

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EIG

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is EIG however, when I was a child, I was known as EIG. My date of birth is 1968. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in the Rankin Memorial Hospital, Greenock and taken back to in Greenock. I lived there with my mum and all of my brothers and sisters. My brothers' names were and I have always known as . My sisters were and . I was the youngest. I don't know my brothers and sisters dates of births, however, was the oldest and I would say he was about twenty years older than me. After it was then it was or then was nearest in age to me and there was a year or two between us. It was four boys first and then four girls.
3. I had a sister called who died before I was born, on 1966. I was told about her by my best friend's mum. I am not sure what age was when she died but I think she was between three and six years old. I don't look at my file because I know a lot of things.
4. My mum's name was and her maiden name was . My dad's name was . There was a man called who my mother had an affair with and I believe that he is my father. We think my eldest brother also belonged

to [REDACTED] because [REDACTED] was very dark skinned. I think [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] may have belonged to [REDACTED] as well. I'm not ashamed of it.

5. [REDACTED] bought us a big house in Bishopton and we were all going to move into it. The house was quite big and we were all going to have our own rooms. [REDACTED] was very good to my mum. He was a very well-known man in Greenock and he had a lot of businesses. He had a family in Italy. I was told when I was a little girl that I had a half-brother who lived in Italy with his mum. I believe my half-brother has now become a monk. I learned that as an adult.
6. I remember the home I lived in as a child and I remember playing out in the backyard. You would call the garden "out the back". We stayed up the close, as we called it then, on the third floor. Our home was on higher ground than where I later moved to at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] These were bigger places and there were three homes on one side and four on the other. There was a big drop in the garden at the back so it went down in a hill. There were two shelters and we used to jump over the shelters.
7. I remember my neighbours. My Auntie [REDACTED] lived downstairs with her children, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Mum was always drunk so Auntie [REDACTED] used to throw pieces and jam out the window to feed us. She wasn't actually related to me but she looked after us.
8. We had a nice home with a nice black leather sofa. Our living room was round the back where the garden would be. The kitchen was next to the living room. I used to go out the back with the girls who lived downstairs and I played with them, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
9. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were very different to me. I must have been a bad child that is how I feel. I was always up to something. We used to put bricks across the two shelters and use the bricks to hold blankets in place. If we fell then we fell with the blankets and that happened quite a few times so you would get a cut knee and cry, as children do. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who lived on the ground floor would shout at me that I couldn't

go up there because it was too high for me. I would be told off for it but I just liked to do things.

10. I went to Craigieknowe Primary for a short time when I was a young girl. I remember that school well and I remember the canteen because I used to go up and get extras. When I was in Craigieknowe we used to get milk and we had a little sleep. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to the big class, through the big windows. I wasn't allowed to go and play with them because you weren't allowed to go where the older kids were. I used to try and run round and jump and see in the window. People would come to the window and wave at me. The caretaker who lived in the grounds was always nice to the three of us.
11. Everyone loved my mum from what I knew. She was starting a new life but everything went wrong for her after [REDACTED] died. My father died on the [REDACTED] 1973, the day before my fifth birthday. I found out as I was growing up that my father had drowned but I don't know the circumstances. From what I know and what I have heard from people in [REDACTED] things just went downhill for us from then on.
12. There was no social work involvement before my father died. Aunt [REDACTED] and Uncle [REDACTED] lived on the bottom floor and they married and moved to [REDACTED] in Gourrock. When I got older I went and found them, like I did everybody. I went looking for people. Aunt [REDACTED] died from an ulcer while we lived there. She went into hospital and never came out again. She loved [REDACTED] me and [REDACTED] but she was very fond of [REDACTED]. Aunt [REDACTED] used to always take [REDACTED] because I think [REDACTED] was named after her. When she went to [REDACTED] she would come and get [REDACTED] but not me and [REDACTED]. She would take her out for the day to give my mum a break.
13. Mum took very ill. She was drinking and she had cancer as well. I didn't know that she had cancer at the time. I found that out around 2017 and up until then I thought that she had only been an alcoholic. We had gone into care but my mother signed herself out of hospital to come and get us out of the children's home. My mum loved me very much and I know that. She took us home so she could look after us but she died when I was five years old.

## Grosvenor Road Children's Home, Greenock

14. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Leaving Grosvenor Road Children's Home, Greenock**

20. We weren't there very long and one day they told us that we were going out for the day. I told [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] we were going out and I was happy, however, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s car went up the hill and my car was facing down the way. I was in the back seat crying because I was in a different car. I didn't see my sisters for nearly two years after that.
21. My brother [REDACTED] was up on the hill because he knew what was happening and [REDACTED] ran away. [REDACTED] had tight ginger curls when he was a little boy and he just stood there. I see [REDACTED] now and he remembers it as well. We have spoken about it as adults. I won't forget that but we couldn't do anything because we were all helpless children. [REDACTED] knew that we were going out in the cars.
22. Two people took me away in the car but I don't remember their names. The car drove about and they couldn't take me to wherever they were going to take me so I ended up going to the [REDACTED] back in [REDACTED]
23. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were passed about a couple of times in Greenock before they went to Quarriers in Bridge of Weir. I know that now but I didn't know at the time. They had a bit of a rough time from what I have gathered. I couldn't understand why they went somewhere and I never went with them.

### **Convalescence Hospital in Drumchapel**

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Foster care with <sup>EIH</sup> and <sup>EOT</sup> at  
Greenock

28. The foster parents were <sup>EIH</sup> and <sup>EOT</sup> and they would have been in their forties. They died around 2003 when they were 72 but I wasn't allowed to go to the funeral. Their deaths were announced in the paper but my name was not

included. They had two sons and two daughters called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were a lot older than me. [REDACTED] was nearly ready to leave secondary school and [REDACTED] was in St Stephen's High School, which is where I went later. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were both working. I already knew [REDACTED] [REDACTED] because she used to take me out in the pram.

29. My foster father worked in the shipyards from Monday to Friday and he sometimes worked overtime. My foster mum never worked, all she did was the flowers at the chapel. She was a very fine florist and the things she did with flowers were amazing. She arranged flowers for weddings that were held at the church. All the money went to the church and she never kept any. They were very holy people. Before I arrived, they had never fostered children before.

### **Routine**

#### *First day*

30. I went into the house and everything was chocolate brown. The wallpaper was jumping out at you with flowers and everything was very old fashioned. The house was lovely and when I arrived there every one of them was ever so nice to me. They showed me my bedroom and I was in the back room with their two daughters, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My foster parents were in the big bedroom at the front. The other front room was shared by their two sons, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There was a big front room and a kitchen. Not long after I got there we got a twin tub washing machine which was the 'in' thing. I think they got a lot of things through me.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

31. When I went there I had a single bed that social services had given them and there was a bigger bed in the room. We got two sets of bunk beds after a while because there were three of us crammed in the one room. My bed was on the bottom. When [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had both left home I was given my own bedroom. I was about fourteen and we had moved to [REDACTED] by then.

### *Washing/bathing*

32. When I was little I had to share a bath with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We had to share the hot water and that's how it was in [REDACTED]

### *Healthcare*

33. I wasn't well when I was a little girl. My sister, [REDACTED] died with the illness that I have. In those days they couldn't cure it. I was in and out of Yorkhill as an inpatient when I was a little girl and I didn't always have visitors because it was quite a distance to come and see me and because of the money situation as well.
34. When I was young I met Rod Stewart in the lift at the hospital. He had come to visit the sick kids. I was ill and I was in a bed being transferred. I had to be protected in a tent because I was quite sick. I was in incubation and no one was allowed near me. I was in a special ward because sometimes I was very sick when I was little.
35. I was up and down to Yorkhill Hospital a lot as a little girl but they got me on medication so I didn't have to go as often. I ended up going to hospital with my foster mum every three months, then six months and then once a year. I saw Professor Hamilton at Yorkhill and he was good to me but he would spend time with my foster mum and I would need to go out of the room to the play area. After the appointment we would go to the café for a treat before we went home. We had to go from Yorkhill to Kelvingrove and then from there to Glasgow Central to get home.
36. As I got older, when I was thirteen, my foster parents told me about my parents and they told me that they died. They sat me down and told me things but we didn't speak about grief. There was no counselling. I was just to fit into daily life.
37. When I was at school I used to self-harm to ease the pain. My friend [REDACTED] knew I was doing that. The [REDACTED] never knew I was self-harming and I used to cover it

very well. Other people around me never knew because I was too frightened to tell people in case they went round to fight with the [REDACTED] EIH-EOT

### *Clothing/uniform*

38. I moved school when I went into foster care and I had to get a new uniform. I was excited to get new clothes. I had to go to the special shop in the town to get it because I was a special child. I didn't know at the time that the special shop was social services providing clothes for me. I knew they gave us a slip of paper and I got my new uniform and new shoes.
39. When I first moved there the [REDACTED] EIH-EOT bought me things to make it look good but, as time went on, I never had the things the other kids had. I wasn't dressed like the other kids at school. I didn't know at the time that the [REDACTED] EIH-EOT would have been given an allowance for me. When I was ten or eleven my sister [REDACTED] told me that.
40. I had asked [REDACTED] if she wanted to meet my foster sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] because they wanted to come to Quarriers and meet them. I asked if I could bring them but she said that she didn't want anything to do with them. I said that they were ok and that I had met her brothers and sisters at Quarriers but she was adamant that she didn't want to meet them. She told me that the [REDACTED] EIH-EOT were given money to look after me but I was badly dressed. That hurt me. I had no one to go to and no one to turn to. My friend [REDACTED] was my rock when I was growing up. She was my best friend and still is. She was a friend from [REDACTED] However, my friends could only do so much because I was under the care of the social services and it was heart-breaking for people to see what I was going through.
41. When I was older I was given a slip of paper and it would tell you what items you could get like a pair of shoes and a jacket. Whatever I needed was on the piece of paper but you could only get one of each thing on the list and you could only choose certain things because that was what social services paid for. I couldn't go to the shops my friends went to. My friend [REDACTED] went to "What Every Woman Wants" to buy clothes

and she would let me wear her things but I had to change before I went back the  
EIH-EOT I would probably have been grounded if I had gone back in her clothes.

### *Religion*

42. My family were Protestants. My mum was a member of the Orange Order and my father was a Mason. My foster parents were Catholics. Not long after arriving at the  
EIH-EOT I was baptised a Catholic and about a year and a half later I made my Holy Communion.
43. I went to St Mungo's church to be baptised. I was given a little pink dress with tassels down the side of it. It was a really pretty dress. I couldn't reach the font because of my height so [REDACTED] the eldest brother, lifted me up. Father Fergus and Father McIlroy were there and they had to put the water on me to baptise me. It was against my wishes, it should never have happened and I will never forget it. I don't have a picture of that, I have nothing of my life.
44. My foster mum would take me to see the Sisters of the Poor. The school took us there to give us an insight into what life would be like if we wanted to become a nun. We met Sister Mary Bernard, who was from Sussex, when I was in Lourdes we became friends with her. My foster mum and dad used to send packages of things like sweets to her when she was in Sussex. She later died when I was living in London. I used to phone the convent because she always stayed in my heart from when I was young.
45. We started making plans and they prepared me to make my Holy Communion. I was given my dress and I had a blue velvet cape. Sister Mary Bernard gave me a parasol. I made my Holy Communion when I was eight and I was given lots of gifts like crosses. On our Communion Day we went to the school hall. There were lots of sandwiches and cakes and you could have as much as you wanted. All the kids sat at a big long table.



46. Father Fergus and Father McIlroy were both there. They were really nice priests to me. They knew I was a Protestant and they tried to help me through my religion which I struggled with. I never told anyone that because I was afraid as a little girl.
47. I remember after it my brother [REDACTED] came to where we lived and he was giving them abuse because I had made my Holy Communion. I remember him doing it and I was so scared. I was told to go in the back bedroom so that I couldn't hear the abuse he was shouting but he was right to do what he did because he was my big brother. It was out of his control because I was already baptised but he was venting his anger.
48. I had to go to mass every Sunday and I had to say my prayers. I was naughty in Chapel because I didn't want to be there. My brother, [REDACTED] would get drunk and come and shout at the [REDACTED] because they had moved me to a Catholic school.
49. When you live in [REDACTED] Protestants and Catholics used to row all the time. There were very few Catholics that lived there. It was a very serious thing in my childhood. I wasn't allowed to speak to certain people if they were Protestants. Kids were always fighting with each other outside the school gates. It would be disturbing for anyone but it was very disturbing for me because I was Protestant at a Catholic school and, at the same time, I was baptised Catholic, knowing I was Protestant.

### *Schooling*

50. I was moved to St Mungo's, which was a Catholic school, when I went to stay with the [REDACTED] My old school had been local and this was a bit longer to walk to. I was sent to a Catholic school because the [REDACTED] were Catholics. I was just told that I was moving school but the reason was not explained.
51. My best friend [REDACTED] went to St Lawrence's Primary School which was also a Catholic School. I could never understand why she went there and I went to St Mungo's. I wanted to go to the same school as [REDACTED] but the [REDACTED] wouldn't let me. They could have sent me there and I think my life would have been better if they had let me go there. I met people at St Mungo's but I felt like an outcast because I wasn't dressed

like the other kids. People made fun of me because of the way I was dressed. My clothes were very old fashioned. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were dressed very old fashioned as well. Years ago they had blue and yellow banana coats which you could turn inside out and you could wear it blue on one side or yellow on the other. It was quite a trend and I wanted one. I needed a coat the next year but they got me one from the cooperative and it was way out of date by the time that I got it. I had to try and fit in but I was embarrassed because I had free school meals. The other children went out for their lunch and went to the bakers but I never got that.

52. When I started at St Mungo's I became friends with [REDACTED] who is a long standing friend. I wasn't very good at school because of my home life. I didn't always get to do cooking in school because I didn't have money to buy the ingredients. My friend [REDACTED] helped me out and she would give me money. She bought me food when I didn't have food from the [REDACTED] <sup>EIH-EOT</sup> One day I came in and my foster dad asked me how I got money for the cooking stuff at school. He used to collect twenty pence pieces in a sideboard with a key in it but he always left the key in it. I used to steal the 20 pence pieces out of it. As a kid I didn't know they were being counted so sometimes I took money out of there.
53. I stole off [REDACTED] a few times and she had to ask me why. I needed sanitary towels and I was ashamed to tell people. I didn't want to tell my foster mum because I knew that they would say that they had no money. As I became older things got tighter for my foster family. There was only one wage coming into the house. [REDACTED] and I spoke about it in 2019 and I apologised for doing it.
54. We used to give to the "black babies" on Fridays. You had to give a penny on Friday and you would be given a baby and your penny would go to helping that baby in Africa. My teacher, Mrs Barclay, was good to me. I didn't always have pennies so she would slip one of the leaflets to me. I wanted to help the children in Africa but I was too scared to ask for things as a little girl.

*Clubs /organisations*



55. I went to the youth club when I was older but [REDACTED] always paid for it. She looked after me. The [REDACTED] didn't know that I went to those clubs.

#### *Leisure time*

56. I wasn't allowed to go further than the front of the stairs at the house. They used to go crazy at the things that I used to do. I was always getting into trouble and I was very mischievous.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

57. Just before I turned fifteen social services got me a new bed and a new wardrobe. I loved reading Enid Blyton when I was young. I loved sitting up and reading through the night so I was told off. On my birthday once my foster dad bought me a lampshade to read because he didn't want me reading in the dark but I had to put it off at a certain time.
58. One Christmas I was given two dollies. I got a black baby and a white baby and they were twin dolls. I was able to keep them. One Christmas I got a stocking and an apple and an orange. That was the kind of things you got. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who were in Quarriers would always get lots, they got record players and things like that. I would get a new dressing gown.

#### *Personal possessions*

59. When I went to the [REDACTED] I had clothes in a black bin bag. When Mr [REDACTED] threw me out he made sure that I went out with that black bin bag.
60. I didn't have anything to remember my family by. I have a photo of myself in my uniform in my mum's house that someone gave me. They told me that they gave me it because they thought that I deserved it because I had nothing. I have one photo of me as a Catholic and one photo of me as a Protestant. The [REDACTED] had a camera and they took pictures but not often.

### *Trips and holidays*

61. I was taken to Lourdes when I was between seven and nine years old. I thought St Mungo's Church had paid for it but it was social services. We went on a coach and a plane to get there. My mum went with me and we went with the Diocese of Paisley. Only a few people were picked to go on the trip and I was picked. It was a pilgrimage.
62. I was pushed about in a wheel chair with a hood on it. We stayed in the Royal Hotel. Lourdes was just a beautiful place to go to and it was a memory that made me want to travel as an adult. I met a lot of sick people and people who were dying.
63. Social services used to pay for the EIH-EOT to take me to Girvan. We went to a bed and breakfast and it was the same place every time we went. I didn't get a holiday every year. It was just me and my foster mum and dad that went. At the time I didn't realise that it was social services who paid for those holidays.

### *Family Contact*

64. My friend, [REDACTED] said our life as friends was amazing and we did have a good life in [REDACTED] but I had to live with the memory of what it was like when I was living at [REDACTED] with my family. I knew what was going on and neighbours were always telling me not to forget that I had [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They would start to tell me things like where [REDACTED] was but I would ask them to stop because the EIH-EOT were coming. I was never told about my family when I was in their house and I wasn't to hear this.

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

65. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] lived in a big house in Quarriers called cottage 33 and it was like going from a hell hole to Buckingham Palace. Aunt QAH was their housemother in Quarriers and she used to go to Macro which you had to have money to go to back then. There was Aunt QAH and Uncle [REDACTED] and they were very posh. They had a

cloakroom in their house and all of the children had their names up. I asked if I could have my name up but I wasn't allowed. I went into the playroom and each child had a big cupboard with their name on it. It was really lovely. I asked Aunt QAH if I could come and stay but she said that I wasn't allowed to. I asked in front of the social worker.

66. During my first visit to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] we had to stay inside the really posh, big house. I had travelled through Kilmacolm to get there which was even posher. We had to sit in the front room with the social worker. I don't remember who the social worker was. During that visit I was given a guided tour of this beautiful big home.
67. When I visited I would only be there for between two and five hours. I would ask if I could come back next week but I knew that I wouldn't be going back next week and it could be between eight months and a year before I visited them again. It was a long time. Sometimes I would have lunch with them but I never stayed for dinner. When I was there everyone had their own chores to do but [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would be let off lightly when I was there because I was only there for a couple of hours with them. Aunt QAH was quite good at letting them do that. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were the apple of the mother's eye.
68. On one occasion I went to the house at Quarriers with the social worker, who I think was Jan, but I was turned away at the door. They said that I couldn't come in and see them. I think [REDACTED] was out and a couple of minutes later [REDACTED] came to the door. I asked why I couldn't see my sister because I could see her there and I was told that it wasn't as easy as that. I had to book an appointment to see my sisters and then sign in at the gate. I had booked an appointment that day but my appointments were sometimes cancelled for whatever reason. I don't know if social services hadn't booked the appointment. It happened on a few occasions that I would be turned away. I only saw them once a year if I was lucky.
69. Just before the EIH-EOT [REDACTED] threw me out, when I was fifteen, I went up to Quarriers for the day. [REDACTED] was a couple of years older than me and she had a job. She was about seventeen and she worked in the hairdressers in Quarriers, training to be a

hairdresser. I went that day and [REDACTED] wanted to buy me sweeties because I loved sweeties. She wanted to be like a mum to me.

70. We never spoke about what was happening to us but I would get upset when I had to leave. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would be taken away so I didn't upset them. Their mum would be very stern with me about it and she told me that I couldn't be like that and I needed to stop it. She didn't want that happening to her two daughters as she called them. I think their mother put a stop to me visiting. Somewhere along the line between her and social services someone has failed me because we should have been kept together. I can't see why I couldn't be with them in Quarriers. Social services didn't take me as often as they should have.
71. I don't even know how I ended up with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said that her mother and father in Quarriers tried to get me but I don't believe that for one minute. They had a huge house in Quarriers and they could have fitted me in there easily. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had their own bedrooms so I could have fitted in one of their rooms.
72. [REDACTED] knew she had big brothers but she wasn't interested. I don't know if the mother brainwashed her and she doesn't want to talk about it. I feel [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have been brainwashed by what happened to them. They had a completely different life. I have never been a jealous person but I can't understand why I never got to be with them, even as an adult now. That is a hurtful subject for me. Why we never got kept together.
73. I had one sleepover with them in the whole time that I was there. I went to church while I was at Quarriers and when I went home I was grounded for a month for going to a Protestant Church. I shouldn't have done that because I was Catholic. That was when I was eleven. We had a nice time because we went to the wee shop. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had pocket money and they treated me to sweeties. They did their best for me when they could see me.



74. They had a different life. They were being taught to play the piano and different instruments. I never had the things they had but it wasn't about the life, I wanted to be with them. I wanted to play with them.
75. I saw [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] just before I made my Holy Communion and I told them that I was getting a pretty dress to make my Holy Communion. [REDACTED] got really angry with me. I said maybe I could come and stay with them because they had their own bedrooms in Quarriers.
76. You had to be really clever to get into the high school in Port Glasgow. When I saw [REDACTED] she told me that she had got into that school. [REDACTED] didn't get to go because she wasn't as smart. [REDACTED] made me swear never to tell anyone that I was her sister because the Catholic and Protestant schools were opposite one another. I used to try and bunk off classes to see her but she would tell me that I had to go and that she couldn't be seen with me because I was in my uniform. She said that we had to do things properly. I just wanted to be with my family.
77. [REDACTED] was in a bus accident when she was a young girl at Port Glasgow. She came off the bus and she was dragged a good few hundred yards. I was in St Stephen's School. I can't remember the date but I can tell you that it was a Friday because I was a kid and I was all excited that it was the weekend.
78. That day everyone was saying that there was an accident at the school on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I knew about this accident and the penny dropped when I heard it was the bus coming from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] I said to my friend [REDACTED] that was the bus that [REDACTED] gets. When I arrived home the social worker's car was outside of my house. When I went in I asked if she was there about [REDACTED] and she asked how I knew that. I told her that the whole school knew about it. I asked if my sister was alive and she told me that [REDACTED] was very ill, the next twenty four hours were crucial and she might die.
79. I asked the social worker to take me to see [REDACTED] and at first she said that she couldn't take me because she had just finished work and she was only there to tell me what

had happened but she did take me to the hospital in the end. I had to beg her and run out of the house to get her to take me to see my big sister.

80. The mum, Aunt QAH, told me that I couldn't go into intensive care and I pushed her out of the way. [REDACTED] was in the bed and she was bandaged from head to toe. She was going to theatre and she hadn't been there for long. She was only there for a few hours. She was very drugged up. She remembers me being there. I put my arms round her and told her that I would buy her sweeties when she was better. I told her that I loved her. I never saw [REDACTED] for eighteen months after that because she went away to hospital in Canniesburn and she had a lot of serious operations. She was in intensive care before they were able to transfer her.
81. When the social workers came I would ask if I could go and see her but they said that I couldn't go and visit her because of all the operations she had. She had a lot of skin grafts. They had to rebuild her shoulder and arm. She can't use her arm anymore. Greenock to Canniesburn was a long journey in those days and I couldn't have told you where it was. They told me it was far away.
82. I did eventually go to Canniesburn Hospital and I brought [REDACTED] a magazine and some sweeties. The social worker took me in the car but I was only allowed there for an hour. That was all I got with her because she was not well. That was a hard visit to get because her mother didn't want her seeing anyone. Her mother wanted her to get better which I understand but I was her little sister and I struggled to see her as it was.
83. I never saw [REDACTED] for the whole time that [REDACTED] was in hospital. [REDACTED] had told me that [REDACTED] doesn't know that I was able to go and visit her and that she would be very distressed if she found out because she wasn't able to be there with her. She has nightmares over that.
84. I saw the social worker twice in the eighteen months and it was on the second visit that I had to ask if they could they take me to see [REDACTED] I asked to go the next day but they said it wasn't as simple as that. I don't know why it wasn't a phone call to

arrange for a child to go and see their big sister in hospital. I had to do what social services said and they didn't care if [REDACTED] was dying or not.

85. On the third visit the social worker took me and then a few months after that I was told [REDACTED] had gone home. I asked to go and see her but I was told by the social worker that [REDACTED] was still recovering. She had physiotherapy and she had to get the use of her legs again. She was lucky to be alive after that.

[REDACTED]

86. I never saw [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] until I was fourteen. Someone told me where [REDACTED] lived. I found out that the hospital was right next to my Aunt [REDACTED]'s home and she had taken [REDACTED] in so I started hurting my arm in the school toilets. I damaged my arm so that I would be sent to the hospital. The first day that I turned up at her door my Aunt [REDACTED] knew who I was. I said that I was sorry to come to her door and it might not be the right house but that I was looking for my brother. She said that she had been waiting on me and she told me to come in. [REDACTED] wasn't there because he was at school. I got to see [REDACTED] after that but I had to make her promise that she wouldn't tell anyone what I had done or how I had got there. Aunt [REDACTED] died and her brother Uncle [REDACTED] took over looking after [REDACTED]. They weren't my aunt and uncles but I called them that. She lived on [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

87. [REDACTED] and I went to the Youth Club one night. I told my foster parents where I was going and I was to be in at nine o'clock. I told them that it wouldn't be finished and I begged to stay out until ten. I was told to be home as soon as it was finished. On the way there I met one of the drunks on the corner, called a corner boy. He pointed up to a light up in the flats and he told me that my big brother [REDACTED] lived up there. I told him [REDACTED] was gone. As far as I knew he was in America. He told me to go and see him because my family should be together. That man died three days after he told me that.

88. I went up there that very night and I had to knock on eight flats to get to the right one. I'll never forget [REDACTED]'s face when he saw me. He took me into his wee flat and he had lots of money which he was telling me to take. He was drunk and he told me that he drank every night to kill the pain. He told me he was happy that I had found him but he said the [REDACTED] were bad people because they baptised me a Catholic and he didn't like that. He said that he had tried everything that he could to get us all together but social services turned him and my other brothers away.

89. They went to Quarriers to see their sisters and were turned away which was on record. Apparently they turned up drunk but I believe they weren't drunk. They made mistakes as young men because there was no support to keep the family together. [REDACTED] has suffered a lot and was on the streets for quite a few years. I told him that I would come and see him again and he said I could come whenever I wanted. I was too scared to tell anyone that I had seen him but I was really happy and I told [REDACTED] I showed her all the pennies he had given me. I never saw [REDACTED] after that for quite a few months.

[REDACTED]

90. I had already found [REDACTED] and he was trying to get me to go and find [REDACTED] who we knew was in Kilwinning. I tried on several occasions. I started getting the envelope for the Chapel and stealing the money out of that because there was a pound in that. I was putting a bit of paper in the envelope to put in the basket because the [REDACTED] trusted me. I was stealing it so that I could use the money to try and get two trains to get to Kilwinning to try and find [REDACTED]

91. [REDACTED] used to come with me and she helped me with the money at times. We used to laugh on our way down on the train. Kilwinning wasn't a very big place in those day but everything was big to me. We randomly knocked on doors but we had to be careful in case someone phoned the police. If I had been taken back to the [REDACTED] then I would have been grounded.



92. When I got there I knocked on doors in several areas. If I went one month I might not go for four months so I had to remember where I was going back to. I knew [REDACTED] was a painter and decorator so I was able to describe him that way to people. I eventually knocked on a woman's door who thought she might know who I was talking about and she said he lived ten minutes away. I asked her if she would take me but she couldn't. She told me the name of where he was and [REDACTED], who was with me, said that she would remember it. I just went to the door one day and there he was.
93. He lived in a nice white house and it was beautiful where he lived. I never thought I would find him but I did. He was amazed that I had found him. He said that he hadn't given up on me and that he knew where I was but because of everything with social services he hadn't been allowed to see me. He said he didn't want me to forget that. He told me that he was leaving for London in a few weeks.
94. He died in London. [REDACTED] went and took care of it and he told me about it. I can't tell you how old I was when [REDACTED] died but I was very young. He had been an alcoholic and he never hid that from me.
95. I have my memories of [REDACTED] and whilst they are sad memories, I treasure them. He told me the same as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that they had tried to keep us together but it was very difficult and social services never supported what they were trying to do.
- [REDACTED]
96. [REDACTED] was about eighteen when my parents died. He was getting married when all this happened. I wanted to be a flower girl at his wedding but the [REDACTED] had to buy the dress and they wouldn't so I couldn't go to the wedding. I don't know the dates of when this happened.
97. I knew [REDACTED] was an alcoholic and he was on the street in Greenock. He and his wife lost their house because of their drinking. [REDACTED] and his wife moved away after they lost the family home. He had lived two closes away from me but he wasn't to be

involved because I wasn't to be involved with anybody. He got drunk but that was because my mum and dad died.

[REDACTED]

98. I went to [REDACTED]'s grave with my foster sister [REDACTED] and she told me not to tell anyone we had gone there because she would get into trouble. I think I was nine or ten when we went. She told me never to forget coming there and to remember the spot. I used to go up and try and find it but Greenock Cemetery is the biggest in the UK. We used to go up there and play hide and seek. We would try and find the graves but we couldn't because it was like trying to find a needle in a haystack when you are a young kid.
99. There were two local cemeteries, Greenock and Port Glasgow, but they were both big. We never knew that we could have gone up and asked someone. When we saw the gravediggers we used to hide because we were in our uniforms so they could report you to the school.
100. Social services made no effort to keep me in touch with my family and I only knew what people told me. I wasn't encouraged to write letters to my siblings.

*Supervision oversight / inspection by fostering authority*

101. After a few days of being at the [REDACTED] EI H-EOT's house I met Miss Hibert who was my first social worker, she was really nice. I knew my sisters weren't coming back when I went to the [REDACTED] EI H-EOT. The social worker said that I would be going to see my family but that never happened.
102. Miss Hibert would come and check up on me. When I first went to the [REDACTED] EI H-EOT she was there for a few years. She was very prim and proper but she was lovely and she cared about me. She came to see me quite often when I was a little girl. When she left it was different and everything changed for me. Miss Hibert never sat me down and spoke about my family, she was more interested in what was going on and whether I

was settling. She wanted to know where I slept and she was the only social worker who wanted to know that. I don't know if it was because of what had happened to me but she wanted to do everything she could.

103. I think Miss Hibert was the transition lady for me moving to the [REDACTED] and then she told me she was leaving and I would get a new social worker. I didn't want her to go but she told me she would get someone as good as her. I had quite a few social workers after that. I think my next social worker was Sheena but I can't remember. Jan was when I was older and there was a gentleman but I don't remember his name. I never had him for long and he moved on. I wasn't comfortable having a man as a social worker and I wouldn't speak to him. I would rather speak to a lady that was how I was when I was younger. Jan was my second last social worker. The social workers would come and visit me at the [REDACTED]'s home after school. Kathy Dickie was another social worker that I had at another stage.

#### *Relationship with foster parents / other children*

104. I called my foster parents mum and dad. I was asked to call them mum and dad because it was easier. Just before my Holy Communion, [REDACTED] told me to call them mum and dad because I wasn't going back home now and this was my home. I asked if it would be ok and she said it would be fine so I just called them mum and dad after that. I knew they weren't my mum and dad but I felt ok calling them that at that time in my life. They weren't really affectionate, they were just mum and dad to me.
105. I didn't feel I was treated different from their own children. When I first went there they spoiled me. Everything was a big shock. When I went into the room the two foster sisters came with me. [REDACTED] always came with me and she mollycoddled me when I was a little girl. She was the big sister to me that [REDACTED] should have been. I always felt safe with [REDACTED] because she used to take me out in my pram and she was good to me. She was my safe haven.

#### *Discipline*



106. They were very strict and they followed the book by social services. Everything was done that way. If someone came to visit then I wasn't allowed in the room because children should be seen and not heard. I think they were told by social services to protect me from everything that was going on. They weren't allowed to speak about my family life and it was something that we never discussed. I was to fit into the family life and that was it.
107. They became strict when I went to secondary school and my life changed. I used to be really naughty as I got older and I rebelled against them. If they told me to come in at eight o'clock then I wouldn't come in until nine o'clock and then I would be grounded so I wouldn't be allowed out. They told me that I had to learn and that if anything happened to me then it would be down to them but I wasn't far away. I was down in [REDACTED] We had moved to [REDACTED] when I was about twelve or thirteen but that was round the corner from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were seconds apart.
108. When I was about fourteen I was grounded for a year for stealing money out of someone's house and I had to go to my room every day. I was naughty because of what had happened to me. I wanted to find my family so I stole the money. I'm not going to be ashamed about that anymore. I used to travel very far to look for my brother in Kilwinning.
109. I started bunking off school more to try and find my family because I didn't want to be where I was. I went with a friend to another friend's house and I took a piggy bank. We went and buried it and we halved it. I don't know what made me do it. I think I was probably having a bad day because I had been told off or something. Life was becoming worse for me as I was getting older. I felt rejected in life. I was trying to understand why I had family out there but no one to go to. I had no one to talk to and I couldn't even talk to the social workers because they put me where I was.
110. I was allowed out again after my year, not long before my sixteenth birthday. I got my national insurance card through which was a big thing because then I could work and earn money. I wanted to learn but I was more of a reader so I used to bunk off

school to go and find my family. I would go to the cemetery to look for their graves. I did what I thought was right. I was afraid to tell people what I was doing but my friend [REDACTED] knew and she would help me to do things so I could go.

111. I was caught in Port Glasgow cemetery by my foster sister, [REDACTED] and I were sitting there because we were trying to find my family member's graves. When my foster father came in from work he asked me how my day had been and how school had been. I told him it had been really good. I told him I had been doing a project and I had to go to the cemetery to learn about tomb stones. He told me that he knew that I had been bunking off school and that the school had phoned and told him that. I apologised but I was grounded for three months. He let me out after about five weeks.
112. My foster father provided for his family though. They didn't beat me up, they were just following rules. They were just very strict. It wasn't the children's fault, it was just the way the dad was. He was quite a stern man but he never beat me up or anything like that. He did when I stole the money. That was when my life changed and I became very frightened of him. The social worker knew I had been grounded for a year and I told her that my foster father had gone to hit me. She asked me if I knew that he would go to prison for that so I stopped and said nothing else about it. That frightened me and I didn't want him to go to prison.
113. He felt humiliated. He felt like any father would of any child who had gone into someone's house and taken something that didn't belong to them. They were very holy, Catholic people and they were very respected in Greenock.
114. I never told people or embarrassed them when they threw me out. Only a few people knew because I didn't want to shame them. I wasn't going to be like them. I was going to make my own life. I was a little girl but I had to grow up very fast, in the space of a few hours. It's a scary thing when you have to grow up that fast and you are on your own in the big world. And you have the black bin bag that you went in there with as a child.

## Leaving foster care

115. A couple of weeks before my sixteenth birthday, I went out one night with my friends. I was going to the town with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and we met all these boys. It was a good night and we had a bottle of cider between five of us. A few weeks later [REDACTED] said she was going out again and I said ok. I met a boy called [REDACTED] who was a year older than me. I was snogging him and we were having a laugh. I never wanted the night to end. I stayed out a lot later than I should have and [REDACTED] took me home. We were walking up the street and I could see my dad and my brother coming. It was midnight and I should have been in at ten o'clock. I said I'm going to be killed because I've just got out after being grounded for a year. He asked me why and I told him I was in foster care.
116. My foster father went for [REDACTED] and he fought back. We had been up a close and my legs had been around [REDACTED]'s waist. He had been throwing me up and down but we weren't doing anything. My father thought I was having sex with him and I wasn't. I had to go to a doctor to verify that I was a virgin.
117. I went home and my foster father came in shouting and screaming. My foster brother, [REDACTED], told me to go to bed so I went up to my bedroom. My foster father hit [REDACTED] and they were fighting. [REDACTED] was trying to stop my foster father from hitting me. I was terrified lying in my bed. My foster father came up and told me that I was out at seven o'clock the next morning because he didn't want me in the house any longer.
118. I couldn't sleep that night. I was very frightened but I thought that he gets angry but he will calm down. [REDACTED] had lent me a brand new mint green trouser set and she still gets mad because she never saw that until the following week. That was what I was still wearing when I was thrown out at seven o'clock the next morning. He got a black bin bag and threw my things into it. He said that I had come with a black bag and I would go out with a black bag and then he threw me out. My foster mum was asking him not to do it but he told her to shut up and go away.

119. I left the house at about ten past seven with my black bin bag. I was crying and asking him not to throw me out. I was scared he was going to push me down the stairs as I left. That is why I never looked back, because that is a memory that I have to keep in my life. A couple of weeks later I was sixteen. I didn't see what people saw, they told me that the **EIH-EOT** took me in for the money. I didn't see that but sometimes you don't know. It wasn't the mum.
120. I walked up **██████████** and a lady called **██████** asked why I was out at that time in the morning with a black bin bag. I was trying to hide at the bottom of the close because I knew that my foster mum went for the morning papers every Saturday. I was peeking out to see if she was coming. **██████** shut her window and came storming down the close. She told me to tell her what was going on so I told her that he had thrown me out. She said that they couldn't throw me out because I was under social services so I showed her all of my clothes in the bag. I asked her to be quiet because I was scared.
121. I saw my foster mum coming and she gave me five pounds but she told me that she couldn't be seen speaking to me because he would kill her. I asked her where I was going to go but she had to go. It was lucky that she did go because my foster father had followed her. I was up in **██████** by that time and we were watching from her window. He knew **██████** so she opened the window and asked him how his morning was.
122. **██████** told me to go to the social services but said that she couldn't take me because she couldn't walk far. I took my bag and said that I would go. I headed down to the town and I put my head down away from people. I got to the police station and asked them where the social service's building was. I was given directions to Dalrymple Street at the other end of the town but before I went there I sat outside the back of the police station and cried. I sat under the fire escape where no one could see me. I left my bag there because I just didn't know what to do. I eventually got up. I didn't know who to phone or who to talk to, my head was so messed up.

123. I phoned [REDACTED] because he was going to a caravan. He had told me where he lived so I looked up his number in the directory. I had only met this guy the night before but he came down to the town and he gave me twenty pounds which was a lot. I didn't want to take the money but he insisted that I needed it. He said his mum and dad had said that I could go to the caravan but I didn't go. [REDACTED] wanted to make sure that I had a friend to go to but I told him that I would go to social services and they would get me somewhere to stay.
124. I went to Dalrymple Street and it was a big building but it was all locked. It was a Saturday but I thought that it would be open. I had never had any need to go to that building before because the social worker came to see me at home. I got the emergency out of hour's number which was on a poster. There was a phone box a couple of hundred yards away there so I went and called the number.
125. A man answered and I told him my situation. He told me that I had to get to Glasgow. I told him I had no money to get to Glasgow. Glasgow was like going to the moon for me as a teenage girl. I had so many things going on in my head. I asked if he could come and get me but he couldn't because he didn't drive. They said they couldn't come and get me to take me somewhere so I said I would just have to wait until the office was open on Monday. They said that they were an emergency service so I had to make my way to them.
126. I went into a baker's in the town and had a roll and a cup of tea. I sat up the back so that no one could see me. It was Saturday morning so it was busy in the town. I sat with my head in my hands, not knowing what to do or where to go. I walked out of there and I met someone that I knew called [REDACTED], who I now know was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I also knew her daughter but I don't remember her name. I was speaking to her and she asked me how I was. I told her that I was ok. She asked me why I was in the town so early in the morning so I explained what had happened to her. She took me to get my clothes and took me to her house.
127. I didn't know at the time but she was a foster carer herself. She asked me if I had any brothers and sisters so I told her my foster brother [REDACTED] lived in a house



nearby and he had built a loft conversion in it. I didn't want to go and see him because I had been thrown out but eventually she got me to go and phone him. He wanted to know where I was and I told him that social services couldn't help me until Monday. He said that he couldn't get caught up in it. He wanted to know why I had been thrown out and I explained what had happened. He asked if I wanted to go to his house but I told him that I didn't want to because I didn't trust any of them. He said I could stay with them but that on Monday his wife would take me to social services because his wife was having a baby so I couldn't stay with them.

128. I stayed at [REDACTED]'s and I had a bath. She bought me a new top and trousers on the Saturday to cheer me up and then we went back home and had some dinner and watched television. She was doing her usual things with the kids and her daughter who I knew. They tried to include me but I didn't feel up to it. I offered to leave if they wanted me to and I said I would go and stay down the docks because I didn't want to be a burden to anybody.
129. [REDACTED] couldn't take me to social services on the Monday because she had to take the kids to school but she had told me that I was welcome at her house until they could find me a place and I could go back there that night if they couldn't find a place for me. She told me that they would struggle to find me somewhere because of my age but I said it couldn't be difficult to find a child a home.
130. On the Monday my foster sister in law, [REDACTED] took me to social services and dropped me outside with the black bin bag. She didn't even come inside with me. She said she was really sorry but she was having a baby in a couple of weeks' time. It was her first baby and they had bought this house. They had bought an expensive Chesterfield sofa which was their pride and joy. When they said they could put me up over the weekend but then I had to go, I wondered why because they had a five bedroom house and no kids. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had given me some money to make sure I could have lunch and money. I had about forty or fifty pounds which was more than I had had in my life. I had it all in a little carrier bag.

131. I went in and the woman asked how she could help me. I went upstairs and the office was on the right hand side. I told her that my foster parents had thrown me out. When I told her that she asked what she could do for me so I explained that I was fifteen and a half years old. However, again she asked what they could do? I said that I would need to speak to my social worker but when she asked me who that was and I couldn't tell her. I couldn't have told her what day of the week it was never mind who my social worker was. I tried to explain to her that I needed help because I had nowhere to live. She asked me where I lived and I told her again that I didn't have anywhere to live. I wasn't being difficult but I was messed up because my head wasn't in a very good place.
132. Eventually she went and got someone and they came down asked me my name and details and then asked me to wait. I sat there for twenty minutes or half an hour while they tried to sort things out. I was really worried they were going to go the police and I would go to a home for naughty kids. I asked to go round the corner to the baker's and they said no because I might run away. I had to wait for a social worker to come and take me round the corner to the bakers even though they hadn't cared about me for the last 48 hours. They took me to the bakers and bought my lunch for me. They took me back and I sat in a chair for the rest of the day.
133. At half past three they told me that they had nowhere to take me. They couldn't find a home for me and they told me that no one took children my age. I said that I could go back to [REDACTED]s. I phoned [REDACTED] and then they spoke to her as well and told her it would be for the next twenty four hours. She said that she would take me.
134. Social services took me from Dalrymple Street to [REDACTED]s. They had a chat with her and then I stayed there. On Tuesday I phoned [REDACTED] to tell him where I was because he wanted to know what had happened. He said that I should go to the doctors and prove that I hadn't done anything with [REDACTED]. He said that he had been to the house and that my foster dad was really angry with me.
135. On Wednesday I had to go to a meeting with the [REDACTED] in their house. I didn't want to go but I had to because there was quite a few people going to it. I don't know

who all the people were. I refused to stay with them because I could never trust them and the relationship had broken down the day he threw me out. I went back to [REDACTED]s on Wednesday night and then we agreed that I would move in with my foster sister, [REDACTED], at [REDACTED]. Eight weeks later she told me that I had to leave because her husband didn't want me there. I think it was her who didn't want me there. I was over sixteen by then. When [REDACTED] threw me out the neighbour upstairs, [REDACTED] heard us arguing and she took me in. She had heard me saying that I had nowhere to go and asking where I would go. She told me that I could come up. I stayed with her for a few days. [REDACTED] sat me down and said that she needed to send me to social services because I was still under their care and she could be arrested if she kept me there.

136. On my sixteenth birthday the [REDACTED] <sup>EIH-EOT</sup> wanted me to go and see them but I told them I wouldn't see them. They had all of my birthday presents and I told them to shove them where the sun doesn't shine. I had to go to the dole office and arrange to get some money and sort out my address for national insurance.
137. I stayed with [REDACTED] for a few days and then I went to see social services but they said that they couldn't help me because I was sixteen by this time. I explained that I had nowhere to go and that I was staying on someone's sofa. I had to go back a few times and then they got me a board and lodgings in Port Glasgow.
138. I boarded with a woman called [REDACTED] who worked in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] loved her men and at the weekend she brought them back to her home. Sometimes it was two men and I had to listen to that at night from my bedroom. I had to pay to stay there and the money that I earned went to [REDACTED]. I had a job and I had to walk to work in the morning and then walk home at night. [REDACTED] used to make me packed lunches to take with me during the day and she was good to me that way. I went out to my friend [REDACTED]'s but [REDACTED] didn't let me stay out. She worried and she did care about me. Social services just left me in Port Glasgow and that was it.

#### **Life after being in care**

139. Seven or eight months later [REDACTED] moved to England so I left [REDACTED]'s and I never looked back. I didn't know who else was going to fail me or turn me away. [REDACTED] had told social services that she was going but nobody came. [REDACTED] bought me some new clothes and gave me some money to help me. She suggested that I go to Greenock and stay with friends for a while. I went back to my friend [REDACTED]'s for a while. Her neighbour [REDACTED] lived with his granny and his father lived in London. He said that I should move to London and his dad would put me up. I wasn't sure but he told me I would get a job and it would be fine.
140. [REDACTED] gave me the address so I went there but his father didn't expect me and he turned me away that night. I never looked back. I was on my own in the big world. That was near Islington and I used to stay in one of the parks near Arsenal football grounds. I slept rough from the age of seventeen until I was nearly twenty. I stayed in London for about a year and for the first few months I was between Islington and Kings Cross. Wherever I could sleep, I would sleep. I once went to cardboard city but I was really frightened so I never went back there because it was quite bad. I used to stay round the outside of Kings Cross and there were a lot of people who stayed there at that time. It has been cleaned up now. I moved about a lot and I went to Manchester. I used to get the bus because I would have sex with a bus driver to get the bus fare. I would get a free ride to Scotland and then stay with [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
141. I had to go home when my brother [REDACTED] died when I was about seventeen. [REDACTED] told me that he died but I didn't go to his funeral because I didn't know when it was. I was hoping to see the children and to tell them I was sorry for not being at his funeral.
142. [REDACTED] had been a drunk and he lived on the streets. I tried to help and I got him into Inverclyde when I was about fifteen. He then went to Jericho house. [REDACTED] told me that [REDACTED] had got a place but that a neighbour had contacted him so [REDACTED] went there with the police. When [REDACTED] found [REDACTED], he had been dead for a few days. [REDACTED] has had to live with seeing that as well as everything else. [REDACTED] kept telling [REDACTED] that

he was going to clean himself up but he had those problems because of the trauma that we had all been through.

143. When I came back to Scotland I stayed at friends' houses. I moved about with my carrier bags because that was all I had, I never had anything.
144. I remember [REDACTED] and I went into a shop in Greenock one day and [REDACTED] had given me some money. I saw nice mugs and [REDACTED] kept them for me because I had said that one day I might have a house and I would be able to have people over for tea. She found them recently and remembered me buying them when I was sixteen and a half. I had said I wanted my own house but I couldn't get my own house.
145. One of the girls that I had grown up with on [REDACTED] had moved to Leicester and she said that I could go there. I got a job in a pub in Leicester. I was over eighteen. I was there for three months and I lived at my friend, [REDACTED] but her aunt came and threw me out. She apologised but I left and went back to London. That was how I lived until I was twenty one.
146. I went to Scotland a couple of weeks before I was twenty one and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] gave me some money. I said that I was going to go back to London and get a job and that is what I did. I went into bar work and I worked my way round London. That was how I got off the streets. It was tough and I had to work hard and do long hours but I put a roof over my head. I met my son's dad and I moved in with him.
147. I had my son, [REDACTED] when I was twenty four. I had to bring my son up on my own and when I was with his dad I nearly lost my home so that was a difficult time for me as well. I had no one to turn to for help. My partner was cheating on me with three of my neighbours. I told him that I knew that he was cheating on me and he started beating me up. I took the beatings for a while and then I snapped. I told him to get out and he left me with no money.
148. We had joint bank accounts and he stopped all the money going in so I went into rent arrears. I didn't know how to manage things so they were going to evict me from

my home. They took me to court but I was lucky and the judge threw it out because I was going through a traumatic time. He told the housing association to go away and sort it out with me. The judge said that putting someone who had already been on the streets back on the streets wouldn't resolve anything. My son's dad said that if I was evicted then I was to phone him. I said that he should pay the rent because he had a job and I had nothing.

149. I have always worked and had two jobs because I don't want to be in that situation. Sometimes I think I feel more at peace on the streets. When you have a home you are looking at four walls. You have a house and a nice garden and you think you have done well but I feel I don't belong here. I have no one about me. I have none of my friends around me who I grew up with. I have had no guidance in life.
150. There is no book to tell you how to go through life. I didn't want my son to suffer without a father so I tried everything to get his dad to be a father. I felt like that because of my childhood. I was told by solicitors that he didn't want to be a father. I don't speak to his dad now but my son speaks to him. He has a lot of property and he is good to my son but he can't buy the love that I gave him. I have told my son that money doesn't make you happy. It can help people and solve a few issues but it can't give me my family. There is no money in the world that can compensate me but I have a roof over my head and that is what I work for.

### **Impact**

151. I think about the effect of this as damage rather than impact. I think of impact as something from a car crash.
152. From the day I was told that I had come with a black bin bag and I would leave with a black bin bag, I had to grow up very fast. I was a very frightened young girl. I stopped trusting people from that day onwards. I tell people that I trust them but I don't trust people as far as I can throw them. I learned that at fifteen and a half. I was a child and there was nobody there for me. The two most trusted people that I went to



turned me away, the police and social services. I went to the police station because I had nowhere to go and I asked where social services was. They told me to go to Dalrymple Street but they didn't ask me why I wanted to go there. Why they didn't ask, I will never know. The person I spoke to from social services that day also let me down.

153. That day I had nobody to turn to or rely on. I had many thoughts and emotions going through my mind and I suffer from bad flashbacks of that day when I am lying in bed at night. That trauma alone has been a big thing for me.

154. I sofa surfed for a while after I had been thrown out of my foster sister's but my friend [REDACTED] made me go to see the social work. Social work told me that I wasn't their responsibility and that was a big thing to hear at the age of sixteen. I stayed with friends when I came back to Scotland but I never felt like I belonged in people's houses. I never wanted to outstay my welcome. I told my friends recently that I would rather be living on the streets just now because I have so much going on in my head.

155. I never asked for this hand in life, it was given to me. I don't know if social services should have put a roof over my head when I was sixteen and found me a wee flat. I had just turned sixteen and I was out. I had told them they were my carers but they said there was nothing they could do for me. I'm an adult now and I was a wee girl then so I accepted what they said. I had to grow up and survive with what I had in my black bin bag which was just clothes. My foster father put the clothes in the bag and he chose what I had with me.

156. I met Fran Hague who is a social worker in 2017. She has been a guardian angel to me. It took a lot of strength for me to go and meet Fran and on that first day she must have thought I was crazy. I went in and told her lots of things. I had so much to say. I wanted to get out what had happened to me. I thought that by the time I was fifty I would have found out a lot about my life but some days I don't know who I am. I don't know if I belong in Greenock or where I am now because I don't belong to anybody. Everything is muddled up in my head. I try and separate it every day to try and make sense of what happened to me.

157. Fran has taken time out to have meetings with me on the phone. She had never let me down and from the day she met me she has always supported me. That is what I should have had as a little girl. Fran broke things down slowly with me. She has done a lot of work with her people to find out about my family history. Fran couldn't find my file but she created a family chronology from information she put together from me and the registrar. She got something that confirmed I had been in Grosvenor Road Children's Home. I don't read the family chronology, I don't need to read it. No one can give me my family back. The only time I will be in the room with them is if they come to my funeral when I die. That is only if they come to my funeral.
158. I cannot thank Fran enough. She has taken me on a journey that should have been taken when I was growing up. I went to [REDACTED]'s grave with Fran and then she took me to my mother's grave. On another date we went to visit my father's grave and I found out that I had relatives and a family that I never knew about. When you don't have a family unit, you don't know what family you have. I found out that I have an aunt. It's sad knowing I have relatives that I could have gone to. I could have gone to them when I was homeless. I could have asked them for help but I never knew. I found out about a cousin called [REDACTED] in 2019. His mum was the only relative that I knew I had and that was it. She never really wanted to know me. I never knew of anybody. I probably had a huge family out there. As an adult I wonder why other relatives didn't step in to help and why social services didn't involve them. I am going to try and find my brother's daughter who I have never seen and I'm going to go to London to find out what happened to my brother [REDACTED]'s body. He died in London as well.
159. I found out about [REDACTED] because he had gone to my sister, [REDACTED] with a photo of my mum. [REDACTED] had also met him. They didn't tell me about this for six months after they had met him even though they knew that I had been looking for a photo of my mum. I was really angry and I went ballistic at them. My sisters were brought up differently to me and they haven't had the same experiences as me so they look at life differently. They didn't see how important a picture of my mum was to me. I met [REDACTED] about six months later after I had mentioned him to Fran and she went through the proper channels to put us in touch. I asked him if I could come and meet



him and be part of his family but he said no. I asked him not to reject me and that is what happened.

160. I get very upset and I cry every day behind closed doors where nobody sees. I cry when I go to bed at night because I don't want my son to see me crying. I don't trust people. The EIH-EOT were people I trusted because I was put there by social services. They are both dead now. I know they were strict Catholics and he thought I was having sex but he had no right to throw me out. He should have phoned the social services and asked them to come and get me.
161. I tell people that I trust them but I don't. I tell Fran I trust her but I don't. You have to tell people you trust them but I don't. Fran has helped me along the way in my life and when I say that I don't trust her it's not that I think she will hurt me or fail me. I don't want people to hurt me because I have too much pain inside me that I have to live with every single minute of my life but I don't show people how I feel inside.
162. I speak to Lyndsey who is a counsellor that I found through Future Pathways. Lynn at Future Pathways looked hard to find Lyndsey for me. It is the first time I have spoken to a professional about this. I was too afraid when I was younger. I tell Lyndsey all of this but she gets it as it comes out of my head on the day.
163. I don't want another child to go through what I go through now. I have suffered every minute of every day of my life because all I see are families and I can't escape from that. The best counsellors in the world or a million pounds couldn't replace what has been taken from me. I can tell you the things that I miss but the feelings that I have on a daily basis are not nice. I sometimes wish I wasn't born because kids grow up with their mum and dads. I have suicidal feelings. I go to bed at night and thank god for getting me through the day. When I get up in the morning I say thanks for getting me through the night. Sometimes I think, take me in the night, out of the cruel world that I live in. I hate life but I live it and I make sure that I live it. I tell my son when I die that he will have lots of stories about my life because he will know who I am and the good things people have to say about me. I didn't have stories of my family.

164. I was given a locket by my friend [REDACTED] for my birthday and I broke it because that was a symbol to me that I cannot be fixed and nothing will put me back together. She had wanted me to put a photo of my mum in it but we couldn't find a photo of my mum at that time. She did try and get one. I have fixed it now and [REDACTED] put a photo of my son and my dog in it.
165. I love my sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but I don't talk to them about this. They don't know how I feel. They will never understand. I ask all the time why I didn't go with my two sisters and I don't understand why I didn't stay with them. I don't know what went wrong but something is not right.
166. [REDACTED] calls me Miss Independent. She found out that I lived on the streets and I came back to them after not seeing them for five years. She has only found out recently the actual impact it had on me.
167. I spoke to [REDACTED] at Christmas time in December 2020. She told me that she was the one who had to tell [REDACTED] that my mum and dad were dead. [REDACTED] had thought she was on holiday and she asked [REDACTED] to take her back to mum and dad. I spent a few hours crying to her and then I didn't hear from her again. I wonder what I have done so badly wrong. I wonder why I wasn't at her wedding with her. Is it because I never grew up in Quarriers? I was her little sister and I should have been a bridesmaid. I was only allowed to go to [REDACTED]'s wedding for an hour in the evening and I had to hide away from everyone. She said I wasn't to tell anyone who I was. I think I was twenty two or twenty three when [REDACTED] married. I hadn't seen them for five years before that because I had been living in London.
168. I had my son, [REDACTED] when I was twenty four and then I asked to be sterilised. I didn't want to bring any more children into the world in case what happened to me, happened to them. I was sterilised on medical grounds but at first the doctor didn't want to do it. I had to explain that I had had a lot of bad experiences and I didn't want my children to suffer like I had. I couldn't speak about it to the doctors but I had seen what had happened to my brothers. I would have loved to have had another child for my son but I'm also glad I never.

169. My son doesn't need to know or have the burden that I have had to carry. He has only child syndrome. If he plays me up then he has a dad to go to and he has friends. I have a lovely son. People tell me they can see me in him. We do have our moments but I have a beautiful son who the EIH-EOT didn't even want to know.
170. I am a good mum and I haven't let what they did to me destroy me as a mum. I have done well because I have done the opposite to what my foster father taught me. I'm not a strict mum but I've kept my son off the street and away from drugs. I've kept him on the right track.
171. My experiences have impacted on me as a mum. My son loves playing golf, football and going out with his friends. They love nothing more than going out and having a drink. I clash with him when he is drunk because I see my brothers.
172. I like going to the pub and I used to drink years ago. I got into the pub trade and I became a bar manager which changed my attitude in life. I was never a big drinker because it never really appealed to me. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] don't drink either and they say that's because of what has happened to them. I know that's what has happened to me. I don't drink because of what I have seen. I saw more of life with my brothers than my sisters did and they had a lucky escape from what I saw in Greenock. [REDACTED] lived far away but I never thought [REDACTED] would be where he is today. I never thought he would be an alcoholic but I understand his trauma.
173. [REDACTED] is locked up somewhere and social services won't tell me where he is. They are not allowed to tell me even though I am his little sister. It's all to do with Data Protection. Fran has touched base with the social worker for me as well. I phoned and was told that they are moving him away for his own protection. I tried ringing the social worker a few times but I gave up because I can't put myself through more pain. I had been phoning her for about four weeks and I was leaving messages but she never got back to me.

174. She was a social worker and I had told her our story. She is not very good at her job as far as I am concerned. I hope [REDACTED] is safe and well somewhere. I will always love him and he will always be my big brother no matter where he is. I said I would buy his clothes and send him whatever he needs but they still wouldn't tell me where he is. Before this, Fran and I went to see him in the hospital and he was really damaged. He never drank before but he couldn't live with what was going on in his head. He went from being a beautiful man to being an alcoholic.
175. [REDACTED] was like me. He was sensible and smart. He had a wife and two children and she told me that he had been secretly drinking. I was gobsmacked because he never drank, even when he was younger. I still find it hard to believe that he did it. He must have had a lot going on in his head that he couldn't share. I asked a doctor at the hospital if it was possible to become an alcoholic and he said it was and that [REDACTED] had lost some brain capacity. I have a photo of [REDACTED] in the hospital that Fran took for me. I haven't seen him since then. He went back to the girl he was with and she was beating him up. I contacted social services and they took over. He could barely walk and then she told me they were moving him. He was put into a rehabilitation unit in Larkfield. I begged them not to let him out to the same woman.
176. Last Christmas I got a phone call from the police to say my brother had disappeared and I thought he was dead. I was working in [REDACTED] when I got the phone call. I went out to the car park for over an hour making phone calls. He was eventually found and now he is under a protective order but I can't remember the name of it. It's like a vulnerable order and I can't have access to him even though I am his little sister. I think that is wrong and the system is failing me. It was me who asked them to help and support him so he could be looked after. I really care about him and I didn't want to see him die. When he improved I was going to bring him to London to live with me so I could take care of him but they have taken him away.
177. I had to tell the social worker my story and the impact that has had on my family has killed me. If I was that social worker then I would want to make sure that that lady in London knew where her brother was or I would at least let her speak to him. I've told her to tell him my name is [REDACTED] because he always thinks I'm [REDACTED]. He always

called me [REDACTED] when I first met him. He would apologise and explain that we looked like twins. He was older and he suffered a lot more than me, same as the other brothers. That was why they drank the way they did, to kill the pain.

178. I explained everything to the social worker, Alison McTavish. I really thought she would have worked with me and my brother on it. There is nothing that I can do about it but I have told her that if my brother dies then I am going to sue her. They shouldn't be keeping me from him as an adult. I know he is vulnerable but I am his sister and I got in touch with them to get him help and support because he was an alcoholic and he was beaten up by the woman he was living with and who took him out of the hospital. She took him out of hospital for the day and said they were going to a pantomime but she never brought him back. The hospital apologised to my face when I turned up there. They said that they were sorry and they should have listened to me. I told them that they should be sorry and that I hadn't been coming to the ward for the fun of it. They agreed but I told them that the damage was done. All of the hard work rehabilitating him was lost when they let him back out. I become angry at things and I was angry when he went missing. I was mad at the social worker. I was mad at Fran when I phoned her for help. I was crying with anger. I wasn't really mad at Fran though I was actually mad at the social worker who was dealing with my brother and I took it out on Fran. The police then had to look for him and I was worried he would turn up dead.
179. I am kept away from my brother again as an adult because there is some sort of protective thing. It is because he is vulnerable and he only has limited capacity. I understand that but I am not going to hurt my brother. I was going to help him because I thought he was going to end up dead. The social worker knew that but she has taken him wherever she has taken him and that was over a year ago. I couldn't tell you where he is. He could be dead but I know he isn't because someone would phone me and tell me. I phoned Carstairs and I think that might be where he is. They have a rehabilitation unit.
180. I explained to the social worker that he had had a beautiful life before he almost drank himself to death because of what happened. It may have that impact on me in



time but I don't know what tomorrow will bring me and I try not to worry about tomorrow until tomorrow comes.

181. It makes sense to me why my brothers drank themselves to death. They were in my situation. They were older and they were homeless. Social services failed the whole family, not just me. I understand why they did what they did and why they are not here today to be part of my life. I tried to build a life with them as much as I could by stealing money and trying to jam my arm in toilet doors at school so that I would be sent to the hospital near where they lived. Those are things that I did to be with them.
182. Maybe I was a bad child, I don't know. I just did things that kids do when they are growing up. I used to steal daffodils from the Barley Brae and then I would wrap them up in newspapers and sell them at ten pence a bunch to the houses. I was caught by the police once. Maybe I was a bad child. I don't know what I did wrong. I don't know why they took me away from my family and left me on my own. I can't get that answer. I can't get my head round how social services could do what they did. It is not just wrong, it is cruel.
183. People were very nice to us and couldn't understand why social services had broken us apart. I always heard stuff about my family when I lived in [REDACTED] I wanted it to go away because it was just me living there by then and everyone else had gone. I suffered for about seven or eight years in [REDACTED] after everyone else had gone. I had to live where this had all happened to me. As an adult I can see that that should never have happened. Why they never moved me as a young child given what I had been through, I will never understand. There was a bigger situation behind all of this with [REDACTED] my biological father, being an Italian. I know we were all left gold sovereigns each but I don't know where they are.
184. Sometimes I feel really angry and I don't want to be around people in case I snap. If I feel like that then I will stay away from people. If my friends or my son ask me to go out with them then I will say no but sometimes they don't accept that and my they will keep phoning me when they are out which makes me feel really agitated. They don't

know what goes on so they don't understand that I get agitated so they keep phoning when I want to be alone. When my son wants me to go out with him, he isn't doing anything wrong but he doesn't understand how I am feeling. When there is a lot going on I need to stay away from people because there is a lot going on in my head all of the time. I try to hide the issues and the anger that I have but I can never really relax. I stand up to people if they talk down to me. I have been on the streets and that changes you.

185. I should not have gone to a Catholic family, I should have gone to a Protestant family. I can talk about it now but back then I wasn't allowed to talk. I was a little girl who was pushed out somewhere and social services thought I would be fine. I had a lot of things going on. I don't know who I am. I don't know if I'm a Catholic or a Protestant. I know these things shouldn't have happened to me but I was a child so what could I do? I was a child so I listened to adults.
186. I don't remember my mum and I have a total blank on my mum and father's faces. I've seen a picture of my mum now. I had a memory of a lady who I thought was the aunty of the home but I know now, from seeing a photo, that the lady I remember was actually my mother. I don't know if I have blanked my parents out because of the damage that's been done to me as a child and because I had to live in [REDACTED] and hear about the damage that had been done to my family every day. People were whispering and they would tell me things like who my brothers were and where they were. I was dead afraid because of what I had been through.
187. I have a picture of me when I lived in [REDACTED] and I have a picture of my mum. They are the only two pictures I have of my life. I have my mum's wedding rings which I don't wear but I keep. They were given to me by my foster mum. She gave me them when she told me about my parents when I was thirteen. She told me that she had taken them from my mum's hand when she was dying because she wanted me to have something from my mum. I have her eternity ring and her wedding band.

188. I have seen a picture of my sister, [REDACTED] and she was very pretty. [REDACTED] has that picture and it was her mum's. She says it is in her loft and one day she will get it down and give it to me. Fran took me to [REDACTED]'s grave. I went in 2019 for the first time. I drew Fran a picture when I met her. I remembered being taken to the cemetery by [REDACTED] when I was a little girl and she told me never to forget where I went. I drew a picture for Fran and I told her about the gate and the gate was broken. Fran went out of her way and found it all for me. [REDACTED] is buried with my grandparents. I didn't know that I had grandparents either.
189. There is a girl at work who lost her mother when she was five. She was at work on mother's day and she had a meltdown. She went home and she phoned me and told me about it. I told her that it was ok to be like that. I told her that I had lost my parents when I was five and that I understood. Everyone was coming in and buying cards and flowers for their mums. I told her not to work mother's day again and not to put herself through that pain. It took me years to do it. I did a mother's day in [REDACTED] and it nearly killed me doing it. I thought I was strong enough to do it before but it's a horrendous thing not to have a parent, let alone not to have two.
190. It's happened to many children but I have to look after me and go on my journey. I need to speak about everything that happened to me. I couldn't do anything to protect myself and I had to accept everything that happened to me. Thank goodness I am here to tell the story. Not many people would be alive today, telling this story, because they probably couldn't cope with it. I try and keep myself together every day, breathing and going to work.
191. I haven't been to Scotland for a year now and I am struggling with that because I like to touch base. I like to get home and know that this is where I belong. I have so much pain inside me and it can't be fixed. I will just have to carry on with what I have done up until now and tell myself that it is just a dream that I will wake up from. The day I waken up I will probably be dead. It will kill me because it will get to me. I am able to put it in the box some days and that is nice. I think about getting on a plane and not coming back. I went to London and no one came looking for me. Social services never looked for me. They should have looked for me.

192. I have the fear of losing my home even though I know that no one is going to take it from me unless I don't pay my rent. I have a few issues at work that I am trying to sort out. I am trying to ease my work down to let myself know that it is ok not to work because I don't know anything different. I only know I have to work and I have to work all of these hours to keep a roof over my head. I feel everything is on top of me now.
193. When I was a wee girl I wanted to be a lawyer. I was clever. I could read, write and speak French but after everything that happened to me I wasn't able to do that.
194. However, money doesn't mean anything to me. If a friend asked me for a piece of my furniture then I would just give it to her. It's all just material to me I have been there, I was on the street, and I've lived it.
195. I try and help people even though I don't have much. People think I am a millionaire because money isn't important to me. I never had anything in life so that's how I am. A customer came into the shop and she had just lost her job at Thomas Cook. She told me about how she had just been on her last flight. I asked her if she had any identification to show who she was. She must have thought I was going to give her a discount but I paid her £135 shopping bill. She had no money coming in and I have been there. I do that now and again. It just brings me back to what happened to me. There is always something that triggers me all the time.
196. I don't feel nice as a person. I don't know who I am some days. I feel I was robbed of my childhood and my family. I'm not ashamed to say it now. I am going to go through court and to newspapers. I know I'm not going to get them back. I don't want to suffer anymore. I have suffered my whole life. I want someone to know that they have done this to me.
197. My big brother who is left, [REDACTED] is a mess. He is worse than me. I don't speak to [REDACTED] now but I bang into him in the town when I am in Scotland.

198. When my son [REDACTED] was seven, [REDACTED] said that I should send him to see my foster mum and dad but they turned him away. I had to watch that from [REDACTED]'s window. I told him he was going to meet his grandparents and he was to tell them his name and that he was their grandson but he was outside the house for two minutes and then I saw him walk back towards us. After that I said that no one will hurt my baby again.
199. My foster mum died on [REDACTED]. She died at home in her sleep after having been unwell with cancer. The mum wasn't bad to me. I could see she was frightened the day that I was thrown out. I found out she was unwell four days before she died and although we weren't speaking, I would have gone to see her if I could have. However, I was a single mum and [REDACTED]'s dad wouldn't look after [REDACTED] so I wasn't able to go. [REDACTED] phoned to tell me when she died but I wasn't included in the announcement in the paper. I wasn't welcome at the funeral and I had to sit at the back of the chapel. I wasn't allowed in any of the family cars. I was able to see her in the coffin before the funeral but it had to be arranged through my Aunt [REDACTED] so that I didn't bump into anyone. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] knew I was there and I went in before them. [REDACTED] didn't know I was there and she would have been angry if she had known that I had been in there before her. She didn't want me at the funeral but it was an open place and she couldn't stop me going.
200. It was a shame that they excluded me from that part of their life because she was a big part of my life. It is very hard that I never got to say goodbye and tell her that I loved her but she was getting old and I never wanted to cause them any stress. I've never fought with them or given them any trouble. I know to walk away because I have enough going on in my life.
201. When my foster dad died on [REDACTED] the same year, they tried to rectify things by including me in the announcement. [REDACTED] phoned me to say that he had died and she said [REDACTED] would have a problem with me going to the funeral. I told her that I wasn't going to go. I went on holiday to Portsmouth on my own. I wanted to be on my own to think about things.



202. Later that year, when I was thirty six, I got ovarian cancer and they offered to phone my parents and I said that they had just died. [REDACTED] came down to look after me but we later fell out. I haven't seen her for about ten years, maybe longer.
203. I always say to people when they are rude that, until they have walked in my shoes and walked my path, they can keep it. People tell me how strong I am but they see a front. They don't see the lovely <sup>EIG</sup> [REDACTED] who is hurting inside and who just wants a hug from her big sisters. Some days I have to tell myself to pull myself together and some days I just want someone to tell me that it's alright to be upset and to cry as much as I want but I can't do that because I don't want to go back to those bad days.
204. I have missed all the wee, silly things that people don't realise are important in life. There is no amount of money that will give me my family back, my Christmases with them, our birthdays together and our play days. I suffer a lot at Christmas and birthdays, the pain can be excruciating.
205. I do have good long term friends who phoned and texted me support before I spoke to the Inquiry. My first friend when I moved to London was [REDACTED] but she moved away and I struggle with that. I do go out with people but it is not enough because they are not my family. When I go to parties I don't stay because I see families and I am not part of that. I sit and wonder why I can't have that. I'm not bitter or jealous and I try to go and show my face. I have explained that to some of my friends and then they realise that family celebrations are something that I never had. I never had that opportunity and I never made the decisions about that as a child. I could never have a big party and invite people. I had a fortieth and there was a big turn-out of friends but there was no family. That was hard for me
206. What happened to me doesn't just affect me. It affected my brother's and sister's children and their children. I didn't spend Christmases with my family but my nephews and nieces never had that either. There is a whole generation of families wiped out. It is not just me that has been damaged. My nieces and nephews have been damaged and then they have kids. It is like a row of dominoes that has been

knocked down. My sisters' children have family from Quarriers and they know who I am but I'm not the auntie who is included.

207. I will never be the person that I should have been. I live with so much in my head. I tell myself that I'm not bad but I must have done something bad in life for this to have happened to me. I feel like I have been rejected my whole life. I know in my heart that I will never get closure but I have been able to share it now.
208. I was gifted with a memory and no one can take that from me. People can steal from you but they can't steal your memories and no one can take those from me, not even social services.

### **Reporting of abuse**

209. I went to Police Scotland and I wrote a letter. This letter was sent to them on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020. I wrote it a few days before I went in for surgery to have a tumour removed from my adrenal gland. I went into hospital on the 30<sup>th</sup>.
210. I headed the letter "Historical Neglect – Letter of Complaint". In the letter I said "I am a fifty one year old, white, Scottish female who was placed in the care of a foster family called the EIH-EOT As a young child of five years old I was separated from my brothers and sisters. Our parents had died. I originally contacted the Health and Social Care Partnership Inverclyde for support in the hope of accessing my personal file to be told there was not one, I don't exist. I was actually placed in Grosvenor Road Children's Home from [REDACTED] until [REDACTED] 1973 before being placed with foster carers where I remained approximately from five to fifteen years of age. At the age of fifteen years old foster carers put me out of their home. The out of hour's social work services in Glasgow failed to support me and social services left me in supported lodgings. The lady frequently had gentleman callers."
211. This is just a rough idea of the letter I sent out. It gives you a brief idea. I went on to say the placement didn't last long because the woman was leaving. I said "I was ill-

equipped to look after myself and still immature. I left Scotland feeling abandoned and alone, forced to sleep rough on occasions. Thinking back to my early childhood there were a number of significant losses including the loss of my birth family, the opportunity to be raised with my siblings, the loss of these relationships as a child and an adult. My religious and cultural needs were ignored. Foster carers provided me only with very basic needs. Social services held monthly meetings at the foster carers' homes." I've put at the end of it "I understand that you may require to interview me to gather information" and then I added my contact details and details of when I would be in hospital.

212. I sent the letter and I received a reply. A meeting was pencilled in for the 10 February. I flew to Scotland the day after I came out of hospital and I needed assistance at the airport. I landed in Greenock the day before the meeting.
213. I wasn't feeling too well. I was in a lot of discomfort from my operation but I wanted to do this. There was no turning back. I have to keep going to get justice for my family for what was done to us. Even though I don't have my family, I want to get justice for us because what they have done is wrong. It was pouring with rain and I couldn't walk properly. Fran had an umbrella but I could have been drenched and it wouldn't have mattered to me.
214. I went to the appointment at Greenock Police Station and Fran came with me. A lady from Paisley phoned me and I told her about my meeting so that was fine. I never took the ladies details but she was involved in this. When I went to the station there was a young girl and a young guy, neither of them would have been older than twenty five. The police didn't take any notes and they never took a statement. They just asked for my name and my date of birth. I was told there was nothing they could do about what happened.
215. I went into shut down. It was another failing in my life. Fran wasn't impressed with them. She told them who she was but they didn't blink their eyes at Fran working in social services. They didn't give a toss. If I was in childcare then they didn't care. Strathclyde police should be held responsible for what they have done to me. They

are failing kids in many ways. It took me as an adult to report what had been done to me because I was so scared and I was scared again that day.

216. My head went into shut down because I had been failed again. Fran said I had to keep going. When the police failed me I thought that it would be ok and I would put it behind me but Fran told me to keep going and I got in touch with the Inquiry.
217. I have spoken to my solicitor, Michael, about taking a civil action. I am not interested in money but it is the only way to hurt these people. I'm going in for 5.5 million for the damage that had been done to me. The figures were given to me. That case is progressing just now. I want to take them down for what they have done to me and other children. I am willing to go public as much as I can. I want to pursue them for what they have done, right down to Strathclyde Police because no one helped me. They are still failing me and it is wrong.
218. I can do something like give money to a homeless person who is in the same situation that I was in. No one was there when I was on the street and it was hard so if I get money then I will find a way to help people and I have looked up charities that I can go through for that. I might be able to get a wee house back up in Scotland. I will still work. Money will never change who I am. No one and nothing can give me back what I missed out on. They can't give me my family back.
219. I had a meeting with a woman called Anne Glendinning. I wrote a letter to Sharon McAlees who was head of children's services. My handwritten letter was hand delivered by me on 17<sup>th</sup> February. I was given a note to say it had been received. She never got back to me until 17th April. Everyone including Fran and Fran's boss, Amy, couldn't apologise enough for how long it had taken her to respond to my letter. Fran was on vacation when this was happening and she was off when Amy had to ring me to apologise for how long it had taken to get a response. I was crying and in a mess. It took from February until April. Is that not a failure? Not even an acknowledgement.

220. When she responded, she wrote "thank you for your letter dated the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Please accept my apologies for not responding". This is why sometimes I don't want to do this. I feel failed all of the time. Fran was on holiday when this happened and she found out about it when she got back. It was just another insult. These are powerful people and I am a small fish in their big sea. I told my solicitor to take these people down after I got that letter. It is wrong to take two months to respond because what does it take to send an email or a letter just to acknowledge a letter?
221. The letter went on to say "I have viewed the information you provided along with the information that has been retrieved on your behalf. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the lack of information that we have been able to retrieve and for the experience you describe while being looked after by the local authority. Unfortunately it will be difficult for us to describe reasons for the decisions made regarding you and your siblings given the lack of information that we have been able to retrieve. However, I would further like to offer you an appointment with services manager, Anne Glendinning, in order to discuss more fully information contained in your letter and any potential support the service may be able to offer." The letter said that, if I would like an appointment, I should contact Amy McKellar and then it was signed off "Kind Regards, Sharon McAlees, Head of Children's Services and Criminal Justice."
222. I never phoned Amy McKellar for a about two weeks because I was really upset when I got the letter. I was so angry about how they felt they could treat me. People at the top don't care about people like me who have been in care. It was just a failure to me. I felt like a nothing and a nobody. However, when I phoned Amy she took my call straight away. She told me she was disgusted that it had taken her two months to respond to me and they were having to pick up someone else's dirty work. An appointment was arranged with Anne Glendinning for the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
223. That day was also [REDACTED]'s niece, [REDACTED]'s, 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday and the family were all having a get together. They were having a take away at home and a family gathering in the garden. [REDACTED] couldn't understand why I couldn't be there so in the morning I took a walk along the esplanade with her. I had to tell [REDACTED] that I wasn't her real



auntie because she was really distressed that I wasn't going that day. I put my arms round her and she said that she would always call me her auntie even though she now knew that I wasn't. Meeting Anne Glendinning was the most important thing in my life that day and it had to come before anybody. I would even have put it before my son because I don't want to carry this with me anymore. I have suffered enough.

224. I had the meeting with Anne Glendinning at 3:00 pm in Lomond View Academy which used to be a primary school. Fran was in the meeting and then Anne Glendinning came in and introduced herself. We were all separated due to social distancing. She asked me a few questions about me and I told her that I liked to travel. We had been on holiday to the same place.
225. The meeting started and she said that I would have lots of questions to ask her. I told her that I had only two questions. I asked her "what is a family?" but I couldn't tell you what she told me because my head had fallen apart asking her that. The second question that I asked her was "what is its purpose?" I stood up and said you took that from me, not you personally, but you took my family from me.
226. She told me that she was really sorry that had happened but that it had happened to hundreds of children. I clammed up and I couldn't speak. The woman had no empathy for what I had been through.
227. The first day I met Fran was one of the scariest days of my life and when I met Anne Glendinning it was even scarier. Anne Glendinning and Fran Hague are two completely different people. Fran has empathy and Anne Glendinning doesn't. What she said to me in our meeting changed my outlook as a person. I couldn't speak but I wanted to say that I was there for me and not for the other kids. I have gone forward since then. I want to take her my story so that she can read it. She probably knows a bit about it but she hasn't been on my journey.
228. Fran called me that night and I cried. I felt I had no one to turn to, no brothers and sisters and nowhere to turn. Fran rang me again the next day and I was in Braehead Shopping Centre but I never got out of the car. When Fran phoned I started crying

and it all came babbling out of my mouth. I was frightened like that little girl. When I was in the meeting I couldn't speak even when I was trying to say something. I couldn't get it out. I was trying to tell her that I wasn't there for the other children. I lost all track of my life.

## **Records**

229. Social services don't have records of me but I have a family chronology which Fran created for me. I hoped there might be a box of photos or some memories so that I would have something to tell me where I came from and who I am. I feel that as a human being my name should be in their public records. Records should never be destroyed because people and other generations should be able to go and look at them. I didn't know who I was or even who my father definitely was. I didn't know where my parents were buried or who my relatives were. There should be a file.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

230. No one can fix what happened to me but hopefully I can help other people come forward and help other people who have been through what I have been through. I want to change the law for other children and if I can change one child's life then I will be happy with that. I think I am going in the right direction to change the things that shouldn't be happening.
231. If children are separated then I think they should be able to see each other every week and have contact every day to build up a bond. How can you bond with them if you don't see them? It's wrong for siblings not to have memories of one another as children. They need to bond so that they can create their identities as children. I think that is a must in any social service all over the world but especially in the UK. We do have a lot of failures and I know that because I am one of them and I am here to tell my story. I never had the opportunity to create that bond and I don't know why social services never did these things for me.

232. I would like to see the law changed in relation to siblings. I am going to write to Nicola Sturgeon. I would like to meet her and share my story with her. I want to take it as far as I can go in Scotland. I want my voice to be heard. I'm going to take things slowly but I know where I am going.
233. I work for a very powerful lady and she has said to me that one day I might be working next to her in Downing Street if I can go the whole way with this. She had told me not to look back now and to keep going. She says I have to keep fighting because what they did was wrong and I will get what I want. I said I will never change the law but she says I can do it if I fight.
234. I want to keep going at the moment. I nearly stopped in 2020. Fran has been my rock and I have a good team of people to help me moving forward. I am going to go public and I won't be that frightened little girl anymore. They took something that never belonged to them. They took all my brothers and sisters from me, my nieces and my nephews and all of my relatives. They stripped me of my entire family. Not only did they do it to me but they also did it to my family. They are in the same situation as me and they don't have a family either.
235. My solicitor was gobsmacked by all of the work and energy I had put in before I met him in 2020. He said that I didn't need a solicitor and that I could do it but I do need a solicitor because I don't understand some of the jargon.
236. It has broken my family but it will not break me because I am going to keep fighting for something that I have set my heart on, I want justice for my family. They can't fix it and they can't give me that back, money can't give me that back, but maybe I could get the law changed in Scotland and open people's eyes. People can see what happened to me and then think about what is in place at the moment. How often are siblings seeing one another? Is it every six or eight weeks because that is not good enough. How can you bond with someone even every four weeks? I would like to see the law changed on that and that is my biggest thing. Especially if a child loses their parents and they don't have anyone.

237. I think if parents die, like mine did, then the child shouldn't live anywhere near where they grew up. They need to come away from all of the bad memories that they had as a child. They shouldn't live a few doors along from their family home and have neighbours tell them who they are. People didn't want me to forget where I had come from so they were doing it in a nice way. A lot of people in that street were Protestants and they didn't like what happened to me because I was a Protestant and so were my parents.
238. I had lost my mum and dad and I knew about my sister, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had told me about that when I was five. However, when you are a little girl it is hard to get things out and to express yourself. If a child loses their parents then they should be given counselling. There should have been support in place given the tragedy the family had been through.
239. Children should know from the age of five upwards who their parents are and their backgrounds. I was never taken to visit my parents' grave as a child and I only went there recently as an adult.
240. Fran has told me that they do books now so that children know where they come from. It is called life story work. I had a life story that I want to share now because I never had that when I was young. That would have been a good thing for me to have as a child. It's important that children have life story work and that they know their whole stories and then that continues through their life. I only have a family chronology. I don't have a file from social services. I am a nobody now.
241. I think children should have the same social worker for a few years so they can build a bond with them. It is the same as siblings, you need to build a bond with them over time. There are teachers who children get to see as they grow up and it should be the same with social workers. I had seven social workers in ten years.
242. I feel there are things that happen now in social services now that they weren't able to give me. There should be a record of why decisions are made to split families up.

If siblings are split up then you should be able to see notes as an adult to explain why these things have happened. Then you could question why a decision was made.

243. I think when parents die they should take things from the family home to give to the children. I hoped there would be a shoe box of things for me but there was nothing. I have two bits of paper and that is all I have of my life as a little girl.
244. I have met some people with Fran and learned that some people don't get paid or get any help when they take their grandchildren in. I think if a grandparent takes a child in then they should be paid for it like a foster carer would be. I went to an event that they do at Fran's place as a little thank you for taking the kids in and that is something. I met some nice people because I helped to make the sandwiches. I wanted to be part of something that was happening. I know a lot of things because Fran tells me things that go on in social services but I still think there could be a lot more changes.
245. My friend is a foster carer and I know some things through her. When my friend became a foster carer I shared my story with her. She said that she didn't want to tell me about a few of the people she did foster care with because quite a few of them were in it for the money. I was shocked. My friends doesn't do it for money.
246. I would like a public apology to my whole family. I would like social services to say sorry for what they did to us all. I would like a written apology and I will get that in court. It will probably take me years but I will get it because what they did was wrong. They did fail me. Sometimes I need other people to reassure me that they failed me but I know that they did.



**Other information**

247. 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..........

Dated.....2/6/21.....