it, it was a mini-holocaust we were going into: being taken away, separated, stripped off and given a number, and the life you had there. Life there was so cold. It might sound a bit melodramatic but it was like that.

28. I used to wet myself in the daytime, when I was dressed. This had started before I went to Smyllum. We only got our clothes changed once a week. In the winter I was red raw between the legs. You didn't ask or say anything to anybody. If I had asked to be changed I would have got what I got from the sister who did the first aid. She would batter you on the head with a cane with a silver knob. I don't know her name but I do remember her. She did the first aid or any medical thing. That problem was with me all the time. I don't remember when it stopped.

29. On Easter Sunday we would get an egg, and on Christmas Day we could get a bit of slab cake. I remember once getting a Christmas present – somebody had made a plain stitch scarf from bits of leftover wool. It would have been from someone in the community outside Smyllum. On Boxing Day the scarf was taken away by the nuns. Who's to know why it was taken away?

30. It took me a long time before giving in due to the threat of Carstairs. I think I was always rebelling and would not co-operate.

31. I could not tell you if anything was done to any other child or what the names of the other children were. I must have seen what was happening but I don't remember to whom. I had no friendships with other girls at Smyllum. That was damaging really. I don't recollect any other girls working in the nursery.

32. Sister **BAF** was constantly putting you down. "You've been picked up off the streets." "Your body's wild". "You're worthless".

33. Our clothes were changed once a week. We were taken down to what I call the dungeon. It was down in a cellar. We got so frightened that part of our clothes might not be there. You couldn't help it but if you were missing something you'd be hit for it. We used to say "Oh please God, let everything be there". When we were down there we only had a chemise on. We were down in a cellar and in winter we were kneeling there praying. It had a patterned concrete floor and when we got up, our knees, we were so cold. When we were in a chemise we had to kneel and pray, thanking God for what we were given. This would be a group of girls of different ages.

34. One morning I remember getting up and I was very light-headed. I nearly fainted. I actually got to go back to bed. But would they let me miss mass? No. I had to go into Lanark and have mass there. At Christmas I remember the amount of time we were in church. We were at midnight mass, then the sermon in the morning. Then it was benediction. That was it. We never had a Christmas present to talk about. Nothing happened on our birthdays.

35. I remember once that the Mother Superior was leaving Smyllum. I don't remember her name, just that she was there. This other girl, I don't remember her name or her face. But I said to her "Let's go through and see. Let's go and have one good look at her because she's going". So we got there, to an area between two buildings. The St Vincent De Paul nuns wear these big headdresses. The light

was at the Mother Superior's back. As she came towards us her headdress seemed massive. I said to the other girl "Run, run!". There was a big pillar in this area. We ran but I misjudged it and ran right into that pillar. I still have the scar. I had to have stitches in my forehead.

36. I must have gone to hospital. This nun said to me "Why were you there?". I said "I was so sad because the Mother Superior was leaving and I wanted to see her one last time." I got a holy medal from the nun who was leaving. Of course the medal was stolen from me. "Where's that medal?". "Somebody's stole it Sister". I think I must have got battered by Sister BAF because somebody stole it.

37. I developed a limp whilst I was at Smyllum. I don't know why and it didn't hurt. I just knew that I limped. So eventually I got taken down to the hospital and looked at, which was amazing. He looked and couldn't find anything but they did put me in a plaster cast. That's when I went to the small infirmary in Smyllum. It was the only time I ever felt any warmth. I was in bed and there was a big fire in the room and lots of drinks. It seemed nice and I thought it was good and I wouldn't be going back to the nursery for a while. As soon as I got a walking plaster on I was sent straight back to the nursery. I was still scrubbing floors and getting up. The irony was, the limp was still there. "Why are you limping?" "I don't know Sister". I think I was beaten because I was still limping.

38. I don't remember going to hospital, other than for the limp and the stitches.

39. Where I had to go past the main bit of the building, the nuns' bit, I remember the lovely smell of food and cakes. But we went up and got filth handed to us. We were hungry, so hungry. My brother ████████ worked on the farm at Smyllum with the lovely nun Sister Patricia. He brought round the milk cart and the pony. He would come through the wooded area next to the nursery and I'd meet up with him. Being on the farm he brought cow cake and treacle for us to eat – cow cake which was fed to the animals. If we had ever been found out, I don't know. I doubt he would have lived.

40. Meal times were in the main building. It was just us girls. We never mixed with the boys. There was porridge in the mornings. I always just remember the

porridge. You had to eat everything. I was never made to eat anything. I don't remember that side of things. I don't remember any one being beaten or forced to eat. I think, because of the pain I was going through, I couldn't watch the pain for others. I drew away from it.

41. Someone referred to "sour milk". We had to drink that. It was sour but I think it must have been buttermilk. It was awful. We had to drink it. Sandwiches were brought in at tea time in an old tea chest – they were just two lumps of bread stuck together. That was one of the meals.

42. We had a bath once a week. Obviously there would be a queue. There would be two of us, one in the bath and one sitting waiting to go in. The water was never changed from the time the first one went in to when the last one came out. The water in the bath was probably a bit hot for the first bath but it was always cold after that. The last girl probably came out dirtier than she went in. When you were getting out of the bath, the girl sitting had to hold a towel up for you but she saw your torso. The nuns were constantly pulling the curtain back and watching and looking to see what you were doing. They were always looking at you.

43. I moved dormitory at some point to the turret of the main building. I don't know why I was moved or why I was there. It was a smaller room with only a few beds in it. It was a better place than the dormitory because there were less people.

### **Brother's experience**

44. There was a nun. I don't remember her name. She might have been something to do with the school. My brother told me that when he and another boy got to school, she said "I'm going to give you your punishment now because you will deserve it later". And they got the strap. He told me that they hadn't done anything. That's evil, isn't it, evil.

45. My brother was a bed wetter. He told me he would be made to wear the wet pants on his head. When they got up and the beds were wet, the beds would have the old thick rubber protectors which would wrinkle. The urine would just lie in the



wrinkles. But he had to get back into that bed with that. The bed didn't get changed or anything. [REDACTED] has scars on his back from sores.

46. In the mornings, he told me, they were just paraded with the sheets over their heads. All the boys had to ridicule them. They didn't want to but that's the sort of thing you were told to do. They made you do things like that. I don't think they made me do that.

47. I wrote all this down for my brother, for the lawyer Cameron Fyfe at Ross Harper Solicitors. He should have that statement.

48. My brother was my lifeline at Smyllum. He left three years before me because he had reached working age.

### **School**

49. I briefly went to school in Smyllum itself. It was a school for younger children.

50. One of the worst things that happened to me was that we then went to an outside school. So did my brother. It was called St Mary's. It was just outside the drive for Smyllum. When you got to a certain age you went there. It must have been a secondary school. I don't remember how old I was when I got there.

51. I went in to the school and I'm not exaggerating and saying that I was clever, but I was intelligent. I was put to the back of the class at St Mary's. I think mainly the teacher was so fed up of smelling me. Before Smyllum, I was nearly always top of the class or at least second; I just stopped learning when I went there.

52. One teacher took pity on me. I used to get these hacks on the joints of my fingers which would weep in the winter. She came in one day and either she or her mother had knitted fingerless gloves for me. When I got back up to Smyllum with the gloves Sister [BAF] said "Where did you get those?". "My teacher has given them

to me". She pulled them off and I never saw them again. Where's the wickedness in that? I don't know how old I was when this happened. She took them away.

53. When my hands became really bad I went to see the first aid nun. I had tried to see her before but she had told me to come back. The second time I tried to see her she said to me "Why haven't you been here before?". I said "I was, Sister, and you told me to come back." She said "Don't tell such lies". She hit me on the head with her cane. I do remember being hit by her. I had two or three big lumps on my head. Then she put iodine into each of the hacks on my hands. It was very painful. I don't remember if she said anything when she was doing it. I didn't go back to see her again.

54. St Mary's introduced showers after PT. I remember that a teacher kindly offered to dry my back. I refused but she kept insisting so I said "Alright then". We were brainwashed into believing our bodies were vile and must never be exposed. Someone told about this when I got back to Smyllum. You wouldn't believe it. They were so wicked and false. There was nothing wrong with what the teacher did but they saw that as bad. Sister BAF was very angry with me. I would have been beaten but I don't remember.

55. In the morning we were marched down to school with these horrible clothes on. We would see parents with other kids. They might have been on holiday, and they had their wee pieces with them. It was hard to bear but that's just part of life. But it was more hurtful going to an outside school. It would have been better to stay inside Smyllum because the outside was so sad.

### **Nursery work**

56. I was put to work in the nursery as a punishment. It WAS a punishment. I don't know what age I was when I started doing this but I worked there for the rest of my time at Smyllum. I don't have a timescale for when it happened. I was put there and I never got out of it. Sister BAF was threatening me with going to Carstairs so I must have been rebelling quite a bit.

57. I remember carrying a bucket back to nursery and seeing all the other children playing. I never got to join them because I had to work at the nursery.

58. I got myself up in the mornings. It would have been very early, maybe six o'clock. I'd get up and then go over and start because the babies had to be looked after. And there would be cleaning and that sort of thing. I did everything in the nursery. I would go back to the main building for my breakfast and then off to school. When I got back from school I would have to go straight to the nursery. I would go back to the main building to eat and to sleep. I don't know what time bedtime was.

59. I could be working in any part of the nursery. When I had the walking plaster on I still had to scrub floors.

60. There was a wee boy in the nursery called [REDACTED] I loved him to bits. He wasn't the most beautiful of children but I loved him. The children were set on potties for, I don't know how long, but very very long each day. [REDACTED] he probably wasn't the only one, but he had a prolapsed rectum because of sitting on the potty too long. I don't know how, I must have seen someone do that for him, but I could manipulate it back for him. He could have waited I don't know how long. It must have been very sore for him.

61. The babies in the nursery only ever seemed to get this horrible Pablum baby food to eat. It was boys and girls in the nursery. I don't remember how many babies were there. The orphanage started with babies and then went on to what you call the Tweenies. And then they came into the Girls or Boys. The children might have been aged 3 or 4 going into the Tweenies and then 5 upwards in the Girls and Boys.

62. There was a nun in charge of the nursery. I don't remember much about her but I do remember an incident one day. The nursery cots were on wheels. I don't know what had happened but I had displeased the nun in some way and she came to get me. Well, by the time we were finished all these cots were all over the place. She kept chasing me and I kept kicking the cots. I think she did catch me but I don't remember what happened. I see that, to this day, as funny.

### Contact with people outside Smyllum

63. I only remember a couple of visits by my dad. He saw us in that Our Lady place in the main building. I think it would have been better if he hadn't visited. We weren't with him that long and he went with my sister to the cinema or whatever, and we got put back again. My brother and I never left the orphanage at all. I have spoken with my brother about that. I was a child. You begin to wonder how much of this is reality. I believe that but I asked my brother "Were we put back and [REDACTED] went with Dad?" and he said yes. I felt rejected all over again by my dad. Dad meant nothing to me.

64. Dundee Corporation would come and visit to see me. I was warned not to say anything out of turn and you would be threatened. Sister [REDACTED] BAF said that. Of course, you never said there was anything wrong. You would be interviewed by them in the little entrance hall to Smyllum, but no one ever said anything was wrong. We had been brainwashed. I never told them.

65. I never told my father the couple or three times that he visited. I had been warned not to tell my father too.

66. There was a Lanimer Day festival once a year in Lanark. There were floats and stalls. There was always a float for St Mary's School in the festival. I was chosen to go on it. I thought "Oh great!". I was the [REDACTED] from the Wizard of Oz. I was so happy to be there and be a [REDACTED] I remember sitting there. That day was absolutely lovely. I was important for one day.

67. Prior to the festival we had to go for rehearsals to the teacher's own home. The teacher's mother was there. She was a lovely, couthie looking woman. The embarrassing thing was we had to change from our own clothes into our costumes. The other girls had some nice underwear. You should have seen what I was in, and it must have smelled too.

68. The mother said "Would you like to come back, [REDACTED] AAC?" I said "Oh yes." We had a lovely fire and tea and cakes. It was home and it was lovely. It was hard

to leave. The mother said she'd like to come to take me out now and again. They wouldn't allow it. She asked them and they wouldn't allow it. They didn't want anyone coming in.

69. We never saw any priests coming in to Smyllum regularly. I only saw priests at mass and at confession. I never told a priest at confession about what was happening. I had a feeling I shouldn't. I used to see my brother in church. The girls were on one side of the church and the boys on the other. He would go up with the choir. I was so proud as I thought he was in the choir. He told me later that he went up to pump the organ!

### **Life after Smyllum**

70. I was coming up for 15 years old when I left Smyllum. I left because my father was going to be taking my sister out and she said she would not leave without me. Otherwise at 15 I would have been put out. My father was taking her out. He said she should come home with him but she didn't want to. This would be 1950 or 1951.

71. We went to live with my "Auntie" [REDACTED] in Dundee. She wasn't really my aunt. She was the best friend of my mother whom my father had been having an affair with. My sister told me about the affair much later when I was married. My father lived in the house with her and her husband. You would never believe how many of us were in that house. It was a but and ben. Her, her husband, my father, me, my brother and sister.

72. I went to St John's secondary school in Dundee, the Brown Street annex for about six months. The annex was for people who were not very bright. Although I hadn't been learning, I was still intelligent. I wasn't there that long. A teacher, a stout woman, took a dislike to me and used to send me out the room to stand in a corner. Another teacher came along one day and said "We should put a statue there when you leave, you are there so often". The stout teacher said it was the way I looked at her. I didn't mean to but there was something in the way I looked. I think I was looking at her in a way because I thought she might hurt me.

73. When I did the leaving exam I didn't know anything. I put my name at the top of the paper and that was that. How bad was that! I left school when I had just turned 15. I went into factory work. I just wanted to get away. I taught myself.

74. I worked in a laundry when I came out of Smyllum. I was about 15 or 16 at the time. Way back then the machines were driven by a big belt. I remember one time I stood and looked at the belt and thought to myself "One of two things is going to happen here: I'll either kill myself or I'm going to be injured". I visualised putting my arm in the belt and it pulling me up. I would've got injured or possibly killed. At that time I believed no one cared. Even yet I think about committing suicide, but I know I would never do it as I have my family and would never do that to them.

75. I got sacked from the laundry for pushing a woman out of the way with a trolley when she offered to help me and wouldn't take no for an answer. I hadn't had any help or affection and wasn't used to somebody trying to help me; yet that was the one thing I needed. I think I was so frightened of someone offering me help and was just trying to protect myself. That was sad.

76. My father died within six months of me leaving Smyllum. He was in hospital for his duodenal ulcer. He vomited and inhaled it and he died.

77. After his death I was really just passed around between relatives. The first one, my aunt, she really just wanted me because she could get a bigger house off the council. She couldn't understand why I didn't cry when he died. He was the cause of all this. My aunt wanted me handed on after my father died. She said I never smiled and never said good morning when I came down for breakfast. How could I after that place?

78. I was passed on to another relative. That was bad as well. He was my uncle and he wanted to have sex with me. I wouldn't do it. He didn't try to abuse me but he wanted the invitation. He'd say "Lie beside me and we'll have a cuddle". That was leading to abuse. That made me want to get away to the army.

79. I joined the army when I was about 18. It was the Women's Royal Army Corps. I was attached to the Royal Signals over in Germany. That was great.

There was only about 20 or 30 of us. I enjoyed that. I found army life okay. I knew what discipline was.

80. I stayed in the army for 3 years. I met my husband there. He was a clerk in the Signals, in the same block as myself. I left the army and got a job as a typist. I had trained in touch-typing in the army as a clerk. Then I went into nursing. My husband had also got into nursing. I met my friend [REDACTED] through my husband [REDACTED]. They had trained as nurses in the same class and [REDACTED] would come to parties at our house. We were living in [REDACTED] at the time in a little but and ben.

81. [REDACTED] and I moved to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] worked as a staff nurse. I was assured that I could continue my training as a nurse at the hospital down there. But when I got there I couldn't. I was given state enrolment as a nurse but didn't train further than that. I got pregnant soon after and didn't go back. I worked as a post-mistress for a while when I was down there.

82. When things were not going well in my marriage [REDACTED] said "Come home". She had been coming down to visit us when we lived there. We moved back to [REDACTED] and continued to build houses, as we had built two in England. We were up here when we divorced.

### Effects of abuse

83. My brother went back to Smyllum once. He was a long distance lorry driver and he saw a sign for Lanark and went there. He told me later that he was looking for [REDACTED] BAC and he said "I'm really glad I didn't meet him" because he went there to sort him out. [REDACTED] BAC was a former resident of Smyllum and stayed on as a helper. He was a wicked man. But I have been told there are [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He has a nice grave. The graves of the children who died at Smyllum are just lumps in the ground.

84. My brother is not good at getting things in writing and we had to give the lawyer Cameron Fyfe some sort of history about how we felt. I was writing it down

for my brother and I heard something and looked up as I thought my brother was laughing. He was sobbing his heart out. He has now got Alzheimer's and is living, in his head, back in Smyllum again. It is torture for him. They say that's what can happen.

85. [REDACTED] I take his wife shopping every so often. She says he is telling her things that happened. He is telling her everything thinking he is telling me. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] wouldn't be able to speak to the Inquiry now. He's gone now and there is nothing we can do about that.

86. I had very little contact with my sister [REDACTED] after we left Smyllum. She went [REDACTED] and got her state registered nurse qualification. We went down to see her once and when we got there she was in a really bad way and she just verbally attacked me. She said she didn't want to see me again. She said when she knows I'm coming and we're going to meet she is physically sick. And that was it, again. Another rejection for me.

87. I have these dark moods. The worst thing is that you think you are just being sorry for yourself, but you're not.

88. I have problems if I get close to someone. I begin to think I'm going to lose them and it's all going to fall apart.

89. I have told my friend [REDACTED] about my time at Smyllum. I started telling her about four years ago. I have told her bits over time. I have never told anyone else – not my daughter, my husband, or grandchildren. I think that is why my marriage failed. I split from my husband [REDACTED] He's never seen his grandkids. He doesn't know if they exist. I don't know if he is still alive. Our marriage didn't break up because of someone else. It just dried up.

90. I was a good mother. I was creating something to keep my family in and protect them. I'm still doing it. I understand why I do that. It's a protective thing. My daughter sees my behaviour as controlling but it isn't.



91. I'm always looking for something, not money, but I need a secure place and I never get that. I'm always trying to make a place secure. I did that through running businesses, building two or three homes. My friend [REDACTED] family are close to her. I think that is what I have been missing. Talking about it with [REDACTED] helps. It helps my mood. It is because of what happened to me at Smyllum and the way things went when my mother died.

92. When I'm depressed I'm not thinking of anything in particular. I've never dwelt on things or made excuses. For one thing, I've never told anybody. I just have this feeling of being so afraid. There is something I need but I can't get it. I always feel that there is a part of me that's missing. I search for it but it's not there. To this day I feel that the Roman Catholic Church has deprived me of being able to lead a full and meaningful life.

93. I once saw some nuns outside the shops and I felt like bashing them. I feel that whenever I see nuns. They are not all bad but they didn't speak up for the kids.

94. My son never forgave me for getting him sectioned. I think he may have died because of the drugs. He went once to see his dad but he turned him away. That is often on my mind. It is not like him to just up and go. When I hear a motorbike at home, that triggers things. He used to have a bike.

95. I have other friends but not as close as [REDACTED] I feel that I'm still a good person after all that happened. That didn't turn me to anything like drink or drugs or prostitution, and didn't turn me hard.

96. I didn't go to the police because you just didn't. I wouldn't have been believed.

97. It is said that a lot of people like myself either go into nursing or the services. I suppose it gives you protection. They helped me to educate myself. I was going to beat it, beat "them" if you want.

## Treatment and support services

98. There was no coordination then of social services when I went into Smyllum. When I went in there, why wasn't there something to say that this child has just suffered a traumatic experience? You never got any support or kindness. There was nothing on my records about my traumatic experience so I had no support and no allowances were made. I think that's when I began to block things out, which was self-preservation.

99. When I was at the Brown Street annex no one knew about my background. No one knew that I might need support.

100. When I moved [REDACTED] with my husband I went to the doctor and said "I'm depressed". It must be about 20 years ago. A psychiatrist did home visits to me for a while because of my depression. I didn't really tell the psychiatrist about what happened in the past.

101. I saw Dr [REDACTED] the psychiatrist for a long time as an outpatient. When I needed to go back to see her I found the areas she covered had been changed. She was helpful. I didn't tell her a lot about Smyllum. Psychiatrists really diagnose and medicate. Psychologists are more into how you are.

102. One psychologist I could not relate to. I was offered six sessions with her. After the first session I sobbed all the way home. I had talked about my mother during the session, and thought maybe that was me grieving. She asked at the second session if I had had a reaction to the first session. When I told her about sobbing she said I shouldn't continue with the sessions. She told me she didn't think I was strong enough to go through analysis. So I only had two sessions with her. I was a bit disappointed. She sat with notes and never once looked at me. That was off-putting, and maybe also one of the reasons why I sobbed.

103. I started receiving treatment from a psychologist for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I was seeing my GP a few months ago for a diabetic check. The nurse said something which triggered me, I can't remember what it was but I burst

out crying. I just sobbed. The nurse said Dr [REDACTED] would come through. Dr [REDACTED] is very good. I said "There is no point in me going to see any more counsellors. It's just a waste of time" but she said "No."

104. Now the psychologist has diagnosed PTSD. It had been said before that I probably had that but she has clarified that I definitely do. Her name is [REDACTED]. She is very good. I haven't spoken to her in as much depth as I have to the Inquiry. I will do. It will come. I was to see her weekly for hourly sessions. I started [REDACTED] or something like that. It's a programme. She has now gone off on maternity leave, but I expect I'll carry on with it when she comes back.

105. I have said that there were times when I believe I was beaten. I can only really remember the time when the first aid nun beat me with a cane. I asked a psychologist whether it was possible I had blocked out the beatings and she said that trauma can do that. I suffered trauma for 5 years.

106. [REDACTED] and talking to her about Smyllum, helps. Her family are lovely. I miss the family that I lost - not the family that I have now, my daughter and everyone - but my mother, and father, brother and sister that I lost. It sometimes makes you stand away. I went away from [REDACTED] for 12 years because I couldn't stand watching her with her family (not her children, but her sisters and brothers). I was frightened. But, we're back now and we're fine, and [REDACTED] family include me in their family.

107. I feel I'm getting sufficient support at present. My daughter and grandchildren don't know. I've never talked to them and I don't want them to know. I feel if I tell them, there would be a certain amount of hurt.

### **Current life**

108. I went to a spiritualist once in [REDACTED] when I lived [REDACTED]. Friends were going and they said "Come along, [REDACTED]". Lo and behold I was called, as they say, by a nun at the session. There was a light at the session and I was trying not to move or interact. The spiritualist asked me to come back to see her on my own. I

thought, alright then. She said there had been a massive light above my head and there was a nun. Also there was my "auntie" [REDACTED] who wasn't good to me.

109. I went to a spiritualist meeting again last year with a couple of friends. Lo and behold, here I go again. A spiritualist at the session said there was a nun standing with her arm on my shoulder, wanting to say sorry. I wouldn't usually do these things but there is something there. I wouldn't get into that but it happened twice, two nuns.

110. I'm not sleeping well at the moment. I'm coming out of this episode now, it's always around Christmas (when I went into Smyllum) when these episodes start. I have not been to bed since before Christmas. I doze off in a chair. My psychologist says I need proper sleep in bed.

111. I found a photo of my father [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I got it out and I left it there. Every time I go by it, I hit the photo now. My psychologist says that is good, because I have anger now.

112. I have been a member of INCAS for a few years. [REDACTED] and I went to a meeting of INCAS in Glasgow. It was the first contact I had with anyone from Smyllum. Being a member has helped, because of Frank Docherty and now Helen Holland. She's a genuine person. I have discussed some of my experiences with Frank Docherty too. It is all the same what we are talking about. When I went to the meeting in Glasgow there were lots of people there. You realise it is not just you. You are not alone.

113. I have not asked for my records from Smyllum. Frank Docherty says there is a Sister somewhere in London. He says they will only give you the time you went there, years, brothers and sisters - very basic information. So much has been disposed of. I think that seeing records would make a difference.

114. I don't think about Smyllum unless something is said that triggers it. A sense of humour keeps me going. I don't drink much. Escaping from it is what drink or drugs does. The ones who keep it all in, that's the damaging ones.

115. I'm no longer a practising Catholic after my time in Smyllum. I believe in God but it has put me off the Catholic church. I used to go to church with [REDACTED] but there were always nuns there. I never told [REDACTED] but I didn't want to go back because I couldn't stand looking at them.

116. I don't know what happened to [REDACTED], that wee boy in the nursery. He wouldn't have had a chance. He was in Smyllum from when he was very young.

117. I do lots of DIY. I've done decorating, working up ladders. I play darts in a ladies club. We're not very good but I really enjoy it.

### **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

118. I felt I have to speak to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. I don't like to do it but I have to do it. It has been daunting thinking of doing this but I'm pleased I've done it now. What I am saying is being recorded and will go down in the annals. So that's the mark that is being put down now. This is important. This Inquiry being set up is one big achievement for Frank Docherty and the others.

119. I would like a good ending to the Inquiry. The Inquiry can't do more than it is doing. We feel that you are on our side, that you care. I know good body language and feel that talking to the Inquiry has been one of the best therapies for me.

120. I would be happy to give evidence at the Inquiry's public hearings. I really want my evidence to be known. But I want to remain anonymous as I don't want my family to know.

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

Signed

AAC  
[REDACTED]

Dated

7/10/16