

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BFB

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is BFB. My date of birth is 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. My husband was BKF, also known as BKF who was born on 1957. He died on 2014. He was known as BKF to friends and family.
3. I have contacted the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry because BKF was in care when he was a child and he was subjected to abuse. This would have been from when he was a baby, only a few months old, right up until he met me in 1976, when he was nineteen.
4. It was not something BKF ever spoke about with me and I was unaware of the abuse until many years after we were married. When he did speak about it and tell me some of what happened to him and his siblings, I began to learn about a whole new side to BKF's life. I began to understand more about BKF and the impact abuse can have on a person, both as a child, and later on in life as an adult.
5. I would like to share with the Inquiry what I have learned from BKF about his time in care, what I have learned from the enquiries I personally have made and what impact it all had on all our lives, but particularly BKF's.

6. The information I talk about is either direct from [BKF] when he's told me about it in later life or from speaking with his family. I also have the documentation I've recovered from the enquiry I've made. There is a considerable amount of documentation and I can make it available to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, if necessary.

Life before going into care

7. [BKF]'s mum was [REDACTED] she was from Southern Ireland. She went to London then came up to Edinburgh looking for work when she was eighteen. She was known as [REDACTED]. She had an affair with a married man, [REDACTED], and fell pregnant in 1956. She then had a girl, [REDACTED], who I think was initially looked after by her grandparents.
8. [REDACTED] then met [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] nephew, who was about a year older than [REDACTED]. They got married and he accepted [REDACTED], so they were all together. [REDACTED] then fell pregnant with [BKF] who was born in 1957.
9. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] split up when she was pregnant with [BKF]. [BKF] was only a month old when he went into care at Clerwood House Children's Home in Edinburgh. [REDACTED] went to stay with her aunt in [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. It'll be on the social work records why that happened but [REDACTED] got the children back about a year later in 1958.
10. It was about then that [REDACTED] got together with [QOR] known as [QOR], and they had [REDACTED] in 1959. There are contradictory reports on what happened next, but there was a period when [QOR] was in London working and [REDACTED] was in Edinburgh. He alleges she was having parties and then they had a fight when he got back from London and she ran away with the family allowance book. Whatever did happen, that seems to have been the last time anyone heard from her.

11. Six weeks later and QOR applied to have all three kids, BKF and put into care. That is documented as well and the date was 1960.

Barnardo's, Haldane House, Alloa

12. On 1961 BKF and all went into Barnardo's care at Haldane House in Alloa.
13. QOR put them in there but he wasn't the parent of and BKF He didn't have any legal responsibility and wasn't their legal guardian.
14. I have learned from BKF that he had always believed he was put into Barnardo's because QOR was ill. As a boy BKF always thought that QOR and Helen Ford, were
15. BKF didn't know his dad was and I believe, from documentation, that Barnardo's didn't want BKF to go back to his dad at all. His dad had paid for his care and had applied for custody of BKF but as a result of false information QOR was providing to Barnardo's, was told BKF was in Australia. therefore did not get custody of BKF or This too is documented.
16. QOR then applied for custody of BKF and He got back first, in 1964 as she was his blood relative daughter. He got and BKF in 1965.
17. The records certainly show that BKF was in care at Barnardo's from 1961 until 1965 when he was fostered by QOR The term that was used on the fostering confirmation document, that I have a copy of, was boarded out. I understand that still meant BKF was being fostered though.

Foster Care – Helen Ford (HF) and QOR [REDACTED] Edinburgh

General

18. When BKF and [REDACTED] moved in with QOR [REDACTED] there would have been six kids and two adults in their flat at [REDACTED]. It was a one bedroom flat. There was Helen Ford (HF) and QOR [REDACTED], [REDACTED] BKF and [REDACTED] and, by then, QOR and Helen also had two kids of their own. Their two kids were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who would have been under five years old. I don't understand how Barnardo's or whoever was responsible for the fostering could have allowed that.
19. Helen then had a third child, [REDACTED] in 1969. QOR was [REDACTED] though, and it was QOR that told me that. It was actually a [REDACTED], a guy she had an affair with. BKF also told me that, because he once caught Helen and [REDACTED] together.
20. Once QOR and Helen [REDACTED] they were put under pressure from Barnardo's to move to a bigger place. The council were also involved and they offered them three and four bedroom places but Helen wanted to be in the same area. She liked it in the [REDACTED] area and wanted to be near her friends. They did end up getting a bigger flat in [REDACTED], just off [REDACTED], but it was still too small for all of them.
21. That [REDACTED] flat was much bigger though. It was an old style flat and had a big drawing room, a box room and another room that they used as a living room but had a sink in it. Then there was the bathroom, a cooking annexe and another big bedroom. I remember it as the flat I went to when I first met BKF [REDACTED].
22. The information I have about abuse during the time BKF was with Helen Ford (HF) and QOR [REDACTED] is at the [REDACTED] flat. As far as I'm aware the sexual abuse he and his sisters were subjected to all happened there. I didn't find out about any of it until years after, when BKF and I had been married for some time.

Abuse while in foster care with Helen Ford (HF) and QOR

23. Helen Ford started having these house parties at [REDACTED] and all these men and women would come to the parties. Helen would pair them up with [REDACTED], BKF or [REDACTED] never with any of her own three kids. Sometimes Helen would abuse BKF sexually, or QOR would pair up with [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] but he never sexually abused BKF. Basically, Helen Ford was running a paedophile ring from that flat, that's how they made their money.
24. Helen Ford seemed to run the house and BKF told me he, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] rarely ate and when they did it was only when Helen said they could eat. He said the flat always smelled of booze and the people were always drinking at the parties.
25. QOR never molested BKF that's what BKF said to me but he did batter him. QOR would be at work and when he got in Helen would tell him BKF had done something and QOR would give him a leathering, as punishment. It will be documented in Barnardo's reports that QOR battered them when they were in his foster care.
26. BKF told me they were kept in a dark room, with no light bulbs and that there were no handles on the doors so they couldn't get out. They would hear mice scratching and scurrying about in the dark room. He said they would hear three rings of the doorbell and that was the sign. That indicated someone was there to be paired up.
27. The only individual BKF ever described to me was a man called ERQ who had a tattoo of a thistle on his arm. BKF didn't go into any details, and I wouldn't have asked him, but whatever it was that ERQ did to him, it really terrified BKF.
28. BKF also told me that Helen and QOR's three kids, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were never abused or molested by the visitors to the flat and that they were well looked after. He told me Helen once wrapped up a Tiny Tears doll box at Christmas for [REDACTED]. Just the box, there was no doll in it. [REDACTED] had been looking forward to getting that doll. That was a terrible thing to do to a child.

29. Helen Ford apparently had a boyfriend, I mentioned him and that BKF had once caught them together. BKF also told me that he once told Helen Ford he was going to tell QOR that she had that boyfriend. That was when she stabbed BKF, he had the mark on his body. She knew what she was doing, so it wasn't bad enough for him to go to the hospital, it was just to frighten him, which she did.
30. She starved them as well. Helen drummed it onto their heads that eating was a privilege. They were only allowed to eat when Helen said they could eat. They used to rake the bins for food on their way to school. BKF never ate much all the time I knew him.
31. BKF and BKF both told me about the time when they were at the flat and it was getting renovated. A wall had been knocked down and Helen got BKF and BKF and made them all stand, all night in their vests and pants where the wall had been. Helen told them to stay there and not to move or she would seal them in and they would disappear just like their mother.
32. Another thing Helen did at the flat was to put BKF out onto the back window ledge and close the window behind him. Although it was ground floor there was a drop at the back of about 15 feet and she just left him standing on the ledge, clinging on to the frame. He told me that she said to him that if he fell she would just say he'd fallen while cleaning the windows.
33. BKF also told me Helen would strip him and BKF naked and make them bend over the bath. Helen would then belt their bare backsides. He said that when the buckle hit you, you knew about it, it was so painful.
34. If they wet the bed, Helen would get them to take their wet sheets and put them in a bath of freezing cold water. She would put bleach in as well and then make them walk up and down on the sheets in the bath.
35. On Christmas Eve in 1966 BKF ran away from the house with BKF. He told me they were caught in St. Andrews Square and taken to a police station. QOR

went and picked them up and when they got home QOR battered them stupid and they got no Christmas dinner. BKF and [REDACTED] had to sit and watch the others eat their Christmas dinner. That's documented with Barnardo's by Anita Hunter, she was told about it by BKF and [REDACTED] and she wrote it all down. BKF said that what Barnardo's actually documented was that it was all because [REDACTED] was being born then and that had upset [REDACTED] and BKF. That wasn't the case though, the dates were all wrong.

36. [REDACTED] was trying desperately to get taken back into Barnardo's, she would have been twelve or thirteen when she went to the social work department and asked to be taken out of the foster care arrangement with the HF-QOR. They ignored her though and that too is documented.
37. BKF told me that his way of dealing with the abuse was to block it out. He said [REDACTED] was different and she was taking illnesses that weren't real. She was going into hospital for illnesses she was making up just to get her away from there. Again, that's all on her files from Barnardo's.
38. When I was babysitting with BKF once, for [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], I remember QOR [REDACTED] came in with his friends, and they were all steaming drunk. QOR [REDACTED] suddenly went mental, screaming at BKF for no reason and he picked up a bucket and went to take a swipe at BKF with it. BKF was standing frozen, but then, well that was it, BKF said to him, that if he did it again then BKF would fight back and would be prepared to go to jail. Thinking back, it was like BKF was announcing the end of the abuse and he was standing up to QOR [REDACTED]
39. In the early eighties, BKF and I once went for out for a meal with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s girlfriend, [REDACTED]. When we were back at the house and BKF and [REDACTED] were both drunk, the next thing, [REDACTED] went daft. He grabbed BKF and started choking him, it was like they both went into a past life in their heads, but BKF just froze. [REDACTED] was choking BKF, battering him, and I was trying to stop [REDACTED]. The police eventually came, and I got them to take [REDACTED] out the house. There weren't

any charges, it was obviously the alcohol but it just seemed to be about nothing. One thing about [BKF] he was never aggressive.

40. [QOR] also moved from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] in the early eighties. He had a stroke then but before he had the stroke we would go and visit him. I would actually go and visit more than [BKF] did but it was more to see [REDACTED] and her brothers. I was just helping them out. I do remember [QOR] sometimes used to say the strangest things to me then. He said things like 'Tell [BKF] I'm really sorry, I knew nothing about it'. I didn't know what he was talking about and I would tell him that. He told me he used to beat [BKF] up and that he felt bad about it now. That he couldn't hit lassies so [BKF] got the brunt of it. He said he would just take things out on [BKF]. I was unaware of the past so none of it really meant anything to me.

41. I believe it was around 1969 when Helen Ford left [QOR] so [BKF] would have been about twelve. I'm not sure what the circumstances were but I know the first thing [BKF] and [REDACTED] did when Helen walked out the door was smash up her records. She had left her record player and records behind and they smashed up her records.

Life after being in care

42. I met [BKF] in 1976, I went out with him and some friends as a favour and we didn't actually get on initially. However, he was a nice person and we became friendly. I was sixteen and [BKF] was eighteen, when we started a relationship.
43. I do remember he would never invite me to his house. The first time I was in his house, was in the [REDACTED] flat in Edinburgh. They moved there from the flat in [REDACTED]. It was really dirty and there was [BKF], [QOR] and his three kids, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], all living there. The three kids would have been aged about fourteen, twelve and seven.

44. I didn't know much about the family set up, whenever I asked it would be brushed aside. I do know that BKF seemed to look after them all. I just thought QOR was BKF's dad and I didn't know much about the family and their past.
45. QOR once told me he had adopted BKF. I had found BKF's birth certificate and it had the name BKF on it. QOR told me BKF's dad was a really horrible bad man, who didn't care about him and that he, QOR, had saved BKF from a life in care. I was only sixteen and just accepted that, I didn't question it. I know now that wasn't true.
46. BKF and I dated for two years and we got married in 1978, I was eighteen and he was twenty one. I remember QOR saying he had lost BKF's birth certificate, which we needed to register our marriage. I did think that was odd because I had seen it. So QOR said he would get a copy and I remember the copy said 'BKF' formerly known as BKF. I thought that was odd as I don't remember seeing that on the certificate I had seen a couple of years earlier.
47. BKF and I moved to a flat in [REDACTED] in Leith when we were married. That was the first time he moved away from QOR. BKF was working in a warehouse and I was working in the bond.
48. BKF never spoke to me about his childhood and I had no idea he had any other siblings. I'd known him for about a year when his younger step-sister [REDACTED] appeared at QOR's house. I didn't know her at all, I didn't even know she existed. She left QOR's house as soon as she hit sixteen. The thing is [REDACTED] was only living in [REDACTED] just around the corner, and I never knew she existed.
49. I didn't know of his older step-sister [REDACTED] either, not until I met [REDACTED] that's when BKF told me. [REDACTED] had been begging to go back to Barnardo's and eventually she did go back when she was about fifteen. I think she went off to Amsterdam, but I did meet her once in Middleton's bar in Easter Road. That was about 1977 or 1978. BKF was really vicious to her that night. He wasn't happy with her and was accusing her

of going off and leaving him with **QOR** **BKF** took that badly because he was very close with **BKF** and he felt she just left him to take the brunt of it.

50. We moved from **BKF** to **BKF** in Edinburgh and we had our daughter **BKF** in 1980 and our son **BKF** in 1985. We both had jobs with British Rail cleaning the trains. That was just before I had **BKF**.
51. I had a friend who moved to Crewe and she told me there were jobs and good housing available down there. So in 1995 we decided to go as well. It was better and I got a job easily.
52. We stayed in Crewe for about two years, it was ideal for the kids, but it was isolated and I got homesick. It was about then that **BKF** also started not leaving the house. I did sometimes think his behaviour was a bit odd, but that was me, I was just thinking that's how he was. I didn't think much more of it at that time. I liked to work, he was good in the house and it kind of stayed like that for a while.
53. Another thing that had me thinking was when our daughter **BKF** was diagnosed with a **BKF**. The geneticist was asking **BKF** questions about his past and **BKF** was really struggling with that, struggling to answer them. He didn't know much at all and was very uncomfortable with the questions.
54. Eventually I began to think something wasn't right so we spoke and agreed to come back to Edinburgh. It was bizarre, but as soon as we hit Edinburgh, at Haymarket, **BKF** seemed to have this kind of breakdown. I think that from then on **BKF**'s past really started to affect him. He told me later that he'd felt safe and secure in Crewe because he was away from Edinburgh, then as soon as returned in the train he felt **QOR** and Helen could get him again.

Impact

55. After that breakdown BKF couldn't travel, in fact he wouldn't go out. Within 4-6 weeks he stopped going out and wouldn't get up. He also started ranting about 'BKF' and 'Barnardo's' It was like he was there but wasn't there. He had panic attacks, was ranting and speaking, and having these conversations in his head. I didn't know at the time but that was the start of his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
56. He was also over protective with BKF, well with both our kids really. He was strict with her, with things like eating which turned out good for her. You see, BKF
57. BKF would say BKF was to get nothing to eat unless she asked. He did that all the time and she still asks to this day when she wants something to eat. BKF
58. Sometimes when he had his rants I would hear him shouting 'make sure they've got food' or 'they must have their food', I wasn't sure what that was about until later in life when I realised he wasn't being fed as a child and that was obviously a reaction to that.
59. BKF would always have lights on, constantly in our house, I obviously realised why that was after I learned about what the HF-QOR did to them. It got to a stage with BKF where he wouldn't eat, I would leave snacks for him but eating was always an issue with him, ever since I knew him. I did ask him why not, and he would just say eating wasn't a necessity, it was a privilege, almost as if it was something special.
60. He told me he always got the belt at school for falling asleep, but that was the only time he could get any sleep. They didn't sleep in the house because they were always terrified someone was coming to get them.

61. I think the impact of the abuse affected BKF in so many ways. He had an obsession with washing his hands, he would spend a long time washing them. He also took these turns where he would talk about things from his past and then suddenly snap out of it and start behaving like normal, as if nothing had happened.
62. We never went out and that got worse, it reached a stage where if BKF said he was going out, it would take him 10-14 days to build up to just doing that. He was agoraphobic and going out would make him suffer major panic attacks. We never went anywhere as a couple, in fact we went out three times, all the time we were together. He would take enough medication to keep him calm then we would take a taxi out for a meal and get a taxi back. That was it, he went from one extreme to the other as he used to love going out and walking everywhere.
63. After I learned more about BKF's care and all he was subjected to I did ask him why he put up with abuse and he would say that it was because it was all he knew, he didn't know anything else. He said it was better to be beaten than sexually abused. You take a beating and it heals but it was the sexual abuse that really impacted on them.
64. There was an occasion when our house had to be evacuated because of an incident in [REDACTED] and BKF went into meltdown, I thought he was going to have a heart attack. The army and the police were banging on the door and telling us to get out. I was telling them that BKF couldn't. He was so terrified to go out that they eventually let him go and sit on the opposite side of the house, where he'd be safer. He was in such a state and I was so worried.
65. When I come to think of it, he was so terrified to go out and so terrified of the abuse those people did to him. I think it was the fear that they were out there, that's why he couldn't go out.
66. He became so anxious and couldn't sleep and he would go into sleep deprivation. That would make him hallucinate and he would talk nonsense, have flashbacks and

scream and shout. He wouldn't remember those episodes when they happened. He was on medication for years and took tamazepam for seizures, stress, nightmares and the anxiety.

67. BKF had psoriasis as well, so it wasn't just mental it was physical. He was like a stick and always felt as if he didn't deserve anything. This was someone who, when I first met, used to walk and walk, everywhere.
68. I had to give up my work eventually and look after him and [REDACTED] so it impacted on us financially as well. It was very tiring on me. Personally, I would get really angry but not at BKF more at the system, there was nothing there to really help him. Nothing worked, there are not enough qualified people to help with those sorts of troubles, for sufferers of abuse.
69. After all this time, you have no idea what a relief it is for me to be here and talking about all this. There has been so much impact on us, as a family, after so much time having passed before discovering these things about your family.
70. BKF's sister, [REDACTED] went on to write two books about their lives in care. In 2010 she wrote a book called [REDACTED] and then she wrote another [REDACTED]. She raises money for Barnardo's. She mentioned BKF in a book, after he had been told his name would not be used in the book. So when he was named that had a big negative impact on him. It had an even bigger impact on us as he just exploded. All he wanted was privacy and to be left alone to get on with his life.
71. People said to me why didn't I leave him but, why would I, BKF never done anything to me. That's only because nobody can understand PTSD, and you can't because you can't go inside that persons head. You can only be there to support them.
72. In relation to our children, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I would say they got used to how BKF was, that's how I would put that.

73. [BKF] did love Christmas, having come into a family, as he'd never celebrated Christmas properly as a child. He did go mad and spoil the kids, he would buy them loads. I was always saying he'd bought them enough. It was like he was making up for all the Christmases he'd missed out on and for the Christmas in 1966 when he and [REDACTED] got that beating from [QOR] [REDACTED]
74. [BKF] became more and more mentally ill leading up to his death. He continued not to eat but he brought up the abuse and his upbringing more and more frequently. He died in 2014, his whole life had been impacted, affected by the abuse he was subjected to. Mental health, physically, never eating, never exercising, everything, just as I have been describing. It had a huge impact on his life and undoubtedly led to his death. It really is what put him in his grave if you ask me.

Barnardo's enquiries by [BFB] [REDACTED]

75. I'm naturally noseiy and when [BKF] was having his panic attacks and ranting about Barnardo's it got me thinking. That wasn't long after we got back up to Edinburgh from Crewe. So I Googled Barnardo's and phoned them on his behalf. I didn't actually tell [BKF] to start with. I asked them if they had any information because he was quite ill. They told me he was in their care and I asked if we could have whatever information they had that we could be provided with. That was in 1991.
76. Barnardo's called me back a couple of days later and said they had files and they could bring them to the house. So me and my mum met Anne Forster and we brought her to see [BKF] [BKF] spoke with her and he started having a bit of a rant. He was asking her all these questions about being in care. She was saying that Barnardo's thought it was best just to leave him in the foster care. I wasn't sure what they were on about, I didn't know what was going on.
77. It was bizarre, it was like he was now having the real conversation that I'd been hearing him have or that he'd been having in his head, and he was now having it with Anne Forster. This was all coming out of [BKF] [REDACTED] and we knew nothing about it.

78. Anne Forster brought up the sexual abuse and [BKF] started to talk about it but then he shut down and nothing more was said. I didn't know much about the sexual abuse until he talked to the police about ten years after Anne Forster. That was the first I knew that he'd been in Haldane House until he was five or six, and then fostered out to the [HF-QOR]
79. Anne Forster gave him all the dates he'd been in care but what I found odd was that she only seemed to want to know whether or not he was thinking about suing Barnardo's. He wasn't interested in that but you've got to remember that [BKF] thought [Helen Ford (HF) and QOR] were [REDACTED] and he was only in Barnardo's because [QOR] wasn't well.
80. We also found out that [BKF] s real dad, [REDACTED], had been fighting Barnardo's to get custody of [BKF] and Barnardo's were doing everything possible to make sure he didn't get custody of him. [REDACTED] had also been paying for [BKF] s care right up until about 1973. Barnardo's didn't like [REDACTED] because [QOR] had been writing to them making up false allegations about him. They passed all that false derogatory information on to the council and, whatever that was, it then led to [QOR] getting custody of [REDACTED] and [BKF] after he already had [REDACTED]. It turned out in the end that [REDACTED] did have legal custody but he was told [BKF] was in Australia, which was just a pack of lies coming from [QOR]
81. I did ask Anne Forster how they knew about the abuse and she told us that [REDACTED], [BKF] s older sister, had information on her files. It said on [REDACTED] s files that she had been pleading and begging with them to take her back into care. They didn't listen to [REDACTED] so she had gone to the social work department in Edinburgh and told them of the abuse. It was then that they eventually moved her out. She would have been about fifteen and a half. That was the first time a social worker became involved. So [REDACTED] was taken out but [BKF] and [REDACTED] were left with [Helen Ford (HF) and QOR]
82. Anne Forster said to [BKF] that it was on record that as he only had a year to go they thought he was better off where he was rather than take him out. She said those

exact words to him. She spoke a lot about [REDACTED]'s complaints of abuse and whether or not we were thinking about suing Barnardo's.

83. Anne said some things to us to try and defend Barnardo's but BKF knew she was lying and all he wanted was the files. She said she had them all there, but he said there was much more and he wanted them all. BKF wanted to try and find out the truth about his past and his family.
84. We found out that when [REDACTED], BKF and [REDACTED] were all in foster care they were visited on almost a monthly basis and the Barnardo's workers that visited them completed reports. The main one was Anita Hunter, she was responsible for them between 1965 and 1969. The other social workers who I remember having been involved were a Miss Kohn, a George Smith and a Miss Garland, who was a manager, I think. Then there was a Mrs Trembath who's signature was on a lot of papers.
85. There was also a male social worker, Mr Fraser, who said in his reports that he wasn't happy as he felt there were 'sexual undertones in their actions and in the way they reacted with people'. He said something like, 'they had an exaggerated need to please'. Those are exact quotes from his reports. Reports I have supplied copies of to the Inquiry.
86. He also recorded things like, why were there two sets of social workers visiting the kids. There was one from Barnardo's and one from the council. He also recorded that BKF and [REDACTED] were looking after the HF-QOR own three kids and were having to set an alarm clock to get those kids up and ready for nursery and school then missing school themselves, as a result. He wasn't with them long but he noted those things.
87. One of the Barnardo's social workers who was involved after [REDACTED] left was Miss Kohn, who I mentioned. She actually said they had to get the children out of there but they still didn't. Anne Forster said to us that it appeared to have been decided

that the best thing for the kids was to just leave them there until they could leave, when they were sixteen.

88. The Barnardo's reports I have said some incredible things that just didn't make sense to us. We looked at the reports, you now have them all, there were comments like 'the children were withdrawn and terrified, but this was possibly only because I was visiting'. I can't believe that would be recorded without any follow up on what action needed to be taken.
89. There's a medical report that Barnardo's paid for, that said BKF was 'underweight but healthy' and that's another thing. All three of them, [REDACTED] BKF and [REDACTED], were registered with different doctors. Why would you not all go to the same family doctor, were they not wanting them checked or something.
90. There's another report that says the children were 'healthy but malnourished'. They have it on record that [REDACTED] was continuously wanting back to Barnardo's from foster care. In fact all the children were, and there are social work and council visit reports that also conclude that the children should be leaving the care of the HF-QOR [REDACTED]. As Anne Forster said, the advice seems to have just been that they should wait until the children are sixteen.
91. We also contacted the Social Work Department in Edinburgh and asked them for any files or papers they might have on BKF [REDACTED] and his family but we were informed by them that they had nothing because there had been a fire and the records had been destroyed.
92. BKF [REDACTED] and I had a further meeting with Sara Roberts and Kate Roach from Barnardo's on 3rd December 2009. BKF [REDACTED] had fought for a long time to get that meeting because he wanted acknowledgement and accountability for the sexual abuse he had suffered. So they eventually flew up from London and we met them at the Barnardo's headquarters at Corstorphine in Edinburgh.

93. They did acknowledge Barnardo's were at fault and we were provided with minutes from that meeting. BKF wasn't happy with those minutes because he felt they were inaccurate and were reflecting that Barnardo's provided support rather than an acknowledgement of the sexual abuse and an acceptance of their failings. So BKF then asked for a further copy which he got and which reflected what was discussed at the meeting. I have provided both sets of minutes to the Inquiry.
94. BKF spent a lot of time going through lawyers in what was a civil case against Barnardo's to try and get his documents and files. He saw several lawyers and got good and bad advice but he eventually ended up going to a lawyer, Karen Scott. She was fantastic and actually ended up getting Barnardo's to admit that they were liable and that they knew abuse was going on. That's how BKF got a hold of all the files from Barnardo's which is all he really wanted all along. So he got all his records around 2004/2005, from Cameron Fyfe. I have provided all these files to the Inquiry.

Police reporting of abuse

95. It was when BKF and I were living in [REDACTED] around 2001, when he was watching an episode of the Bill, and a wee boy was being abused, and he suddenly said to me that he had to speak to the police. That must have triggered something, but he also said, back when Anne Forster was speaking with us, that he didn't want police involvement until our own kids were older.
96. I phoned the police for him and a female officer came out and spoke with us. He started telling her about the abuse, he didn't say everything in front of me but I heard him speaking of abuse that happened, at [REDACTED]. It was what I told you already, about the parties Helen was having and the paedophile ring she was running from that flat.
97. I think he said it started in that flat in [REDACTED]. The same flat he was in when I met him. He sent me out the room at times so there must have been really bad parts

he wanted to keep from me and only tell the police woman. He also gave them [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s names so that would have started the criminal investigation.

98. The police then came and took more detailed statements from BKF and from [REDACTED] but I don't think they could find [REDACTED]. It all took a while to reach the court stage but it went to trial about two years later.
99. I remember the trial it was in 2002. During the trial it was really hard for BKF. He spotted Helen one day and he froze, then he put his head down and walked past her. It was like he still had a fear of her, even as an adult he was afraid of her. At the trial he would walk around with his head down, no eye contact and shaking.
100. The whole trial was terrible, we got threatening phone calls two days before it started. We were told they were going to cut our throats and they knew where we lived and everything like that. I reported it to the police and it turned out it had been [REDACTED] and a guy, who was a friend of Helen Fords. He was already in prison. The police got [REDACTED] for intimidating witnesses and the other guy wasn't prosecuted because he was in for fifteen years anyway. It was scary and we had to be moved as a result. We were moved to where we are now.
101. [REDACTED] gave her evidence first, then BKF and they both gave practically the same statement, almost identical accounts. Everything down to having to steal to get food because they were starving and getting battered. It was only Helen Ford that was on trial because QOR [REDACTED] died in 1983. I remember BKF told the court the flat always smelt of stale booze and there were parties with everybody drinking. Then Helen Ford said they had no parties and that she looked after them well with QOR [REDACTED].
102. The defence witnesses for Helen Ford were her two sons, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were saying she gave them fluffy mashed potatoes and fed them constantly and gave them wonderful meals. They also said the only visitors they ever had to the house were her brother and his friends. They said there was no drinking. There was no evidence given by her daughter, [REDACTED].

103. After the court case BKF and [REDACTED] did get together and had a coffee but they didn't meet at all before. There was media all over the place, we thought it was for a murder trial but it was actually for our trial.
104. I remember I was in Ocean Terminal when I heard on the radio that Helen Ford had been found guilty. She was sentenced to two years but ended up only doing a year. I remember it was Lord Hardie that sentenced her and he said that it was unfortunate he was restricted by legislation otherwise he would have given her a far lengthier sentence. She died about a year or so after she got out the jail.
105. BKF was just happy that he had been believed. He was telling the truth all along and felt nobody was listening to him. He didn't expect to be believed so it was such a big relief for him to feel he had been listened to.

Counselling

106. BKF's panic attacks continued after the trial. A journalist at the trial told us about INCAS and we contacted them and that's how we got to know Cameron Fyfe. He helped arrange for BKF to speak to Ian Stephen a psychologist as we thought BKF had PTSD. BKF did go and see him, was assessed and was diagnosed as suffering from PTSD. It didn't really change things then but he was referred to another specialist. I still have that assessment, and can make it available if necessary. That wasn't long after the court case.
107. So BKF then attended the Andrew Duncan Clinic at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for many years from about 2003 onwards and received specialist counselling for sexual abuse. The specialist he saw was a psychologist, Sandra Ferguson, who was great, she even saw him privately as well. She was only one of two sexual abuse specialists in Scotland at that time. BKF loved her and she helped him.

Records

108. As I have stated I have a lot of documentation that I have recovered from the enquiries I've made, both on my own and with BKF. They were all recovered either by us or with the help of our lawyer, Karen Scott. The documents I have are from the social services or Barnardo's. There is quite a lot and it is a bit of a tangled web and a totally unbelievable story but it is all in that documentation. I have provided the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry with all the documentation I have managed to recover.

Lessons to be learned

109. BKF used to say there's no real care homes anymore, it's foster care so you need to make sure the kids are cared for properly and protected. The children are in a situation in the first place, to have to be put in foster care, so unless they're cared for properly the impact just extends. He knew not every foster parent was abusive but he would say that the odd one or two, was just one or two too many. That's what he said and that's what I believe.
110. Children aren't a commodity, they are our future and they've got lives. It's circumstances that put them in care and gave them such a bad start in life so it's therefore only fair that we look after them and keep them safe.
111. As I said earlier, there aren't enough qualified people to help with sufferers of child abuse. Two experts for the whole of Scotland just isn't enough and they need to be able to get as many sessions as is necessary, not a set number of sessions. It needs to be a whole separate system just exclusively for abuse, all types of abuse.

Other information

112. As I said earlier QOR died in 1983. He choked on a biscuit in Leith Hospital after he had a second stroke. QOR moved from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] which is also off [REDACTED] and I used to go and visit him there and help him out.

113. BKF didn't have a huge reaction at QOR's death. He was upset but the ironic thing was that I arranged QOR's funeral. BKF showed little emotion but did say that if Helen Ford turned up she'd be leaving with QOR. I did find that strange back then because I'm thinking that's his mother he's talking about, or so I thought at that time. To be honest I thought she was dead then, I didn't think she was still alive.
114. BKF and I knew his real dad, [REDACTED], had to be somewhere. I made some enquiries and we eventually got an address and phone number for him. So we phoned him up and got speaking to him. That's how we found out [REDACTED] had been paying for BKF's care all his life.
115. BKF was a bit angry about him. When he asked [REDACTED] why he never tried to find him, he said there was no point because BKF was in Australia. He didn't explain that he'd been told that by Barnardo's which was a bit stupid. [REDACTED] had eight brothers and sisters and they swooped in and filled BKF's head with all these stories about [REDACTED] many of them were just lies, so none of that really helped. They did meet and make their peace, but [REDACTED] died before BKF could find out everything that he wanted to. I think BKF just told him he shouldn't have lied to him.
116. BKF and [REDACTED] did go and visit [REDACTED] in Gloucester. It was when BKF was suffering from his sleep deprivation and, when he was there, BKF started acting a bit weird. Well they didn't know how to deal with him and panicked and he ended up getting sectioned in England and put in the hospital.
117. I had to contact the hospital and explain about his PTSD, and then I had to go down there to show them his medical reports before they would let him out. That was so difficult for [REDACTED] as she didn't know what was going on, she was stranded with all these people she didn't know.
118. BKF also discovered that [REDACTED] had a second wife, [REDACTED] who was only two years older than our daughter, [REDACTED]. That was very difficult for BKF he saw that as wrong, having his father, an old man, being married to such a young lassie.

119. BKF was that desperate to find his mother



120. Then we got an email from this woman who was a researcher, and she'd found a death certificate in London with the same name and date of birth as [REDACTED] I got a copy of the certificate, phoned the hospital and got in touch with the coroner and got a copy of the post mortem. The dead woman was two or three inches taller than [REDACTED] but it also said she hadn't had any children so that couldn't possibly be [REDACTED] she had three children in six years.

121. I went to the police and the coroner and then the London police agreed to exhume the body and take DNA but the Edinburgh police said no, there were other things they could do, like the enquiry with the DWP. There are no records of her, they can't find her, and that's all currently on-going.

122. 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... BFB [REDACTED]

Dated... 30th July 2018