

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FWI

Support person present: No

1. My name is FWI. My date of birth is 1952. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was born in Bellshill. My first wife had three children when we got married and I adopted them. They are who is in his forties, who is one year younger than and who is in her mid-thirties. Then my first wife left me with the three children to take care of.
3. Then I met my second wife FWH and we've been married for about twenty years. She's about ten years younger than me. She had a daughter of her own before we met. We weren't married when our son was born. His date of birth was 1995 and he passed away 2020.
4. I used to work in a factory doing twelve hour shifts making television tubes. Then I started a window cleaning business. So when I wasn't working in the factory I was out cleaning windows and I got a couple of boys working for me. When that took off I chucked in the factory job. I don't know the dates. I retired between 2013 and 2015 and I'd done the window cleaning for about eight years before that.

Becoming a Foster Carer

5. Me and FWH must have been married by the time we became foster parents. My three older children had left home by then too and we had just [REDACTED] left at home with us then. Our address then was [REDACTED] in Coatbridge.
6. I consider we were 'support carers' for FWF [REDACTED], who we knew as FWF [REDACTED]. The social worker told us we were 'support carers'. It was to get him ready for the big, bad world after being in the home. FWH [REDACTED] because she works with social work. There was somebody else we wanted to take in, a lassie called [REDACTED], because they got on really well. That wasn't going to happen.
7. Social work approached FWH initially and talked her round as our house was big enough that we could take somebody in. We had a house with four bedrooms and we had a spare room and our children were all grown up and away. That's how it started. Me and FWH discussed it.
8. They brought FWF to meet us at our house and they did all the usual checks and we thought we'd have a go at it to see how it went and give the laddie a chance. FWF was fine and he looked to me as if he was a laddie in a lot of bother, but he'd changed. He was polite and he wouldn't be cheeky to me. Then later on he decided to change.
9. We didn't act as a support carer for anyone else. My understanding was we were getting FWF ready for leaving care. I think he was sixteen years old and getting ready to leave care and live independently. I don't think he'd had what I call a normal life and it was to get him ready for what normal life was like.
10. Later on, after FWF had left our house, we became kinship carers for FWH's daughter's son who was called [REDACTED].
11. Social work did the disclosure forms, they interviewed us and checked the house out to see we had plenty of room and check it was liveable. That was about it. I couldn't

tell you who that was from social work. There was a wee laddie came up to the house who looked really young and he was the head of the team and the one sitting next to him was about sixty. The wee laddie, because he was the boss, came up to see us and checked everything out. There were two or three social workers.

12. They have to go through Disclosure Scotland checks to make sure you've no convictions for offences involving children. FWH went through the same as me. She already had one and they went through the same again anyway. They gave us certificates and everything was fine. If that came through with anything on it we wouldn't get to do the job. That was explained to us.

Training

13. We weren't given any sort of training before FWF came to stay with us. We were not given any ongoing training after he came to stay with us. They just popped up now and again to check on him.
14. We got a leaflet about foster care or support care and that was about it. They never gave us any specific instructions. I think there should have been further checks. We were fine, but if it was anybody else they could pull the wool over social work's eyes and turn out to be an abusive person or just in it for the money. I don't know how they could check on that as they have to take the carers word for it. Social work can't accuse them of being liars if there's no background to it.
15. I know there's foster carers who've taken weans in just for the money. For us if I didn't think it was going to work I'd have said no to it. It was really done to help him and we had a big house and our kids had grown up and left home. I thought we should give it a try and I thought there was no harm in giving it a try and maybe the laddie will turn out well or maybe not.
16. I see fostering as being a vocation and you need to be dedicated to do it and you don't go into it for the money. You need to be good hearted to help the person and give them all the help you can. My experience was bringing up three of my own and they

turned out great. I was thinking FWF could do the same thing. You need to be really in to it. You don't take it for a five minute job. As soon as you take the child in you get involved in their life.

17. I don't think of us being employed as support carers. We were just trying to help somebody. I wouldn't say they employed me. They couldn't tell me I was sacked and they didn't give me a wage. It was a twenty-four hour a day job. It was near enough voluntary.

Foster Care Arrangements

18. FWF has said he came to live with us on 2001 and that could be right. At that time I worked in the factory job. My wife worked as a support worker at the time. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later. The social worker we dealt with suggested to her that we take him in. FWH wasn't too sure at first as he'd been a bit of a trouble maker and they were telling us he'd matured and he'd grown up. They convinced her and that's why we thought we'd give it a go.
19. There was a girl we wanted to live with us called . She was in another place that FWH worked and she was in the same position as FWF, ready to move out at fifteen or sixteen. FWH got on well with this lassie. FWH asked social work and I don't know why we couldn't take her. FWH was her key worker and they were close. I don't know why they said no and asked her to take FWF, unless they just wanted to get rid of him. We thought we may as well take someone else instead.
20. I didn't think we had to have particular qualifications or experience to take in FWF. I'd brought up my own family and FWH's daughter so I had experience. I didn't have any qualifications. The social workers were asking how we'd cope with an extra child and how you would treat the child. We told them we'd treat the child like we did the rest of the family. The child would get fed the same as the family and if they come in

the house late at night and the dinners already been made and they missed it, they can make themselves something to eat.

21. From them first asking us to take on FWF to him coming didn't seem long. Maybe a couple of months. It wasn't as long as six months. I think they wanted the disclosure certificates to come through then they moved it on quickly as his time in Pine Court was up. I think they were pushing it. I just got the impression they wanted rid of him in a hurry and they wanted somewhere secure for him. I think at a certain age they put you out and there's no support package. Otherwise I think there was nothing wrong with the process.
22. FWF had a social worker and she was basically his support worker and we never got one personally. There must have been a support worker because when we decided it wasn't going to work having him living with us we contacted a support worker. We had to tell her the reason why it wasn't working, so he must have had one. She would have been based in Coatbridge or Cumbernauld as Pine Court was in Cumbernauld.
23. There wasn't any support provided or offered by the local authority to us as support carers. Looking back that wasn't adequate. They just dumped the laddie and that was it. Then they'd pop up now and again to make sure he wasn't getting abused and everything was ok with him. They never did anything else.
24. We needed help when he left us as he threw paint all over the room. We'd bought the wallpaper and everything for the room in his colour and he picked it. He did the room himself when he moved in. When it didn't work out I came home from work after seven o'clock in the evening and he was going away in the van and there was paint all over the room and the curtains were slashed. The laddie was angry because he'd been told it wasn't going to work. We asked the social work to repair it and they gave us something like £125. Otherwise, support-wise there wasn't anything for me and FWH.

25. Fostering is a vocation because you've got to be committed to it. It's a life-long job. They'll be involved in your life for the rest of their life and they'll be visiting you. I didn't take it on thinking it would last six months and that would be it.
26. About six or seven years after FWF left us we took in our grandson to stay with us. When we had our grandson with us we went through his support worker for anything we needed. There was no way he was going anywhere else. We were allocated a social worker. I can't remember her name.

Financial Support

27. I can't remember what kind of financial support we were given for looking after FWF. My wife FWH dealt with the finances. I don't remember if they gave us anything and what it was. We probably did get something, but what it was I don't know. If we were given money, I don't believe it was adequate. We got money for looking after and I think that was about £120 a week and that wasn't adequate for his clothes and his activities. The amount of money we got didn't change over the years as he got older.
28. To me, that's the basic they'll give you and you won't get any more as they've only got so much money in the budget. I didn't care about the money as he was my grandson. If they didn't pay me anything he would have still lived with me. If he was a child I was fostering the money still wouldn't have been enough to cover the cost of him living with us. I wasn't doing it for the money.
29. I'm sure that if we got money for looking after FWF it would be around the same because they've got a budget and they have to work everyone into it. If he needed clothes or anything like that we'd help him out and that would be out of our own pocket. The social work offered to help him as well to buy his tools for his joinery.
30. I know for a fact that we didn't take any money off him because he was going for driving lessons and we said we wouldn't take any dig money off him as he needed to get his driving licence. He was supposed to be working.

31. The only other material support I got from social work was the expense of repainting his bedroom after he threw paint over the walls. I don't know what FWF might have got if he went to social worker and got money for clothes. He was well dressed and he looked after himself. We didn't buy him clothes.
32. FWF has said in his statement that *'within a couple of months of my arrival the FWH-FWI undertook major renovations at the property. I think this was being paid for by the social services. I believe FWH-FWI received a substantial payment to take me'*. We bought the house and it cost £12,000 because I had a 70% discount and we got a £17,000 mortgage. Then I got another loan off the Royal Bank of Scotland for £5,000. This is how the renovations came in. We turned the smallest bedroom into a dining room and knocked the wall through. That left three bedrooms. We had the main bedroom, had the middle bedroom and FWF had the third one.

Foster Home Household

33. The house we lived in was at , Coatbridge. It was a four-in-a-block and we were in an upper. Originally there were four bedrooms and we used one of them to knock through to dining room. I don't know why FWF says in his statement that once we'd done the renovations that we chucked him out because we had no room for him. That wasn't true, there was plenty of room. After that we had a living room, kitchen, bathroom, dining room and three bedrooms. The only other people living in there at the time other than me and my wife, was , who was about six.
34. loved company and looked at FWF as a big brother. had no problem when we explained someone was coming to live with us. didn't care why FWF was coming, he was too young and was more interested in his toys. would get into FWF's room to talk to him and FWF would go to 's room and blether. They got on fine, but then it was getting to be too much because of the way FWF was acting up.

35. We didn't have to make any changes to the house for FWF to come to stay with us. It was just his room needed to be done up. That's why we told him to pick some wallpaper, the flooring and curtains. That didn't happen right away when he arrived. It was maybe after a couple of weeks. We let him do it himself and it gave him the experience so he could do the same in his own home in future. I just checked now and again that he was doing it okay. He did a good job of it.

Children Fostered

36. I've not worked as a support worker through social work for any other child. Me and my wife had our grandson living with us, [REDACTED], and that was arranged through social work as kinship care. They came out to ask me to do it and I told him he wasn't going anywhere else. If we didn't take him, he might have ended up in a home. His mother used to visit him in our house and we never stopped that. She eventually got her life sorted out and [REDACTED] went back to live with her when he was about sixteen or seventeen.

Placement Preparation

37. FWH knew about FWF's background [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions. I don't know if FWH knew more, but she wasn't too happy to start with him, but they talked about it. I wasn't given any background information. I just got information from FWH [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] Secondary I.
38. I should have been told about his background so I'd know how to help him and how to treat him in the future. I just saw him as a troubled young laddie. If I'd been told of some trauma he'd had in the past it would have helped me. I'd had some experience of bringing laddies up and I know what they're like. I don't know why I wasn't given any information. I can't see them doing it just for the sake of hiding things. The system said don't bother telling me in case I changed my mind and decided I couldn't handle it and said no. I was under the impression that they wanted rid of FWF and make him safe

once he's out. I think that's wrong. They should give you a choice to know the child's background and you can make a decision if you can go through with it.

39. I don't know what steps might have been taken to prepare FWF for coming to live with us. They just told us he was coming to visit us, so he must have come up to visit us to see where we lived and they've given him a choice to live with us or not. I think he had that choice and he decided it was fine for him. I think he visited the house about a week or maybe two at most before he came to live with us. When he came up he came in and chatted with us. He was a pleasant, polite laddie. He came with a female social worker who was his social worker. When they'd gone, me and FWH had a chat and we decided to give him a chance. After we'd met him we were probably asked if we were still happy to take him. I can't remember it.
40. He settled in quite easily with us, he decorated his room and joined in with the family. FWH liked a drink at the weekend with her friends or family because I don't drink and he was enjoying that as well. He socialised with them all. My adult sons and daughter, my brothers and sisters and FWH's brothers and sisters all got on well with him.
41. I think there should be a trial period before child joins a family home. They shouldn't just be thrown in at the deep end for both sides. That trial should be for two months. We weren't given that and we were just given him and that was it. His first impressions were great and he was polite and well-dressed and he changed. He would come in full of dope and he was drunk and bringing his pals in and playing music. The neighbours complained about the music. I warned him about his behaviour about three times, because I had in the house too. I think because FWH had her friends round about once a fortnight that he thought he could do it. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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42. Then I spoke to him to say it wasn't going to work and he couldn't do what he liked. After that we got in touch with social work and told them it wasn't working. If wasn't there I'd have put up with it. I think FWF had been with us between six weeks and two months when his behaviour changed. After I contacted social work he was

with us no longer than a month after. I can't remember if he was with us for three months or if it was as long as six months.

Daily Routine and Sleeping Arrangements

43. I was working four on and three off. To me the routine at home was normal. In the morning I'd see FWF get up to go to work and get his breakfast. I didn't know he wasn't supposed to be working. Then he'd be back after five o'clock for his dinner. If he wasn't there for his dinner he'd come in and make himself something to eat.

Washing and Bathing

44. There was one bathroom for everyone to use.

Clothes and Shoes

45. I don't know who provided FWF with his clothes as we didn't. My wife washed and pressed all the clothes.

Mealtimes

46. FWF has said in his statement that he had to buy his own food and cook it himself. My wife FWH cooked the dinner. FWF may not have been in for his dinner but when he came in he could open a tin and make something for himself. He could just help himself and didn't have to ask us.

Leisure Time

47. We didn't put down any strict ground rules about when he should be in. I told him to be in before eleven as that was when the front door got locked. I'd have to be up in the morning and FWH could be working night shift. He'd just come in and go to bed and maybe make himself a sandwich first and there wasn't any noise. Then he started

coming in doped up, but he wasn't cheeky when he was like that and he'd just go to his bed. I treated him the same way as the other lads when they did the same thing.

48. At the weekend we didn't do anything together in our free time. We never did things like go to the pictures or shopping as a family. He wouldn't want to go about with us anyway. He was going out with his friends maybe to the park and I didn't get involved. He had his own personal possessions such as clothes and toiletries. I don't think we gave him pocket money. He got to keep his own wages. If he needed money we'd have given it to him, but I don't think he asked us.

Trips and Holidays

49. I've seen in FWF's statement that he mentioned a holiday to Ibiza. We did go to Ibiza and it must have been before FWF came, because I can't see us leaving him in the house. I think a lad of sixteen would jump at the chance to go to Ibiza, so I can't see why he didn't. He didn't go to Ibiza with us but I can't remember if we went to Ibiza before he came or after he left. I just can't see why we would tell him he wasn't going with us.
50. We didn't go on any day trips with FWF.

Schooling

51. FWF had left school and he was meant to be going to college, but he was working on the windows and he wanted to be a joiner.
52. FWF said in his statement that his boss picked him up in his van at 7am. I left the house for my shift before that time. FWF has said he worked with fitting pvc doors and windows and he'd started doing this when he was supposed to go to the behaviour unit and he went to work instead. I wasn't aware he was meant to be doing something else. I should have been told he was going to a behaviour unit. I never knew anything about it. I thought it was college. I knew he was going out to work.

Healthcare

53. I don't know of any health problems that FWF had. He was a fit young laddie. He'd have been registered with our GP if there was anything wrong, but I never registered him. if he'd not been well he'd have taken to the doctors. There wasn't any mention of him needing a dentist. We didn't get any records of any medical problems he might have had.

Christmas and Birthdays

54. FWF wasn't with us over Christmas. I don't know if he was with us over his birthday. When one of the kids had a birthday they got cards and presents. Sometimes we gave them money. I don't know if we were given anything by social work for him.

Discipline

55. I would just tell the children to behave themselves and everything will be fine. Don't abuse what you've got. What you've got takes a while to get so keep it so don't abuse it. Don't abuse your friendships. If he'd come in the house and smashed a cup through temper, I can't stand that. He never did do it. I'd have said 'enough's enough' because I can't stand anyone damaging someone else's property, especially when it takes a while to get it. He never did that. I wouldn't say we used what you'd call discipline, we'd just say to look after what you've got.

Relationship with Foster Children

56. When FWF came to us I explained to him not to take the piss and to go along with what the rest of us did and everything's fine and you don't do any damage. Everything was fine. He just accepted that. He didn't call me Mr FWI he called me FWI and other people call me that. He didn't need to ask if he wanted to use the toilet or if he wanted to make a cup of tea. He didn't feel like that and I told him he could just go ahead and do these things.

57. When things started to go wrong it started to get serious. I explained to him he was carrying on and we couldn't put up with it, not with [REDACTED] in the house. He said sorry to me and said he wouldn't do it again, but it went on and on. It just went too far to put up with. If he'd behaved himself it would have been alright. If we didn't have [REDACTED] we could have put up with it, but he was just six or seven and he was starting to pick things up. [REDACTED] would start to think he can get away with the same sort of things.
58. In terms of guidance from social work about discipline, one of them said 'don't lift your hands' which we'd never do anyway. They never gave us any guidance. The only thing I could have done was if he wasn't in the house for about eleven o'clock, I could lock the door and warn him I was going to do that. That didn't happen. That was the only punishment I think I could have done to a sixteen year old. I wouldn't have tried to punish him in any other way such as grounding him. I don't know what kind of life he had in the homes. For me, going down that road and telling him he wasn't going out at night wouldn't be right. I could do that with a ten year old, a twelve year old but not a sixteen year old. It would just make him bitter.
59. I explained to him that things were going bad and why they were going bad and what he was doing was unacceptable. I did that two or three times. After the third time he wasn't listening to me. I don't think he thought I'd do it. I discussed it with FWH [REDACTED] and it was a joint decision with my wife. She was worried about [REDACTED] as well. I told social work what he was doing and they'd pop up now and again to visit. I didn't say to them that if he didn't behave himself I'd throw him out. They said they'd have a word with him and I don't know if they did. They talked to him in his room and they didn't talk to him with us there or they'd take him out for a McDonalds or something.
60. FWF [REDACTED] says in his statement that things were good at first and we let him have posters in his bedroom. He said it was always FWH [REDACTED] he spoke to and she was always up or down. He says in his statement if he needed anything he was to buy it out of his wages. That's not correct, she wouldn't say that. He says he paid rent of £25 per week as they were teaching him responsibility. That's not correct. I don't know why he said that. I don't know what the laddie went through in the homes and its damaged him.

61. My relationship with FWF was great at first. I had a big garage at the back and it was my workshop. I told him to help himself to the tools in there and if he was interested in joinery he could get some pieces of wood and see what he could do with them. I know he did use it and played around with bits of wood.
62. He said in his statement that he did a lot of work on our house and put windows in, but that's not right. We paid people to come in and do the work. He did his own bedroom and painted it and did a good job and that's it. We didn't have to replace the windows in the house as the council had replaced them the year before.
63. If he needed emotional support it was there. I think he saw himself as being so independent that he didn't need emotional support and he wouldn't discuss things with us. I don't know if he would discuss it with anyone, unless he discussed things with FWH. She wouldn't have told me that if he was having emotional problems. I don't think he would have talked to us about it and he'd keep it to himself. That's because of the character he was or the environment he was brought up in and he didn't trust anybody. I tried to involve him in the family when FWH had her friends and family round for drinks. He'd go in the room and they'd take the mickey out of him and have a laugh.

Contact with Family

64. FWF got on well with . He was polite to him and played with him and that didn't change. He wasn't abusive to and he wasn't saying bad words. FWF was friendly with and that was a good thing in my book. I think FWF grew up with siblings and he was the oldest. He was doing the big brother thing with and they'd spend time in each other's rooms.

Siblings

65. FWF's parents didn't come to visit him. I don't remember meeting any of them. I think I met his brother. He stole money out of FWH's purse and FWF got it back off him. I didn't speak to FWF about that as I didn't want to embarrass him. He knew

that I knew about it. It wasn't his fault that his brother stole £20. FWF has said in his statement that his sister and brother visited sometimes. I can't remember his sister.

66. FWF has said in his statement that FWH's brother came into his room and tried to grab his girlfriend's scarf that had the prince of orange on it. He then went 'mental' and tried to grab FWF when FWF grabbed the scarf back. FWF said in his statement that FWH's brother's name was also [REDACTED]. That isn't the case as her brother is called [REDACTED]. There's no way that [REDACTED] would do a thing like that. When I married FWH her brother and everyone was great with my family, my two laddies and my lassie. [REDACTED] was terrific with [REDACTED]. I just can't see him pulling a scarf off someone neck. Why would [REDACTED] do that? He welcomed FWF into the family too.
67. FWF has said in his statement that FWH didn't like his sister visiting because she had worked with his sister in the children's home and she didn't want the rest of the children knowing about her personal life. FWH is a professional at her job and her job and her home life are two different things. I can't see it. You need to ask her about it. FWH likes everybody and she doesn't dislike anybody, especially children. She loves her job and its difficult, the kids spit in her face and everything and she lets them away with it.

Visitors

68. FWF's social worker might have visited once every three weeks. It would be lucky if it was as often as that. I'm guessing as I can't really remember. It wasn't very often. The social worker was female. I think they just popped in to see everything was fine and see how he was getting on. It wasn't an everyday thing or even once a week. They didn't speak to me, but they probably spoke to FWH. I'd have probably been at work. They also spoke to FWF in his room and ask him how it was going and if he had any concerns it would be brought up, but there wasn't anything.
69. I can remember speaking to the social worker myself at the beginning and at the end. At the beginning we would have discussed how we were going to cope and was the room alright and if the house was good enough. At the end they were asking why it

was ending and we'd already told them about his carry-on. They asked if we would take someone else and I said we would and it all depends on who it is and we needed time to get over FWF first. We didn't look after anyone else after FWF. We didn't want to do it again when [REDACTED] was wee. We didn't have our own social worker visit us at all, we didn't have a social worker.

Review of Care/placement

70. With regard to us having my grandson [REDACTED] there were reviews carried out and we attended review meetings in the house. Then the social worker would come to the house and speak to us about how things were going and take [REDACTED] out to speak to him privately. We were never told that anything was wrong. That happened every three weeks or every month. Her office was just across the road from us and two or three times, [REDACTED] went over there himself.
71. I don't remember any reviews being carried out about FWF staying with us. It doesn't stick in my head. It did for [REDACTED] as it wasn't so long ago. There could have been review meetings for FWF but I can't remember. I don't know if there was a care plan in place for FWF, I think the plan was to just dump him and get him out of the system. It was one more off their budget.
72. FWF asked at one stage if we'd be happy to adopt him and he'd been with us a couple of months. If it had been suggested it wouldn't have been a problem. I didn't say no to upset him. I'd have done it. I was quite pleased for him to ask to take my name. I think he just decided this is how a normal family lives and I don't think he's ever lived a normal life.
73. I think he wanted to be adopted and to change his name to FWH-FWI. I said if that's what he wanted we'd do it, but things started to go downhill. I don't know how his mind worked, he's a damaged laddie. He didn't trust anyone and he needed to learn to trust and get into his head that these people weren't going to hurt him. He didn't say to us that he had problems trusting people. That's just my opinion. He was a secretive laddie. I think if he was really desperate he'd tell us, but otherwise no.

74. I think there should have been reviews about FWF staying with us. They should have been to see us more often and have more contact. Especially on our side of things to see how we were feeling. They should have done that at least once a fortnight to see how things were going, but just us and how we were coping and not FWF. We'd have told them it was fine, because it was fine. They just wanted that laddie out of that home and off their books and they could move onto the next person. That was the impression I got at the time. That's how the system works, they've only got so much money in the budget. I don't think it's right. As soon as the child is sixteen, that's it you're out on your own and they don't put a care package in place.
75. I think FWF was a bit institutionalised and he was going to act with us like he did in the home. In his life inside the home he was being told what to do and he rebelled against it and he did the same outside of it.

Records

76. We weren't told to keep any records and we didn't keep any. I think, now, because of the Inquiry, that we should have been keeping records of FWF being good and then going off the rails. I never would have thought of it otherwise. My own records would have been something to refer back to now and keep my memory right. I took it for granted the social workers kept records.

Moving Placement

77. I don't know what the process would be for a foster child to leave a placement and be moved into another setting.
78. My understanding of how long FWF would be with us was for however long he needed it. There wasn't a certain time to it. They didn't say it was for six months or a year down the road. If FWF had behaved himself he could still be with us now.

Leaving the Care System

79. We had a six year old in the house and we told the social worker that it wasn't going to work having FWF in the house. He was drinking and smoking and his pals would come to see him and we couldn't have that with a six year old in the house because they played loud music. I didn't try to stop his friends coming in the house to see him.
80. When a child leaves care they should put a care package in place. They should organise a home, even a job and that he gets all the things he needs for a home and check on him periodically to make sure everything's fine. They don't do that, you're shown the door and told to go to the council and they'll give you a home. That's my impression of the procedure, but I know they'd tell him to go to the housing and tell them that he's homeless.

Complaints

81. I don't know what procedures the local authority had for making a complaint. If I wasn't happy about something I would tell the social worker and I'd assume she would take it to her boss and they'd have a meeting. That's what happened when we took care of [REDACTED], they'd go to a meeting. She went to a meeting for everything.
82. The social worker could do a lot more, if their hands weren't tied. I know their hands are tied. Everything costs money and the more money they keep back the more people they can help. They don't follow through after someone's out of the system.

Convictions

83. I don't have any convictions other than for being in a fight when I was fifteen and once for not having a window cleaning licence.

Allegations of Abuse

Awareness of Abuse

84. I am not aware, looking back, of behaviour that I would now consider to be abuse of a child in care.

Reporting of Abuse

85. If FWF or if any other child had been in our care at any time, had concerns or worries they could have spoken to any of us. They could have spoken to FWH. She knows how to listen. She knows the problems they go through because of her job. They could talk to me if they wanted to. I wouldn't like to think they couldn't talk to us about concerns.
86. At no time, with the benefit of hindsight, did I see or become aware of anything that should have been reported as a concern. There was just FWF's carry-on and that was just letting him know what the problem was and if they could have sorted it out or he could have sorted himself out everything would have been fine.

Allegations of Abuse for which there has been no Criminal Conviction

87. I have never been the subject of a complaint in relation to the alleged abuse of foster children or any other children.

Reporting to Police/Criminal Proceedings

88. No abuse of any children that were in my care at any time was reported to the police.

Specific Allegations Against you that have been made to the Inquiry

89. FWF was a troubled young laddie and I don't know if he would ever realise that everybody in the world wasn't against him. One day if he realises that, he'll be a better person. I think he's under the impression that he's got to fight for everything and he doesn't need to. I don't know what he's like now. He was a nice laddie but his head was damaged somewhere. He needs to get over that.
90. He didn't have an easy life and that's going to affect him the rest of his days. It'll affect his own family and his relationships. I did try to change that and I was trying to show him what normal life was. There's going to be bad points in it, but it wasn't all bad and you've got a family and that's the biggest thing you've got in your bag. FWF had a chance to do that because all my family got on with him. It would have worked if he'd behaved himself. He's got to stop fighting and give a bit and think before he does anything.
91. I don't remember ever sanctioning him or punishing him in any way. The only thing I did was warn him that I was locking the front door at twelve o'clock if he wasn't in. It never happened, he was always in. Looking back now I don't think I should have punished him. I don't think it does any good. It just gets their back up. I know that from bringing up my own family. I know how far you can shove them and the further you shove them the further they fight back. I don't think I would have done anything different.
92. FWF said in his statement FWH-FWI *had arranged a holiday to Ibiza. I wanted to go on holiday, but I didn't want to go away with Mr FWI because I knew what he was like with a drink in him. He was always quiet and grumpy, but with drink in him he had the potential to get physical. Social work wouldn't give them the extra funding because I wouldn't go. FWH-FWI weren't happy about this. It was all to do with the money for them.* That was porkies. I don't drink and I didn't drink at that time. Maybe I had a beer. Once or twice I had a couple of halves when I was there, but not drunk. I may be crabbit, but I'm not aggressive. I've never got physical in drink. The passage of time

is affecting some of my recollections, but not what he says about being drunk and aggressive. I don't drink. I don't know why he's said this. He also said somewhere that I was going to bite his nose off. That's another porky. I wasn't going to bite anyone's nose off.

93. FWF said in his statement *'on a Friday and Saturday night FWH-FWI partied in the living room and they would shout at me for having my girlfriend in because she wore Rangers strip. Their moods changed when they drank. FWH's friends, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would come round and drink vodka. The house was like a smoking and drinking den. I was an impressionable teenager so I found this behaviour strange.'* No, if they were having a drink they were more cuddly if anything. If they saw a young laddie they'd just take the piss out of him. He's making it out to be a den, they'd have a drink and smoke fags, not dope or anything. If they saw him they'd have a laugh and tell him to come in the room and take the piss out of him. I don't know why he's saying it and I don't know where he's got this from. They're more likely to try to involve him in the drinking and give him a sherry or a can of beer.
94. FWF has said in his statement about the circumstances of him leaving us, *'I was there a few months and one day I came to the door and the husband told me to get a van to collect my stuff or else he would bite my nose off. As soon as the house was renovated I was out the door. He told me they didn't want me there anymore because I was running around with the Protestant mob. He said I had deliberately detached myself from them. It really annoyed them that I didn't want to go on holiday with them. He told me to get my gear and to beat it. I asked him where I was supposed to go and he said he didn't care as long as I didn't come back. I thought foster families were supposed to be caring people.'* That was a lot of lies as I was at work. When I came home at quarter past seven and I saw him going in the van and I went into his room and it was covered in paint. I didn't even see him when he was leaving. I didn't see him coming in because I was at work.
95. His room was covered in paint because he was angry because I'd told the social work it wasn't going to work. Probably I will have told him it wasn't going to work and I said to him he would have to make arrangements to go somewhere else. He was angry

because he'd done all the work and he was making a statement that we weren't getting away with this. I don't know what renovations he's talking about. He didn't do anything, he just decorated his room.

96. I didn't report the damage to the police, but I don't know if the social worker did. I reported it to the social worker, but I didn't go to the police. It was just paint. If he said the police came looking for him to do him for criminal damage, it wasn't us. it must have been the social work because they paid to get it fixed. I think it was £125. Maybe they've got to do that and get a police report.
97. I certainly never threatened to bite his nose off. That annoyed me after us taking him in. If it didn't work it didn't work, but to come out with all this. It gave the impression in his statement that we wanted to turn a bedroom into a dining room and he had to go. No we had four bedrooms and we were doing the work before he was there, so he had his own room. Why come out with all this. He's making us out to be people who were in it for the money. We didn't get much money and not enough to do the house up anyway. That's why my wife was upset. It was nothing to do with the money, we all worked, it was more to try to help him because that's what she likes doing in her job looking after teenagers. I feel angry about that, not physically angry just annoyed that anybody could come out with a suggestion like this.
98. I didn't have any contact with FWF after he left us. I don't know if anyone in the extended family had any contact with him afterwards.

Helping the Inquiry


99. I think they should give the people who are support carers a lot more support. The attitude is get him out and that's him off our books. Follow them up at least once a fortnight and ask them what their concerns are, I guarantee it's all concerns about the wean. They haven't done that with me, even with my grandson. They pop in because they have to write down a report, but that's about it. Then they blame it on the workers

and it's not their fault. Their hands are tied and they've got to go with the system and what their boss tells them and what budget they've got and how they spend it.

100. I think they need to get someone independent of the social worker to go in to the family to talk to them, to the adoptive parents or the support carers, no concerns about anything else and make sure and get them to do it. They need to have some power, they just can't write down on a bit of paper and then say 'that's it' and lift it and throw it in the bin. They need to be able to do something about this. An independent person, outside of the social worker, with a bit of power to do something about it and there to support the carers and the child, to make sure the child is alright.

Other information

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

Signed..  FWI

Dated.. 26/09/22