

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BCP

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is [REDACTED] BCP [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1957. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow and lived there when I was very young. I am from a family of six. My siblings are called [REDACTED] BHA [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I'm not clear on the age order of the family, but I know that [REDACTED] is the oldest and [REDACTED] is two years older than me. [REDACTED] BHA [REDACTED] is older than me. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are younger than me, and I think that [REDACTED] is the youngest of all of us. My father's name was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I understand that my parents were never married, but my mum was known as Mrs [REDACTED] but her name was really [REDACTED]
3. I have been able to obtain copies of the records from Aberlour Orphanage of my time in care with the help of my social worker, Cathy Doig. These records have helped me to fill in the background details of my early life. There are lots of things I don't remember myself and I have used the records to fill in the gaps in my memory.
4. I was placed in care in [REDACTED] 1959 in a place called Tollard House Children's Home. I'm not sure where that was. I was there for one year and then I was placed back with my parents in [REDACTED] 1960. Then I was boarded out for one week, before entering the Aberlour Orphanage on [REDACTED] 1961, aged four.

Aberlour Orphanage, Strathspey, Morayshire

Nursery

5. When I was first there, I went into the Princess Margaret Nursery. This was a separate building from the main orphanage. It was for smaller children from babies until they reached a certain age and they would then be moved into the main orphanage. I remember that my brother [REDACTED] was in the nursery with me.
6. It was run by a women called Mrs [REDACTED] BHL. She was lovely and very nice. I called her 'mum'. When she got married she was going to adopt me, but my dad said no. I can remember at the time that she wanted to adopt me and it stuck in my mind. Mrs [REDACTED] BHL and her husband adopted my brother [REDACTED] and my dad agreed to that, but told them they couldn't have his daughter too. I don't remember [REDACTED] at all at this time, and it has only been in the last couple of years that I have made contact with him.
7. The adoption was arranged in the main office in Aberlour where Mrs [REDACTED] BBG and Mr Leslie worked. They ran the two homes, the main orphanage and the nursery, and [REDACTED] It was Mrs [REDACTED] BBG who told me in her office that my dad said no to my adoption. I don't remember my mum and dad visiting me in the nursery.
8. I remember going for walks after church on Sunday with Mrs [REDACTED] BHM an older lady. She was very nice. Mrs [REDACTED] BHM and Mrs [REDACTED] BHL were different from other staff, more caring and you could talk to them. Other staff were more strict and quite firm. We slept in dormitories with the beds lined up against the walls, on both sides. There were separate rooms for boys and girls, but I still knew [REDACTED] was my brother when we were in the nursery.
9. I was too young to be able to recall much about the nursery. I was aware of a basic routine, you were up in the morning, had breakfast and got ready for school. If you misbehaved you were punished with the slipper. I can't remember the names of the

staff members who gave out the slipper. I can only remember Mrs BHL BHL and Mrs BHM by name and they also gave out the slipper. You'd get the slipper on your bare bottom for simple things like wetting the bed or wetting your pants. You'd get it when you were going for your bath, and in front of the other children too. I can't say how often I got the slipper, but it was more than once and that was for both wetting the bed and wetting my pants. The slipper was the only punishment used in the nursery.

10. The staff would notice in the morning that you'd wet the bed, but you'd be punished at night time. They kept a list of names for punishment later on. The slippers were like traditional slip-on mules and you'd be hit on the bare bottom before a bath. We had a bath every night. If you'd wet the bed, the staff would change the sheets and if you'd wet your pants your clothes would be changed.
11. We got ourselves up and ready in the mornings, and our clothes would be laid out on the beds for us in the mornings.
12. At mealtimes, we all ate together in the dining room around tables. There were boys and girls together. I can't recall what the food was like.

Main orphanage

13. I can't say what the age range was in the main orphanage. The kids were older and there were no babies or toddlers there and all the children were old enough to be going to school. I remember there was a family called [REDACTED]. I remember an [REDACTED] and she was from a big family. Also a boy [REDACTED] and my brother [REDACTED]. My older sister [REDACTED] was in the same house too. I was allowed to talk to her.
14. I was placed in a house that was run by BBP/BGZ [REDACTED]. She was house-mother and he was house-father. They were middle-aged, at least late 40s or 50s. I don't remember there being any staff in the house to help them. There were twenty to twenty-five children living in the same house. There were several houses at Aberlour

and lots of children. The houses were all different, separate buildings and in the same grounds.

Routine at Aberlour, main orphanage

Mornings and bedtime

15. We slept in a dorm room that was in our own separate house. I think there was only one dormitory. Both boys and girls slept in the same room. There were beds lined up against the walls. My brother [REDACTED] slept in the same dorm as me. The BBP/BGZ would wake us up in the mornings, then we got washed and dressed and off to get breakfast in the dining room. We washed and dressed ourselves in one toilet area where there were sinks lined up along the wall.
16. On a Saturday, we'd be up in the morning and washed and dressed to go for breakfast. Afterwards we went for walks with BBP/BGZ. He would supervise the boys and his wife watched over the girls. We would be back for lunchtime. In the afternoon we would play outside our house in the garden. I played with just the children from my own house.
17. On a Sunday we went to church. We wore special clothes, and these included a thing in our hair with earmuffs and feathers. We had a coat and a dress, black shoes and white socks. The boys would wear a kilt. Everyone went to church and we had no choice about it. The orphanage had its own church.

Mealtimes / Food

18. We had breakfast in the dining room in our own house in the mornings. Both boys and girls ate together. I don't know how many children ate together. BBP/BGZ were there in the dining room when we ate. I don't know who made the meals. It must have come from the main orphanage where there was a huge kitchen in the

separate main building. When we were at school, we went back to the house for our lunch.

19. The food was ok, but I had an illness, I don't know what it was, but it meant I would be sick after eating food. Something always made me sick. It happened a lot. A doctor came in to see me. He took a sample of food away with him and I didn't hear any more about it. I started being sick after food when I was aged eight or nine. I remember I was sick after eating stew. I think it started to get better after I left the orphanage. I don't remember seeing any of the other children being sick.
20. If you didn't eat the food or were sick from eating it, you'd be forced to eat it by Mrs BBP. She'd say "that's disgusting, that's shocking, that's terrible, you can just jolly well eat it". She'd make you eat the vomit that was all over the plate and the table. She would physically hold the spoon to force the food or the sick into your mouth. This happened a lot and it was done in front of the other children. They were a very strict couple. They should never have been running a house in an orphanage.

Washing / bathing

21. I think we got a bath every second night. The baths were lined up against a wall on each side of the room. There were about six of them. There were sinks on another wall. The boys stood in one line and girls in another. The boys got a bath after the girls. All six of the baths were used at the same time. We shared water and went in the baths one at a time, and it was very quick. There was no time to empty and refill the bath between each child.
22. Mr BGZ was supervising the boys who lined up outside of the bathroom with towels around their waists, and outside of the bathroom at the door. The girls were supervised by Mrs BBP and we were in a different queue and did not have a towel round us, and instead we lined up with no clothes on. We had individual towels, and they were not shared.

23. In recent years, my sister [REDACTED] went on to the Aberlour website and discovered photographs taken at bath time as the children queued up in separate lines to get their baths. She printed off some of the photographs and gave them to me. These photographs have helped me to remember what the bath time regime was like.

Clothing / uniform

24. The attic of the main orphanage was full of clothes, we didn't go out to buy any new ones. We didn't know what a shop was. The staff picked out clothes for us. The staff washed the clothes and we got different ones back after they'd been washed and we just wore what we were given.
25. We had a uniform of a long grey pleated skirt, black shoes, white blouse and long white socks and a cardigan.

School

26. I started at St Margaret's School in April 1962. We all went to the same school that was attached to the orphanage, as well as its own school the orphanage had its own swimming pool. I was in a class with other children of my own age. I can recall only one teacher, that was Mrs [REDACTED] BGY. She lived in Aberlour.
27. I can remember being in a science class and having gym lessons. We played hockey and rounders and we played sport quite often. I didn't really like school and just tolerated it, but I liked hockey. The teachers were strict with the belt and I got it many times. We all got it at some time or other. It depended on the mood of the teacher and all the teachers gave the belt. You got the belt on your hand and the number of strikes depended on what you'd done. I don't remember the reasons for getting the belt other than it was for misbehaving.
28. After school we came home to [REDACTED] BBP/BGZ house, did our homework and had our tea before getting bathed.

Chores

29. You got chores if you misbehaved, or were cheeky or had a laugh at something. There were stone floors in our house and we were forced to get down on our hands and knees and clean the long corridor with toothbrushes. It was [BBP/BGZ] who told us to do this task. They would report to Mrs [BBG] and tell her what punishment should be carried out. [BBP/BGZ] were like executors at Aberlour, and they had to report to Mrs [BBG] and Mr Leslie. It was Mrs [BBG] who told [BBP/BGZ] we had to clean the stone floor.
30. The hallway was in our house, you would go through a door in the dining room to reach the long corridor that led to other rooms. We had to clean the corridor floor until it was finished and then inspected by [BBP/BGZ]. There would be three or four of us cleaning the floor or maybe more. We would have to do it until it was finished or until bedtime, and then we would be told we could stop cleaning so we could be sent to bed. We didn't have to finish it the next day and would be sent to bed at our normal time. Sometimes, we had to miss our tea as well so we could clean the floor.

Leisure time

31. In winter we would sledge down the hill. My house organised games of rounders in summer. There was no TV in the house. There were toys that had come in from people outside. I can't remember if there were books available for us to look at. No one read anything to us, and I don't really remember being taught to read at school.

Trips / Holidays

32. We went to Rothesay in the summer for two weeks. We went there every year, apart from one year when we went to Aviemore. [BBP/BGZ] went with us, and no other staff and it was just the children from our own house.

Birthdays and Christmas

33. Mrs BBG would take you to a cupboard to choose a toy for your birthday. This toy came from a collection of toys that had been donated by people from outside of the orphanage. The toys were kept in the section of the orphanage in a separate building where she worked with Mr Leslie. After you selected the toy you were able to keep it. There was no cake for your birthday and nothing happened in the house to make it special. BBP/BGZ did nothing to mark a birthday.
34. On Christmas Day we went to church. We were able to open presents afterwards. We had a Christmas dinner and then that was it. There were various toys. There was a tree put up in our house next to the glass door at the entrance. There was also a tree in the huge hall in the main Aberlour house where our gifts were and Santa Claus came in to give out our presents. Otherwise, it was a normal day and the staff were just as strict as usual.

Personal possessions

35. We didn't really have any personal possessions and we weren't given anything else other than a toy on our birthday.
36. We were given pocket money, I think it was five shillings. There was a wee shop at the end of the driveway. Someone took us to the shop to buy our sweets on a Saturday.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

37. My mum and dad came to the orphanage to visit. I didn't know them. I didn't believe they were my parents. They came a few times at the weekend. They were total strangers to me and I denied they were my mum and dad. I met them in the visitors room at Aberlour and I was introduced to them. I saw them with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My older brother BHA was at the visit too. He was living somewhere else in the

orphanage and I only saw him at church. I wasn't allowed to speak to him, as that was banned by staff and he wasn't allowed to speak to me either.

38. After that I didn't see my parents when they came to visit Aberlour, and they saw my siblings instead. No adults tried to explain anything to me. I just didn't want to have any contact with them.

Healthcare

39. A doctor came in to try to find out why I was being sick after meals. I didn't hear anything more and the sickness continued. After I left the orphanage it got better. Other children in the house were not sick like me.

Bed Wetting

40. If you soiled the bed, the staff would change the bedding and you had to put the dirty sheets into the laundry basket. The baskets were taken away in a van for the clothes and bedding to be washed. We had to make the beds ourselves. You'd tuck the sheets in at the top and the bottom and then the corners. Then the blankets went on top, and cornered. It was like being in the army, then we'd have to stand at the bottom of the beds to wait to be inspected by BBP/BGZ He looked at the boys beds and she checked the girls. If it wasn't done right, the bedding would be pulled off and you would have to do it all over again. This happened before we could have breakfast. Otherwise, the beds would be changed at weekends unless you'd wet the bed during the week.

Discipline

41. Sometimes, you would be made to stand in a corner to face the wall, for maybe two or three hours at a time and until they told you could move.
42. We never had fights or arguments in BBP/BGZ house. I was trying my best to protect the younger ones because there was no-one else. There were some scary

moments. People died in Aberlour. One day we went for a walk with the BBP/BGZ through open ground where there were some woods. We were standing next to a big waterfall. One of the boys fell in the water and I saw it happen. He drowned. He had a bed in my dorm and after he died the staff laid a union jack flag on his bed. He was aged nine or ten and I must have been around the same age. After the boy fell into the water we were just told to go back to the orphanage. I didn't understand what had happened. There was a funeral and he was buried in Aberlour Church which is part of the orphanage. No-one from the outside came into the church and it was just for the orphanage only.

43. When children are put in care it is not their own fault that their parents cannot look after them. The children go into the care of others and these people are there to care about them, but they think they can do whatever they like to the children.

Abuse at Aberlour Orphanage

44. BBP/BGZ made a list of names each day of children to be punished. They called out the names at tea time and the children would be given the slipper on their bare bottom in front of everyone. They didn't tell you the reason for getting the punishment. I had toilet problems so the punishment happened to me a lot, but not necessarily every day. It carried on throughout my time in the orphanage. I discovered from my records, because of my early childhood I wasn't toilet trained. My parents were farm labourers, they didn't have a house and they often lived in a tent. They didn't have access to a toilet or a bathroom and I was never toilet trained.

Hopeman House, Hopeman, Morayshire

45. One year I couldn't go on summer holiday with the others from my house, and instead I went to Hopeman House on the Moray coast. I don't know why I went there, but as I kept wetting myself they couldn't take me on holiday. I went in the orphanage minibus. It was just me that went with the driver. I had not been before

and I didn't know where I was going. I can't say how old I was at the time. I was there for two weeks. I don't know what type of place Hopeman House was, but it was it was for older boys and girls who were ready to leave care and go into the open world. It was a halfway house.

46. I think there were roughly twenty people at Hopeman House at the most. It was not a big place and it was set in its own grounds. Opposite the house, across the road was the pier and the beach.
47. I must have been under the age of ten as I left Aberlour when I was ten years old, so the others in the house were much older than me. It was run by BBL/BGT BBL/BGT who were a married couple. They were very strict and they were not nice people at all. It was BGT who met me when I first arrived. They were quite old. Mrs BGT told me 'You're here on holiday for two weeks'.
48. I shared a bedroom with another girl and there was just the two of us, and I can't remember her name. It didn't feel like a holiday. The day after I arrived, I was told to get up in the morning to clean and dust the bedroom. I said 'no, I'm not doing it'. BBL said 'you'll jolly well dust this bedroom'. We used to call him as he had One day the duster blew out of the open window on the landing. He told me to go downstairs to get it and I refused to go so Mr BBL slapped me, really hard. He knocked me out and I blacked out on the top of the stairs. I can't remember anything else. Mrs BGT was there when he did it along with one of the other girls and someone sat with me as I came round.
51. For the rest of the time, we went to the beach nearby. There wasn't much to do really. There were chores like hoovering, dusting and cleaning. At bath times in Hopeman House, we were left to our own devices and it was not like being in Aberlour Orphanage.
52. There was a boy at Hopeman House called BBE He was an adult, not a young child or a teenager. He was too old to be in care, he was maybe aged eighteen or nineteen and a resident at Hopeman House. I didn't like him. He was sly.

I didn't like the way he looked at me and I was uneasy around him. I was terrified of him. I remember one day I walked into a room where the boys were standing in a circle. They had a baby and they were flinging it into the air and playing catch with it. They were throwing the baby to each other. I didn't say anything or ask any questions. I was petrified. I didn't know where the baby came from.

53. One day at the beach, there were two young boys with a bag. There was a deep quarry, just before the beach. They were putting the bag in the quarry. A man saw me, I don't know who he was, and chased me and I ran back to Hopeman House. Mr BBL said 'what are those two boys doing down there with that bag?'. I told him that I didn't know what was going on. It turned out there was a dog inside the bag and Mr BBL took the dog into Hopeman House. I was sent to bed early. I didn't understand this as I did nothing wrong.
54. One day at Hopeman I was supposed to go to church in the morning. We were not forced to attend church, but I said I would go anyway. I sat on a bench at the front door waiting to leave. BBE was there too and he was making eyes at me, and I didn't like it. He was suggesting that I was going to church and I told him that I'd changed my mind about going to church. I was uneasy and I stayed behind. I had to Hoover and dust the house instead.
55. I went back to the Aberlour Orphanage in the minibus after two weeks in Hopeman. I came across Mr and Mrs BBL/BGT sometime later, after the Aberlour Orphanage closed.

Leaving Aberlour Orphanage

56. I left Aberlour Orphanage in 1967 when I was aged ten. The Orphanage was closing down as it was too expensive to keep. They built new, smaller homes around Scotland in Kirkcaldy, Cumbernauld and I think, in Dunfermline.

Aberlour Children's Home, Whytemans Brae, Kirkcaldy

57. I left Aberlour Orphanage for the new, smaller Aberlour Children's Home in Kirkcaldy. I was there for about three years. According to my records I was at the children's home from [REDACTED] 1967 to [REDACTED] 1970. It was run by Mr and Mrs BBL/BGT. I believe that Mr BBL worked for the Council in their offices in Kirkcaldy. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] came with me. I think there were seven children living in the house. [REDACTED] from Aberlour was there too. BBE who I met at Hopeman House was also resident in the Aberlour Children's Home, even though he was too old to be in care.
58. As well as BBL/BGT there was a staff member called Carol Webster. She was the assistant to the BBL/BGT. She made the meals and did the washing and ironing. If BBL/BGT were off duty, Carol was in charge of the home.
59. The home was very modern. There were big glass windows in the living room. There was a big lawn at the front, the side and the back of the house and there was a driveway. When you came in the front door you entered a hallway and to the left hand side was a lounge. Straight ahead was the dining room and off that was a separate kitchen. Between the lounge and the kitchen was a landing and there was a toilet off the landing. If you turned back into the landing, there was another toilet. Also, on the ground floor was Carol Webster's bedroom. Off her bedroom there was a staircase up to the first floor. My bedroom was on left hand side, then there was an airing cupboard and round the corner was the BBL/BGT bedroom. All the bedrooms apart from Carol Webster's were on the first floor. There was also a bathroom on the first floor. BBE had his own bedroom next door to Mr and Mrs BBL/BGT.
60. Mr BBL was a total bully and he had the power over us. You'd hear him coming in because of his [REDACTED]. I told Mrs BGT that I was terrified of her husband. She said 'if you behaved yourself, you wouldn't need to be.'

Routine at Aberlour Children's Home

Bedtimes

61. Me and [REDACTED] had our own bedroom in the home. It was not a dorm room. The property was more like the size of a family house. We were up in the mornings and washed and dressed and got ready for breakfast and then school. Our clothes were laid out on the bed for us to put on.

School

62. I went to a special school in Kirkcaldy with [REDACTED]. It was not mainstream and I cannot remember its name. My brother [REDACTED] went to a local primary school. Me and [REDACTED] walked to school together. The school was OK and we got on well with our teachers. We ate our lunch at school. When school finished we walked home, had our tea and then watched TV before going to bed between 8 pm and 8.30 pm.

Clothes

63. We wore what we wore in Aberlour Orphanage, a long grey skirt, black shoes, white blouse, white socks and a cardigan.

Food

64. By the time I was in the Home in Kirkcaldy, I had stopped being sick after eating food. The food was okay. Carol did the cooking and it was better than the food in the orphanage. If I didn't eat the food I was told to eat it or the next day it would be served up for breakfast, and if I didn't eat it then it would be waiting for me at the next meal. I wouldn't get any other food if I didn't eat what they gave me. Both Mr and [REDACTED] made us eat the food.

Discipline

65. If you misbehaved you couldn't go out to play, you could be locked in a room, no TV and that may be for a whole day. You'd get no food if you were being punished.

Running away

66. My sister [REDACTED] ran away for four days. She was found by the police and brought back to the home and she was grounded for one week. She was terrified of Mr [REDACTED] BBL and had no-one to talk to about how she was feeling. She couldn't tell the police and they wouldn't listen to her anyway. I never ran away as I wanted to be there for the other kids.
67. A long time after I left the children's home, my friend [REDACTED] put me in touch with her friend Anne Cunningham. Anne had worked in the Aberlour Children's Home in Cumbernauld and she said that 'every child in the Kirkcaldy Home ran away'. I told her that I wasn't surprised because of the behaviour of Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] BBL/BGT

Abuse at Aberlour Children's Home

68. I joined the Guides in Kirkcaldy. I went to Guide camp in Perth. When I was away you were allowed to phone home. I phoned the children's home to speak to [REDACTED] and I heard the boy screaming because Mr [REDACTED] BBL and [REDACTED] BBE were beating him up.
69. I saw them beat him up on another occasion. Outside of the living room was a landing where there was a box of cans of lager. Mr [REDACTED] BBL and [REDACTED] BBE accused [REDACTED] of stealing a can, and he denied this. [REDACTED] BBE lived in the Children's Home. He shouldn't have been there. I couldn't stop them beating up [REDACTED]. I heard it all. I was in the living room and there were two grown men beating him up. He was only ten or eleven years old. It happened a lot. I don't know if anyone else was treated in this way. A lot of things were covered up in that home that we didn't know about.

70. [BBE] was seeing a girl called [REDACTED] and she was the same age as him. She came to the Home quite a lot, wearing a skimpy dress and high heels. One day, during the week [BBE] said that when she arrived I was not to go into the kitchen. Carol Webster heard this and asked me what was happening and why I couldn't go in the kitchen. I didn't know what was going on. A lot of things were happening in the home because of [BBE]
71. On one occasion, after I had been asleep, [BGT] had to wash my hair as it was sticky with something. Someone went to get a specimen bottle to take a piece of my hair. [BGT] put my head over a sink to wash my hair and take the sample. Carol took me to see a female doctor who examined me down below. She didn't ask me any questions and spoke to Carol instead. She did a report about it afterwards. [BBE] [BBE] used to come into our bedroom at night and I told him to get out. I think there was a cover up in Kirkcaldy with the [BBL/BGT] I didn't know what statement was made by the doctor, but something was said and it was brushed under the carpet. It was after this incident that I got chased out of Kirkcaldy, I don't know why.
72. I don't think he sexually abused me, I would have known. He did something in my hair. It wasn't the first time that my hair was like that, and the only person who came into my room was [BBE] I left Aberlour Children's Home soon after this to go to the An Cala Home in Lochgilphead.
73. On another occasion, Mrs [BGT] put my head down the toilet pan and flushed it. I did something that she didn't like and she was frustrated and agitated with me. She grabbed me by the hair with two hands and put my head down the pan and flushed it. I think it happened three times in total. I don't remember why she did it. Mr and [BBL/BGT] had no patience with kids.
74. We'd be given a cold bath if our bed wasn't made properly and the corners not done to their satisfaction. This also happened in the Aberlour Orphanage when I lived in [BBP/BGZ] house. We had to make our beds with hospital corners. It was the same routine, if it wasn't done right, they'd strip the bed and we'd have to remake it. You'd be made to go for a cold bath in Kirkcaldy by [BGT] That was for misbehaving

and she'd fling me in a cold bath. We had a bath every second night and I was going for a bath anyway. We weren't allowed to fill the bath ourselves. I pointed out to her that it was cold and she told me I deserved a cold bath and to get in the water anyway.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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87. I went to a Children's Panel in Dunoon. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were there with my parents. We were in a waiting room for the Panel. There was a speaker system from the waiting room to the panel room and they could hear what had been said. I knew nothing about a plan for me to go to Glasgow with my parents. I didn't know Glasgow and I didn't know my parents. My dad was saying 'If you come to Glasgow you'll be ok and I'll look after you and I'll buy you cigarettes'. At this time my sister [REDACTED] was living in Glasgow with our parents and she had never told me what was going on. In the Panel meeting, they repeated what they had overheard. The Panel asked me what I wanted, and the decision was left to me to make in front of the Panel. I didn't know what to do and I said I would go to live with my parents. I was put under too much pressure from my family and my dad was bribing me to move to Glasgow. The Panel should be trained to pick up on things like this.

Reporting of abuse at Aberlour Orphanage and Children's Home

88. I never reported the abusive behaviour of either [BBP/BGZ] or Mr and Mrs [BBL/BGT] When I was in care I had no-one to go to. When you're in care you have no-one to turn to.

Life after being in care

101. My parents had a basement flat in Buccleuch Street, Cowcaddens. There was me, mum, dad, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I was fifteen and the sexual abuse by my father started straight away. I lived in this flat for one year. Mum used to leave the flat to go to the shops and that was when it happened. When mum came back from shopping I would be in tears and he'd tell her that there was nothing wrong with me. He threatened to kill me when we were alone. On a wall in the flat there was a shield with two swords through it, and, one day when my mum was away shopping, he took the sword out of the shield and held it to my throat. He said 'if you tell anyone, I'll kill you'. He was abusing my sister [REDACTED] as well and I didn't know this until I went to live with them.
102. One night my father made me sleep with him. He tried something else and I shouted out. My mum said the next morning that she'd heard me. She and [REDACTED] went to the police and they came to the flat with social workers. The police arrested my dad. My mum tried to disown me and said I was lying. I gave a statement to the police and so did [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I went to court to give evidence and my dad was convicted. He went to jail for one year as a result.
103. After this, I couldn't see where my life was going. I was fed up with living in a pigsty at my mum's. I got myself a job in Collin's factory in Bishopbriggs and I was bookbinding. I worked a day shift and night shift to avoid going home. One day I stopped at a church that was open and I went in the building. I got talking to the Minister, Mr McCallum, and I met his wife too. They put me in contact with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] They were part of the congregation and their first names were [REDACTED]

and [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] as I called her. [REDACTED] was a counsellor for young people. I went to the last Children's Panel hearing and I was just sixteen. My mum was there and she disowned me. [REDACTED] said that she would take me in. It was good living with them, but I gave them a hard time. There was so much going on in my life. They must have known about my dad because of the court hearing. I didn't tell any of the authorities that I was involved with about what my brother [REDACTED] BHA did to me.

104. I lived with the [REDACTED]'s for two years before they went to live in [REDACTED]. Dr [REDACTED] was an expert [REDACTED] at Stobhill Hospital and he was opening a project [REDACTED]. They went on to adopt a boy [REDACTED]. They had no children of their own. [REDACTED] worked with young people at church if they had drug or alcohol problems. I still see [REDACTED] now and [REDACTED] has passed away. She still lives in [REDACTED] and sometimes comes back to Scotland to her house in Helensburgh. At some time they have both met my family, including my son and grandchildren. [REDACTED] also arranged counselling for me through a friend of hers, but it was for two months only.

105. When they went to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] put me in touch with another couple called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and she was also a counsellor. They had a house in Glengarry. They had their own kids. I was with them for three years before they moved. I was living in Glasgow by the time I was twenty-one and I was still working for Collins doing book-binding. At some stage I was in a relationship with a guy and I moved in with him to a place in Drumchapel. It didn't work out, and I had a terrible time and as a result I spent some time in a mental health hospital, and when I left there I moved in with the [REDACTED] again. After the [REDACTED] moved away, I met [REDACTED] and he is the father of my son [REDACTED]. We were together for eight years. I was aged thirty-two or so when [REDACTED] was born. I had to leave [REDACTED] when I was pregnant as he was an alcoholic and he was hearing things. I got a bed-sit in [REDACTED] Dennistoun, and after that I got a house in [REDACTED] when [REDACTED] was three weeks old, and we were there for twenty-one years. I was there until [REDACTED] left home six years ago. Now he has two children of his own.

106. I had a social worker when [REDACTED] was born. She was called Liz Reade, and she had a colleague called Alice Rutherford who spent a lot of time with me. She was someone I felt I could talk to and she was always there for me.
107. When I left Collins, I found a job in a local bookies. I was too young to be working behind their front desk so I did typing for them in the back room. I worked there for a long time.

Impact

108. I protected [REDACTED] from when he was a baby. He doesn't know my family. My dad has died and I had no contact with my mum. I never saw my brother [REDACTED] BHA again. [REDACTED] doesn't know what happened to me. I don't see my brother [REDACTED]. He used to visit us when we lived at [REDACTED] but he has a bad temper and I was scared of him. He has a lot of demons and is very angry and aggressive and he bullied [REDACTED] when he could. I continued to have a relationship with my sister [REDACTED] but she died two years ago. I managed to find my youngest brother [REDACTED] three years ago.
109. At times I have felt suicidal and I have taken several overdoses. This is an impact of my experience of life in care. There was so much going on in my head, I couldn't see any other way out. I was with [REDACTED] and I loved him, but I didn't like the drink. I thought if I took an overdose he would get a fright and come off the drink, but it didn't work. I realised he wasn't going to get sober or go to Alcoholics Anonymous.
110. My experience in care has affected my health. I've been through so much. I had a stroke in my mid-forties. I was working four days a week at the time and I was walking in the street, and I suddenly felt like I was drunk. The next day I went to the doctors and I was told I had a stroke. I think the stress of my early life led to having a stroke so young. I take seizures now. I had one when I lived in Kirkcaldy when I lived with the [REDACTED] BBL/BGT I had to give up work after I had a stroke and have not worked since.

111. I now have a diagnosis of unstable personality disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). I have pseudo seizures and have angina. I take medication now and I have several tablets for different things. I continue to have issues with food and I now have IBS.
112. I think my education suffered from being in care. I didn't have a stable home or the help that I needed with my schoolwork, and I could have done better if my circumstances were better.
113. My relationships have been affected. I'm very wary of people and there are very few that I trust.

Reporting of Abuse

114. Not long after I had [REDACTED] I reported my brother [REDACTED] BHA to police, but they said there wasn't enough forensic evidence to arrest him. [REDACTED] was a baby and I was in my early thirties. I did this because I was being threatened by [REDACTED] BHA and I was fed up with him running my life. He was back in my life through his ex-wife, [REDACTED]. When my dad got the jail, I was still living with my mum and [REDACTED] BHA was abusing me. Then I went to live with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and then to the [REDACTED]. After I left the [REDACTED] I briefly lived with my mum again and [REDACTED] BHA was still abusing me even though he was then with his wife [REDACTED]. At some stage, I had a room in the same flat as [REDACTED] BHA in [REDACTED], Cowcaddens and he used to come in my room and abuse me. I told [REDACTED] what he was doing and she didn't believe me. I have now not seen [REDACTED] BHA for 28 years.
115. When [REDACTED] was a baby I was threatened by my brother [REDACTED], and I was afraid that he would report me for being a bad mother and he would tell the cruelty people. I was then living in the bed-sit in [REDACTED]. I decided I had to do something in case I lost [REDACTED] and he was taken into care. I went into a social services office and explained the situation. A woman called Dora Scott came to the flat to take my

case and she said there's no problem with me having the baby. Because I had been in care myself, I felt there was a stigma attached to me bringing up my own baby.

Records

116. With the help of my social worker, Cathy Doig, I obtained a copy of my records three years ago. I told Cathy about my brother [REDACTED] and how he had come to be adopted many years ago and how I would like to see him again. I was able to find him through the information I found in my records.

Lessons to be Learned

117. People now should know what happened to children who were in care in the past. Children in care need more back up. They require more qualified teams of people who understand kids and back them up. We had no-one to turn to. Kids need to have someone that they can go to that they are not scared of, someone that they trust.
118. If we'd gone to a social worker like Cathy McPhail she would have told the people who ran the Home, and that was because of her relationship with the managers. I couldn't go to the police, what would they do? More kids in care need more support. More organisations to step in and speak up for kids from their time in care, from babies up to teenagers. They all need protection and someone to talk to. I don't know much about today's care system, but I want people to know what happened in the past in care.
119. I'm pleased that my life is so much better than it used to be, years ago I could not have given a statement to the Inquiry.

Other information

120. 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.

BCP

Signed

Dated 19/6/18