

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HGX

Support person present: No.

1. My name is HGX. My date of birth is 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Dundee. My father's name was and my mother's name was though she later became when she remarried. They have both since died. My parents divorced when I was three years old. My oldest sister is, then it's followed by my brother then me.
3. My sisters tell me that when I was a baby, the four of us went with our dad for a walk in the park near the Timex factory to meet our mum. She didn't show up and my dad went into the Timex offices to ask about her whereabouts but it turned out she hadn't worked there for six months. It looks like she had gone off with and that's when the arguments and split happened with my parents.
4. My mum took custody of the four of us and we went to a house in Dundee to stay with her and. It was a two roomed flat with an outside toilet so there was not a lot of space. My first memory is probably waking up on my mum's sofa and meeting her new husband. He was a harsh man, a very strict and brutal man whose opinion of little boys was that they should be seen but never heard. I was there for a few years but just couldn't take to the guy. He never lifted his hand to us though he did to our mum.

5. I went to Cleppington Primary School but I had dyslexia and struggled, I couldn't concentrate. Because I was struggling at school and didn't like it I used to get up to no good all the time and I became a naughty boy. I would go into the garden shed and break things or scare the cat and [REDACTED] wouldn't tolerate it and used to complain to anybody that would listen as to how bad a boy I was.
6. I don't know what got into my head but when I was five years old I bought a box of matches and while playing with them I set fire to an empty derelict house. I didn't want to set the place on fire, I was just playing with matches. It was only a room that was damaged. The police were called, I admitted what I had done and I got sent for a 21 day assessment in Rannoch Moor Assessment Centre in Dundee.
7. There was a children's hearing but I don't remember it and it's possible I wasn't even there. What I do recall is that I was sent home from school one day at 2:00 pm and when I went home there was a social worker waiting on me who took me to Rannoch Moor. I ended up getting three separate 21 Day assessments over that one incident with the matches. There are actually three separate reports about my time there saying that I enjoyed it and I did.

#### **Rannoch Moor Assessment Centre, Dundee**

8. I don't recall the names of the staff but, a few years later, I was sent to Burnside which had amalgamated by that time with Rannoch Moor and many of the same staff were working there and recognised me from Rannoch Moor.
9. There were about twenty boys aged from five up to teenage years in Rannoch Moor. There was nothing untoward about the place and the staff ran it well. They listened to you and seemed to understand the position I was in. I was a wee lad that was lost. They would speak to me and listen to what I had to say which was something I wasn't used to. There were a couple of older nasty boys but they never bothered me and even let me play pool with them.

10. On each of the three occasions I went there I got a medical examination when I arrived and it was at Rannoch Moor that I was first issued with glasses. A psychologist called Dr Ian Menzies visited me regularly. He was a nice guy and would ask me why I had done what I had done and asked me a lot of questions about my family. Everything seemed to be about how I was feeling. They never did get to the bottom of why I had lit the fire and I don't think I knew why I had done it either, probably just fascination.
11. Everything about Rannoch Moor was good and I enjoyed the food and would often help out where I could cleaning up though there were no allocated chores. My mum did visit me once or twice. [REDACTED] would drive her there but he never came in. The visits from my mum were lovely and I have fond memories of cuddling her.
12. After the first lot of 21 days I got sent back to my mum's but hated it and ran off to my dad's but social workers took me back to my mum's. This happened a few times until, a few months later, I got sent back for another 21 day assessment in Rannoch Moor. Again the staff were good to me and although we spent all our time within the confines of the building I had my own room. There was a teacher who was really just keeping me apace with my schoolwork.
13. As I say, I was in there three times and had no issues with Rannoch Moor on any of the occasions I was there. I was actually elated to be there. Given what [REDACTED] had said of me, and the fact that I had started a fire in a derelict house, I think those doing reports on me were expecting to find a nasty child but I turned out to be a pleasant kid that they all liked. I was able to relax and speak freely which I couldn't do at home especially when [REDACTED] was about.

### **Leaving Rannoch Moor**

14. After I left Rannoch Moor I quickly realised that if I was naughty I could get away from my mum's house and, in particular, away from [REDACTED]. My plan was to go back to Rannoch Moor. However, there ended up a custody battle for me between my mum and dad and I got sent to Florence Booth Clement Park House, Dundee by the social workers.

15. According to records, me being sent there was a voluntary agreement between mum and dad that I be sent there. Both parents had to contribute to me being there which apparently was a bone of contention about me being there as, as I only found out recently, my dad had doubts that I was his son and [REDACTED] was not for letting my mum pay anything towards my care out of his pocket. My mum had to get a job as a cleaner to help pay for me being there.

**Florence Booth Clement Park House, Dundee**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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30. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

### Leaving Florence Booth Clement Park House, Dundee

31. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later I did leave Florence Booth quite abruptly. I had been there for four years when, one Monday, I got told I was leaving on the Friday.

32. This really threw me Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later Prior to leaving I had been going to my dad's at weekends and it was my dad's that I went back to.

33. At my dad's I became a latchkey kid. He was rarely at home and there was never any food and often no electricity. It became the job of my sisters and my brother to look after me but they were hardly there either and on many an occasion I was left outside waiting for somebody to let me in.

34. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

35. I was in Primary 7 in Blackshades School and even won a prize as the most improved pupil and was doing well. I then went to Rockwell Secondary School which I had to get a bus to and became a small fish in a big pond. The school didn't work out for me as I was being bullied, as often as not I couldn't get my bus fare off my dad and was

more out of school than in. I ended up getting expelled after upsetting the English teacher though most of my teachers spoke up on my behalf.

36. I went from bad to worse and there were arguments between my dad and social workers with my dad asking for me to be taken back into care. I was twelve or thirteen when I appeared at a children's panel which sent me for a 21 day assessment in Burnside Assessment Centre, Dundee.
37. As with Rannoch Moor I did three 21 day assessments in between going back to my dad's. I got into some trouble including stealing out-of-date cakes out of the back of a van, silly wee things. I was again seen by Dr Ian Menzies who seemed to be linked to Burnside. I appeared at another panel and went straight from there to Burnside.

#### **Burnside House Assessment Centre, Dundee**

38. Burnside was a large complex with one side being a school while the other side was a semi-secure unit that was split into two levels. There was also an isolation cell you were put into if you got into trouble which was called the sin-bin. I was upstairs in a shared room with about thirty to forty other boys all aged between eleven and teenage. There were glass partitions throughout meaning the night-watchman could see everybody at night if they got up.
39. The girls were downstairs though I'm not sure how many girls there were. Every morning they gave you whatever uniform you were to wear that day which was so as they could identify you if you ran away.
40. There was a playroom at the front where you had a TV and could play table-tennis and board games which usually had bits missing. Nobody seemed to be concerned about that area or what went on.
41. When you arrived a guard spoke to you saying we would be shown to our room, shown our bed and told how it must always be kept tidy. I was told I was now in a secure unit and would not be able to come and go as I pleased and that I was there for 21 days

and would be required to attend at various meetings. There was no actual introduction to any rules, instead they just told me what was required of me including not being allowed to swear.

### **Routine at Burnside House Assessment Centre**

42. The daily routine involved getting up and, if you had any appointments like with the psychologists, you went there first. Otherwise you went to the school area which was at the back. In the school you would do some very basic work but as you did it the staff were watching your behaviour all the time. I probably didn't realise this at the time but, looking at the reports from my time there, I can see that was what was happening.
43. We would stop for lunch then go back to school in the afternoon. In the evening you would be in one of the playrooms or stay in your bed area which I did quite a bit. I was a bit of a loner and didn't get on with most of the people there.

### *Food*

44. The food was basic and awful, it was bland. Fish fingers, beans and chips, that sort of thing. During mealtimes there could be issues especially if you sat at the wrong seat. You could receive dog's abuse and boys would ping food at each other. We sat at big long tables and I tended to sit in the corners as far from others as possible but people would come over and sit down which meant standing up to let them by.
45. Seats and tables were fixed to the ground so they couldn't be thrown. Things were designed so that you couldn't harm yourself and others so we used plastic cutlery. Meal times were occasions where things could spark off so I was always wanting to get away from there as quickly as possible.

### *Washing*

46. You were allocated certain times to shower but if you didn't go for a shower you just went dirty. Although the toilets were cubicles the showers were open plan and other boys would hit each other with wet towels during these times and though staff saw what was going on they just ignored it. It became problematic for me and I hated it so I often went without a shower.
47. If you were seen crying about it you were sent to your bed or to the sin-bin. If you complained then you were treated as if you were the problem so you learned to keep your mouth shut

### *Possessions*

48. I didn't have anything that I would have called my own when I was in Burnside. You went from the panel to there with nothing other than what you were wearing and, since I didn't get any visitors, nobody visited to give me anything.

### *Clothing*

49. When you arrived your clothes were taken off you and they supplied you with a uniform which at least was clean if somewhat baggy and was an improvement on the clothes I arrived in.

### *Visits/visitors*

50. Nobody came to visit me other than health workers or people preparing reports on me for the panel. If any outside inspectors came to look at the place then I wasn't aware of them. My dad said he was going to come and visit me but he never did and I never saw my brother or sisters during my times there.

### *Health*

51. You got stripped searched when you arrived then got a toilet bag, new clothes and a shower. There were health professionals that checked our weight and height when we arrived and there were nurses that took care of our day to day health.

### *Chores*

52. The only chores we did was keeping our own areas in the dorm tidy.

### *Trips*

53. There were no trips to the swimming pool or cinema. There was a very different atmosphere to the place from the previous places I had been in and it was very much a case that we were made aware that we were there because we had been naughty.

### *Review of detention*

54. I had various people speak to me while preparing reports for the panel about me. One of the main reasons I was there was because I had been expelled from school and they were deciding whether I was suitable for a residential school. They felt that staying with my dad hadn't worked out though it beats me how they couldn't have seen that from the start. The assessments were eventually used to send me to Balgowan Residential School.

### *Discipline*

55. The staff had a very strong handed approach of looking after us. If you were put on report for anything you appeared in front of the principal who would read out what the issues were against you. I don't recall the principal's name. You would then either be sent to the sin-bin for four or five hours or sent to your bed. The sin-bin was an isolation cell which I got sent to a few times. The hearings in front of the principal were held in an almost military fashion and I can only assume the results were recorded.

## Abuse at Burnside House Assessment Centre, Dundee

56. Burnside was a harsh place, very oppressive, that had more of a bad atmosphere than anything else and the guards were heavy handed rather than being abusive. For instance, if you got caught misbehaving at meal times the guards would drag you out and be quite rough in doing so. They didn't mess around and you were literally man-handled out of the room and into the sin-bin. I would add that, earlier, I said that some of the staff from Rannoch Moor had moved to Burnside and recognised me but they were in a different part of Burnside from me and I would maybe see them at lunchtime.
57. Although most of the guards would do this there were two in particular who did most of it. The main one for me was called [MYD] whose surname was [MYD] and I think I probably got under his skin. I don't know his full name but that's what we knew him as. He was a big man with short hair, light complexion about 5' 9" aged in his late twenties or early thirties and seemed to take pleasure in dragging me out of the dining room into the sin-bin. You would have thought it was his party piece and he was a bit of a monster.
58. When you got put in the solitary room the door was shut and you were just left there. It had a cardboard table, a cardboard seat and padded walls. It was not a nice experience. Even if you were innocent [MYD] would grab you and put you in the sin-bin if he thought you were up to no good. He even dragged me by the ankle there one time and I saw him do it to others.
59. There was a time, and petty as it was, there was a guy pinching my ear and he got my elbow in his face. He obviously didn't like it much but the only thing [MYD] saw was me hitting him in the face with my elbow. I was immediately ejected and put in the sin-bin. I protested that I had only been defending myself which [MYD] wasn't interested in. The good thing that came from that was that that boy never bothered me again.
60. On another occasion [MYD] had read a report on me and said that I was an angry boy. He started goading me asking me to show him how angry I could get so I kicked him in the nuts. Obviously I was then thrown straight into the sin-bin. Sometimes I think

MYD was trying to find out who the true me was but how he could do it in that environment was beyond me.

### **Leaving Burnside House Assessment Centre, Dundee**

61. After being in Burnside three times I went back to my dad's but then got called to another children's panel and my dad came with me. From the panel I was taken to Balgowan Residential School in Dundee. I was fourteen years old and, according to my records, it was ██████████ 1982. I ended up being there for two years. My records also show that my dad actually recommended that I go there as he was finding me too difficult to handle.

### **Balgowan Residential School, Dundee**

62. Balgowan was a huge building but only half of it was in use and there were roughly forty to fifty teenage boys therein. I was put in a big open plan dorm. There was a second dorm but I was never in it. Balgowan was SNR Mr HGZ My number was ██████████ and when I spoke to a guard I always had to say "████████ HGX Sir". We called all the staff sir and if you didn't say it each time you got a back-hander or put on report.
63. When I arrived I had to march to the laundry where I got my uniform, a towel plus a bed-block. I then went to my dorm and then it was time to eat. You weren't allowed to sit down at the table until you had said grace and then were told to sit. You were then told to go and collect your food. They didn't like waste and you had to finish your food. If you didn't then you were put on report.
64. There was no molly-coddling in Balgowan. It was very austere and we were marched everywhere. The building itself was secure though the main gates weren't but it was a long old hike from the building to the gates.

## **Routine at Balgowan Residential School, Dundee**

65. Strip lights went on in the morning and you then went for a shower. A guard controlled all the showers and turned the water on and off. The water was at best tepid and you only had a set time to get washed and dried then strip and make your bed before going to breakfast. A guard had to say if you had done your bed properly or not and, if not, then you had to re-make it. If you didn't get it right the second time you went on report. After breakfast you marched round the square regardless of the weather.
66. We then went to school but stopped for lunch before going back to school. You finished school about 4:00 pm then went back to your dorm or watched TV, played table-tennis or read books. Tea was at 5:30 pm then we had free-time playing pool or playing on the Atari. Playing pool could be a dangerous time as the boys were basically armed with pool cues and fights broke out regularly.

### *Clothing*

67. Balgowan supplied the clothing we wore which were uniforms that, if you ran away, made you clearly visible and it would be obvious to anybody who saw you where you had come from.

### *School*

68. There was a pre-fab horseshoe shaped building for the school. You did woodwork and English and Maths. I complained about the poor quality of the education which was basically primary school level and got put on report for complaining. The teachers themselves were civilians and were actually really nice people and made school time the most relaxing part of the day. When the guards weren't there you could speak freely.

### *Bedwetting*

69. If you wet the bed privileges were taken off you, recreation time was taken away or you wouldn't be allowed visitors. If you wet the bed often enough you could even get the cane. I had a rubber sheet put on my bed. I was never caned for wetting the bed though it was threatened.

### *Trips*

70. At weekends we were taken to the swimming baths and we also had football competitions against other schools though the other schools didn't like playing against us as some of the boys who played for us could be quite nasty. There was an occasion while I wasn't at the school that a group of about twelve of the boys were taken up, I think it was Ben Nevis, by one of the guards. Apparently they didn't like him and when they got to the top they pushed him over and he died. This was before my time but the other boys spoke about it while I was there.

### *Visits/visitors*

71. My dad came to see me fairly often and social workers came regularly either at my behest or because they had a reason to see me as part of their schedule. When you were visited by a social worker you would see them outside the presence of guards and I was able to tell them some of the things that were going on though nothing ever happened about it.

### *Running away*

72. While at Balgowan I ran away twice. The first time I was picked up by the police and they just took me back. The second time I got picked up I spoke to the police at Bell Street Station in Dundee and told them what had been happening in Balgowan. They seemed to listen and did speak with SNR Mr HGZ when they returned me but nothing happened.

### *Discipline*

73. The discipline in Balgowan was a sort of "rinse and repeat" thing and if you stepped out of line you knew what was coming. Depending on who copped you or how hard it was depended on the circumstances. If a boy ended up with a visible injury like a black eye the guards would write up a report that covered up their involvement in it.
74. It was also the case that the older and tougher boys tended not to be disciplined as they often kept the lid on the younger guys. It was a fine line to describe what was discipline and what was abuse.

### **Abuse at Balgowan Residential School, Dundee**

75. There was an incident only eight days after I arrived at Balgowan. According to my records it happened on [REDACTED] 1982 and I get this from a statement that I have a copy of that was written by the guard who the records show was called Mr LIC [REDACTED].
76. What happened was that the guard was dragging me by the scruff of the hair towards the shower room which would have ended up with me getting a proper kicking. The SNR [REDACTED] Mr GMP [REDACTED] saw it and stopped it though nothing happened as a result of it, despite both me and the guard being soaked and SNR [REDACTED] witnessing it.
77. In my records I actually have a copy of the report about that incident which includes a copy of the guard's statement.
78. The statement says – ***'While supervising lunch today I felt it was my duty to move tables to where a community service volunteer appeared to be experiencing difficulty with two boys namely [REDACTED] and HGX [REDACTED]. After a few moments HGX [REDACTED] pushed his sweet (pudding) aside saying he didn't like it. When Fiona, the CSV, left the table to help unload dishes onto the trolley in preparation for dish-washing HGX [REDACTED] flicked some cornflower across the table'***. I didn't do that.

79. The statement goes on 'I **reprimanded him and he met me with verbal abuse**'. Which I didn't as I wouldn't dare. '**Although he did not use foul language after which I asked him to stand**'. Which is customary. '**He reluctantly followed my request but continued to give cheek and back-chat**'. No I didn't, I wouldn't dare. '**I told him to keep quiet or I would remove him from the dining room but he continued to smirk and issue remarks. I removed him from the area into the washroom and, as I verbally chastised him, he refused to lift his head up to speak to me and kept turning away. I took him by the chin with my right hand and firmly held his head in the hope that eye-contact would reinforce my advice regarding his bad behaviour. In my opinion he started hyper-ventilating to the extent that I was starting to form hysteria**'. That's the wrong word. '**I turned on the shower system and told him that unless he controlled himself I would hold him under the warm shower**'. It wasn't warm, it was freezing. '**Irrespective of whether I became wet as well until he quietened down**' He didn't say any of that. '**At that moment Mr GMP SNR appeared on the scene**'. That's the chap I was telling you about. He was all over it. '**And took over control**'. He saved me from a bit of a beating. '**I acted on judgement based on many years of working with children and never during this incident did I wilfully or accidentally strike HGX**'.  
Liar.

80. That statement is on Balgowan School letterhead and is a proper full-on report. This particular nasty piece of work took no encouragement to grab you, push you and all the rest of it. Those showers were horrible but I wasn't hyper-ventilating, I was shiting myself to be honest. If it wasn't for that SNR appearing then that incident wouldn't have been written up and I would have got a kicking.

81. My dad was called into a meeting with SNR about that incident but eventually received a letter from SNR saying that he had found no evidence of an assault on me and did not intend to take the matter further.

82. The guards, or screws as we called them, knew how to grab you at certain pressure points to inflict maximum pain if you said anything they didn't like or even for something as daft as slouching your shoulders. Forcing your arm up your back was common

place. If you kicked off you were put on report. Being assaulted by staff was a daily occurrence and all the staff took part in verbally abusing the boys.

83. The boys being manhandled by the staff was a daily occurrence and we had a running joke that today was "your turn" as it just felt that everybody got a turn of being manhandled and assaulted every day. If someone else was getting assaulted it meant you weren't and there was no place for emotion.
84. My nervous disposition went bananas because I had an inflection which made me smirk a lot and therefore I copped it a lot because they thought I was cheeking them. I wouldn't say all the staff were like that but most of them were. New staff tended to be alright as you could speak to them and reason with them but they either quickly left because they didn't like what they were seeing or got into the routine like the others. My impression was that the guards enjoyed restraining us and at times were just looking for an excuse to do so.
85. I got picked on quite often in the showers but on one occasion when I fought back I got the cane from Mr HGZ. It was done in his room where I had to pull my trousers down, bend over a chair and got hit with the cane. The cane wasn't used too often in the school and it tended not to be used on the bigger guys, the ones that ran the wings. It was used when incidents were close to involving getting the police in.
86. Not long after I arrived at Balgowan I was given a tip that, because of the open dormitories, if I woke in the middle of the night and felt that somebody was nearby me then I should scream like I was being murdered and let my lungs ring to the heavens. That was good advice as on one occasion, not long after I arrived, I was in bed when a pillow was put over my head. I could smell a guy's balls. I don't know if it was a guard or another boy but I wriggled out of it, went berserk, and screamed. The incident stopped and went no further.
87. I felt that if I hadn't been a wriggler and screamed then that incident would have gone further in a sexual way. Though I didn't witness such things myself but did hear it happen, I did hear of other boys, especially those new to the place, being grabbed by

some of the older boys and being forced to give them blow-jobs though that never happened to me. I heard what sounded like it happening in the dorm sometimes and it almost always happened just after a new boy came in. Whether it was staff or older boys involved I couldn't say.

88. I complained to a guard, not sure who, the next day and he asked me if I was sure I wanted to make such a complaint. The night-watchman said he hadn't heard anything and I ended up getting put on report for lying. I also told a social worker about it who took it up with staff but she came back to me and said there was no evidence of it happening and suggested that it was just one of my wee stories.
89. In Balgowan you spent most of your time in a state of fear either from the guards or from the older boys. Eventually, believe it or not, you got used to the treatment but you had to become aware of situations and learn the different quirks of each guard and member of staff so you knew what you could and what you couldn't do or get away with in front of them. You had to get quite clever quite quickly with them.
90. The room where we played with the Atari and the pool room were both flash spots and places you would fear going. You would get a limited amount of time in each and you just prayed that the next boy coming in after you wasn't one of the bigger boys. When things did happen you had to weigh up whether to report it or not as everything would end up in a report and if you weren't believed you could just as easily get into trouble instead even though you had been the victim.
91. An example of the sort of fear we lived with was that I was once in the pool room when I saw one of the older boys and one of the guards coming across the yard towards the pool room. I was so scared of what might happen I actually lifted the top of the pool table and hid inside it. I used the balls to jam the holes and when they couldn't play they just left. But that showed how scared you could be at any time as I was terrified they might have assaulted me or got up to no good with me sexually given what I had heard on the rumour mill.

## **Leaving Balgowan Residential School, Dundee**

92. The residential part of Balgowan closed and I became a day pupil there and left just before I turned sixteen. It was within walking distance of my dad's house. By this time my oldest sister [REDACTED] had left the house. My sister [REDACTED] couldn't wait to get out of the house either and moved in with her boyfriend when she was sixteen. My brother also went off with his girlfriend which left just me and my dad in the house.
93. So I was left being a latchkey kid again fending for myself when I turned sixteen but then my dad made me homeless when he moved in with his girlfriend. Social work helped me with housing by putting me in a bed and breakfast for a short period then found me a council flat in Fintry. That was hard because I didn't know how to deal with bills or anything like that.

## **Life after being in care**

94. When living in the bed and breakfast I only had a giro cheque until social workers got me a job making jute combs which I got £40 a week for which just about paid for my bills and food. Then social work got me into IT and activity centres to keep me busy but thereafter I had no social work involvement. I had left school with no qualifications but did try to go back and do my O Levels but I couldn't continue as I had to work. I fell by the wayside between sixteen and eighteen but then decided to change my life.
95. I spent four years as a waiter [REDACTED] before getting a job in Reading, England in another hotel and stayed in the hotel trade until I was 24 when I moved into the wine trade. I met and married my wife and, about twenty years ago, started my own IT company.

## **Impact**

96. My mum and dad are now dead and I should point out that neither my brother or either of my sisters ever had social workers involved in their life. I don't really speak to my older sister [REDACTED] though remain close to [REDACTED] but I feel the family is fragmented

for me after spending so much of my childhood in care. I feel that my wife [REDACTED] deserves a medal for how she has been with me throughout our marriage.

97. I sometimes worry if what happened to me was real and think that maybe my memory is playing tricks on me. I would say that the biggest impact that my time in care had on me was trust in others and self-belief. Everything is questioned in my head and even today I will sometimes get people to check my work even though I know that I've done it properly.
98. Relationships haven't been a problem as such. I've been with my wife for thirty years and we have two lovely daughters. However, when my oldest daughter was born I felt numb because I was anxious. I couldn't change her nappy because that concerned being near her private parts.
99. My oldest daughter also says I was never one for hugging the girls. My daughters know I love them and know they can ask me for anything although when they were first born, I had no family experience to reflect on due to the way my parents were and the fact I was in care for so long. My mother-in-law and father-in-law have been a massive influence on me and they and my wife are and always have been a lovely family and I've always been able to draw on their experience.
100. I am very confident in what I do in business but it comes with some background anxiety and a sense of doom that can be brought on by simple things like a smell.

### **Treatment/support**

101. I have never sought counselling and I think a lot of that has to do with a sense of shame about what my childhood was like even though I know it wasn't my fault. I have seen counsellors recently but that has to do with me coming to give this statement as opposed to anything from my childhood. It may lead to me receiving further counselling that might have to do with my childhood.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

102. I have never reported any of the abuse to the police other than on the second occasion when I ran away from Balgowan though nothing came of it.

### **Records**

103. Through Birthlink I obtained a substantial amount of records concerning my time in care. They were sent to me in PDF files and I have them stored on my laptop. There are approximately a thousand pages and they cover from 1971 up to about 1983. The files are available should The Inquiry want copies.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

104. I don't know what it's like these days but guards, or people in charge of minors, should not be in a position of being able to do what they like when dealing with minors and certainly should never be allowed to be left alone with a child. What happens behind a closed door often becomes a problem.
105. There is also the problem that social workers never looked at what the actual problem was which, in my case, was my dad. SNR [REDACTED]  
SNR [REDACTED] absolute mayhem with my dad. That should never have been allowed to happen.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

106. Prior to giving this statement I had thought about what I hoped to achieve in giving it and my wife asked what I thought The Inquiry hoped to achieve. We looked up The Inquiry website and saw the aims that The Chair for The Inquiry had listed. My God,

they're good aims. My wife said we couldn't ask any more of The Inquiry than what it is already asking of itself.

107. 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... HGX .....

Dated... 26-04-22 .....