

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

### Witness Statement of [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

#### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow, but I don't know in what hospital. My family lived in Yoker. My mother's name was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was her maiden name. She was known as [REDACTED]. My dad's name was [REDACTED]. My oldest sibling is [REDACTED], he is still alive and lives in London. The next oldest was my sister [REDACTED]. She is dead now. I actually had seven sisters and three brothers. I had another brother [REDACTED] who died, as well as a brother [REDACTED] who has also died. It was actually [REDACTED] and I that went into Larchgrove together. I was the youngest boy in the family.
3. My sisters were, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], in that order. My brother [REDACTED] will be in his seventies, over ten or eleven years older than me. [REDACTED] is the youngest. She is about five years younger than me. [REDACTED] is about a year older than me, there must be a year to two years between each of the rest of them. We aren't in much contact now as we are all a bit older. I've asked all of them lots of questions over the past about why [REDACTED] and I went into care, but they won't answer me. I've developed myself into being straightforward. If I want to ask something about my past, I will just ask them, but they all just tell me they don't know.

4. I loved my life as a child growing up. I went to Yoker primary school, although I can't remember getting an education. I remember growing up as a Rangers supporter. I went to the games on my own in 1973. I used to go from Partick, I'd go on the ferry sometimes, or the underground. I remember the noise and the smell on a Saturday, walking up Portman Road. It was fantastic. That was my life, I loved it. I was carefree. I wasn't a troublemaker, I wasn't a thief. I never done anything like that. I think the only trouble I was in was when I stole some rhubarb out of someone's garden. I got caught and taken back to the house, but that was it. I was grounded for it.
  
5. My dad died of bronchitis in █████ 1974. I remember the day he died. I remember seeing his body. We lived in a two bedroomed flat in a tenement. All the girls had the bay window room and me and █████ had the little room. █████ was away from home by this time. Directly opposite us was the living room with the sofa bed and my mum and dad used to sleep in that. I can remember my mum shouting, "He's dead". I thought it was a joke, but my dad was lying there dead. I believe that's why I went into care. █████ was drinking by then. He was drunk all the time. He would be thirteen or fourteen at the time. I always thought that's why I went to Larchgrove, because of his drinking and my mum couldn't handle him. With this and my dad dying, it was just too much of a coincidence not to be the reason. I had never been arrested, I wasn't a criminal. I lived a separate life from my family. Maybe that's what it was, they maybe thought I was a weirdo, I just loved my football. I was addicted.
  
6. Social services were never involved until my dad died. Before I knew it, I was at Wellington Street Children's Panel, then me and █████ were gone. I don't know the names of any of the social workers involved. I remember being picked up in a car or a taxi and my mum took us to the panel. I remember sitting round a big table and my mum crying, me crying and █████ trying to run out. I just remember the upset. I didn't really know what was happening. No-one had sat us down beforehand and explained what was going to happen. We weren't prepared for it. I wasn't given a chance to speak at the panel. My mum was talking a lot, and crying a lot, so that was upsetting me. I was only ten. It was too much for me. I felt like I was in custody then. It felt like someone was standing over me, so maybe someone was standing behind

me, expecting me to run away. It was intimidating. The decision was to put me and [REDACTED] into care. I heard the words care and protection quite a lot. I ended up getting called [REDACTED] in care, [REDACTED] ILH [REDACTED]

7. I was taken away by a social worker in a car. My mum didn't come with us. I was terrified. I didn't know anything about children's homes. I didn't even know anyone who was involved with a social worker. I know I was only ten, but my sister [REDACTED] was in the army and she was always encouraging me to be that sort of person rather than getting into trouble. She always tried to keep me on the straight and narrow. My mum and dad did as well. I did stay on that path. That's the most upsetting thing for me, being ripped away from my mum. Particularly when my dad had just died. That affected me quite a lot. I didn't sleep, just cried all the time.

### **Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Springboig, Glasgow**

#### *First day*

8. I remember going up the drive of Larchgrove, getting out of the car and the two big doors opening at the front. As soon as we went in, I could smell the place. It had like a school dining hall smell. I could smell the steamed food. I could also smell what I would describe as hospital cleanness. It was like military spotless, but old and miserable, bleak. I would imagine it was run by Glasgow City Council.
9. We were introduced to Mr [REDACTED] KDX [REDACTED]. He was the first guy I met. He was the boss. His nickname was 'KDX [REDACTED]'. This was because he used the word '[REDACTED]' a lot, rather than the 'F' word. He was a nice man. He reminded me of Jock Stein, he had the same hair as him and he was a big guy. He told me to relax because he could see that I was upset. There were other staff members there, but I didn't really pay attention to them because I had to just focus on one person at a time. He must have given me the rules of the place, but I can't really remember that. He gave me a walkthrough but it didn't really last because after about half an hour my brother [REDACTED] escaped. He was gone with another two lads, who I knew well. One of them lived across the road from us. His name was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] found out where



the kitchen was and had got out through the window. So after half an hour I was being asked where my brother had gone. I didn't know as [REDACTED] lived in a different world from me. We hardly communicated at home.

10. Larchgrove was on Edinburgh Road in Barlanark I think. It was a brown, dark, horrible building from what I remember. A big, stone Victorian building. It was in its own grounds. They had their own football pitches round the back. There were housing estates round about it. There was no gate at the front or the back, there was access through both sides. You could run away if you wanted to.
11. There were two dormitories, Bute and Arran. I was in Bute at the beginning, which was upstairs on the right side of the building. Arran was on the left. It was all boys in the place. Just going from the numbers in the dining hall I would say there were sixty or seventy kids there. There were a couple of boys younger than me, but most of them were older, so I'd say from about seven to fifteen years old. There were quite a lot of staff in Larchgrove. You would see them flying about the place. I didn't really get to know any of them, just one guy in particular, his name was [REDACTED] I don't know if that was short for [REDACTED], I only knew him as [REDACTED]. I don't know his surname. I know he lived in Clydebank. I don't know if all the staff stayed outwith Larchgrove. He was the only member of staff that took me out of the place and to his house.
12. I stayed in both dormitories over my time at Larchgrove, but I started off in Bute. I went to Arran sometime after that. I got a little job in Bute. I was like a little teacher's pet. I remember the metal beds we slept in and the small mattress. I don't think we had anything next to our beds, like a cabinet or set of drawers. I don't know where we kept our clothes. I felt better when I went to Arran because this staff member, [REDACTED] wasn't there. Mr [REDACTED] moved me to Arran because I told him about [REDACTED] Mr [REDACTED] was the only member of staff I knew and that I could try to talk to. He wasn't intimidating, he didn't frighten me. He was approachable.
13. I stayed at a place called Gilshochill some weekends. I also stayed there for a period of time. If I was going home to my mums at the weekend, she would pick me up from



Gilshochill. My brother [REDACTED] came back into the system. I don't know if he got captured or had got into trouble, but he came back in to Larchgrove at a later date. I saw him there one more time and then Gilshochill a couple of times. I was in Larchgrove for close to a year, maybe just over that.

*Mornings and bedtime*

14. I think we were wakened about 6:00 am by the sound of keys and whistling. I've been in prison before and you get used to the echoing and the turnkeys. We would get up and get ready. If you had peed your bed, you'd be screamed at to get the sheets off the bed. There were staff members in there that would raise their voices quite a lot and scare a lot of people. I can't remember names. I didn't wet the bed.
15. We would get up, get a wash with carbolic soap and get ourselves dressed. I had my little job of helping in the laundry with the bedwetting stuff, which meant I sometimes got up at 5:00 am. I was asked if I wanted to do this, I wasn't forced to do it. I got singled out by the other boys for being the teacher's pet. They didn't say anything, it was just the way they looked at me. I was only four feet tall when I was ten years old. I was probably the smallest guy in Larchgrove at the time.
16. We would then go for breakfast in the dining hall, which was usually porridge. Breakfast seemed to go in a flash, then we were doing stuff. If you played for the football team you would train for that. They wouldn't let me in the football team because they said I was a flight risk, even though I'd never tried to escape. I didn't do much at all after breakfast. I would just float around basically. As I said, I was like the teacher's pet and I think I made myself more gullible by doing this. I'd end up making the staff cups of tea and keeping everybody happy. I think after a while I thought, if I can keep doing this, I will be alright. Then [REDACTED] turned up and everything changed for me.
17. We were early to bed. There weren't any late nights in Larchgrove. I remember that because you could always hear the staff leaving. In the morning you could hear them coming. I was always awake when they came and went. They had a couple of

people that would stay over at night-time. They would get me up at 5:00 am to help with the laundry. I would fold all the sheets, making sort of bed blocks. That's how I learned to make one. I just made everything neat and tidy.

#### *Mealtimes / Food*

18. The main meal was around 5:00 pm. It was always done quite early. I think it was to get staff away, it was always a rush. Everybody ate together, but it never seemed like everyone was there. Maybe some had been naughty. The food was steamed, it was really terrible. Due to going there I think I had a bit of an eating problem. I couldn't eat a lot and lost weight. So, I didn't get on well at eating the food. You would be put on report if you didn't eat it. There was a tuck shop and you could spend a little money there, but they would stop you doing this if you didn't eat the food. They would also ban you from seeing your family at the weekend when I was at Gilshochill . It was always intimidation. I was never put on report. I was a good boy. I don't know where the money for the tuck shop came from. It might have been sent in from my mum.
19. I never saw anyone being force fed, but I saw some of the boys actually getting hit with the food by the people who were putting it out. There was a lady there who gave the food out, and if you abused the food, she would literally throw it at you, and you would go on report. I don't know her name. There was a lot of bullying by the staff.

#### *Clothing / uniform*

20. We were given clothes by Larchgrove, they were like prison clothes. It was corduroys or jeans, a jumper and maybe a t-shirt or something like that. I can't really remember the clothes I wore there, but when I went out with [REDACTED] to different places, he would buy me clothes. Every single time I went out he bought me new clothes. I didn't keep them at Larchgrove, I had to change into my old clothes when he returned me to the home. When I went to Balgowan I got all my clothes that he had bought me.

### *School*

21. I didn't have any schooling throughout my time at Larchgrove. I think others got some education, but I can't even remember seeing the classrooms. I don't know where they were located. There were some little portacabins at the back of the main building and I think that's where the school might have been.

### *Leisure time*

22. There was a football pitch out the back. They would let you go out there, but you would go out with twenty guys and half an hour later fifteen of them were running away and the other five were brought back inside. It was right in the middle of a few estates near Maryhill. You would get gangs from around there coming up and smashing the windows. My nickname in Larchgrove was **ILH**, which meant **ILH**. Most of the guys in there weren't in for care and protection, they were in for burglaries and other crimes. **ILH** branded me with that nickname. Little things like that I remember, and that was at the beginning of it, him getting all the other kids to intimidate me.
23. I can't remember seeing a TV in Larchgrove. There wasn't any pool tables or a recreation room. Absolutely nothing. There were maybe some books there. I might have picked up a couple of books, but I wasn't the best reader.

### *Chores*

24. As well as helping out with the laundry, I had to do a bit of cleaning. I've done cleaning jobs almost all my life, so I've kind of built it up from there. I cleaned the wood floors and buffed the halls with the big heavy buffers. We maintained the football pitch too, stuff like that. So I was always part of a team doing these things. Maybe the head cleaner in there spotted my potential as being a good cleaner, I don't know. I didn't mind because it took my mind away from everything.



*Trips/Holidays/Birthdays/Christmas*

25. We never went on any trips or holidays while at Larchgrove. I can't remember having my birthday in there or anything special happening at Christmas.

*Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

26. I didn't have any visitors when I was at Larchgrove. I think there were a lot of inspections there, official looking people wandering around all suited and booted, taking notes, going into the dormitories and things. What they were about I don't know. Some would speak to me, asking why I was there and stuff like that. I told them what I have said here today that I have no idea. I stick up for myself, nobody else. I didn't attend any further panels while I was in Larchgrove, so I don't know if there were any reviews done.

*Healthcare*

27. I was healthy while I was in there, so I don't know what the care provided was like.

*Running away*

28. Some boys ran away every day. There was always a hive of activity, always police in and out of there. It was like a prison. Those that ran away would get abused by the staff. They would be terrified. I heard this happening. You heard it more than you saw it. You could hear them getting slapped and punched. Mr. KDX wouldn't do this. I never saw him angry while I was there, and I'd see him every day.

*Bed Wetting*

29. As I said, I didn't wet the bed, but I can remember a couple of kids that did and they were dragged away. They were so humiliated. They were made to stand and they would get kicked and pushed and prodded by the staff. I can't remember the names of the boys or the staff. But everybody got that at some point. If you stepped out of

line there was a quick-tempered person there to put you right in their own way. Not the right way. This could be any member of staff. They were all the same when I was there.

### *Discipline*

30. The harder boys in there, not me, were often lined up outside the offices next to the dining hall, completely naked with their hands behind their backs. I don't know what that was about. There was a lot of boys getting into trouble at Larchgrove, but I don't know what trouble they had got into to be punished like that. There was a shower unit there and they would all be taken in there and come out with different clothes on.

### *Gilshochill School, Maryhill, Glasgow*

31. After a while at Larchgrove I began going for weekends to Gilshochill school. My brother had re-appeared by then and they would only let one of us go home at the weekend. One of us would stay at Larchgrove and the other would go to Gilshochill, and the one going to 'Gilshy' would go home. I don't know why they wouldn't let us go home together. It was upsetting when I couldn't go home. It was like torture.
32. I later stayed at Gilshochill for a few months. It was a complete waste of time. There was nothing there, it was an old house with big, freezing cold dormitories. It reminded me of living rough in the street. It was a horrible place. There was a lot of trouble in there. Staff would argue, I heard [LI] arguing with one of the staff one time. There was a load of windows that were smashed when I was in there. I think it was one of the lads in the place, but he was asked and blamed it on [LI] and the other member of staff. There was a lot of blaming of other people. The staff would do anything to have kids put back to Larchgrove. It was another old Victorian building and it was all boys again. There wasn't a lot of us. I can remember it always being empty. I would say there were ten of us there. I didn't know who was in charge, and I didn't really have the time there to know any of the staff names.

33. I didn't have a routine at Gilshochill, I never had a job and I didn't have any privileges there. It was just a bleak place. It was like a stopgap for something else. It was like sitting in a bus terminus, waiting on a bus. That's what it reminds me of because it was cold and damp. Nothing happened there. No staff members would speak to you.

**Abuse at Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Springboig & Gilshochill School,  
Maryhill, Glasgow**

34. I was picked on a lot by the other boys, mainly because of my size and the way I looked. I never got my haircut. In 1973 my hair was longer than my sisters. When I was at home, I was the youngest boy, so my sisters pushed me around in a little buggy and made me look like a girl. So when I went into Larchgrove my hair was really long.
35. [REDACTED] wasn't there when I first arrived at Larchgrove. He was tall. A big, bubbly guy, maybe overweight, a fat guy, blonde or ginger hair with big sideburns, like a musician. He gave you that impression. He was always laughing and joking. I think he would be late twenties to early thirties. I'd met him in the place for a few weeks. He wasn't just chatting to me, he was chatting to all the other kids. He came to me maybe a couple of weeks later and asked me if I fancied going out for the day. I said I would, so he told me he would take me out on a little trip but I wasn't to tell anybody.
36. When [REDACTED] first started coming to Larchgrove he would come in and make everybody laugh. He would be like Santa Claus at Christmas. He would speak to everyone, asking what they were up to that day, then whisper to me, "I've got a wee secret for you". I'd ask him what it was and he would tell me we were going here or there. That's how he would get to me. I never saw anyone else going outside Larchgrove with another member of staff, or with anybody. I don't know what [REDACTED] role was there. He didn't have the jangly set of keys on him. He had his own civvy clothes on, very casual. The staff didn't wear a uniform, but some of them would be suited and booted, but he wasn't. He wore jeans and stuff. He was like a social worker. He



might have been one, I'm not too sure. He would say things to me like, "I wish you could have been my son". He would talk a lot like that to me.

37. When I got involved with [REDACTED] my life was really messed up. He was the reason I stayed at Larchgrove at weekends, he was the reason I didn't get to go home. He took me to Glasgow Green. I know it was there because I've been to Glasgow High Court and the Green is right across from it and I remember [REDACTED] and I went past the High Court going to this big park. Inside the park was the botanic gardens. We went there. I remember going to big car parks and other parks with him.
38. The abuse started after the second outing. When he came to pick me up, he had this bag of clothes for me, new jeans, shoes or trainers, a top and a jacket. He gave me all this stuff and a big bag of sweets. I got this every time he came for me. But when I went back to Larchgrove I didn't go back with the clothes, I had to give him them back. So if I went out with [REDACTED] I would be getting dressed up and when I went back, I would be in my old clothes. Right at the very end he gave me all the clothes. So when I went to Balgowan I had ten sets of clothes, all brand new. They'd only been worn once. Ten pairs of shoes, ten of everything. Even all the staff at Balgowan were saying, "Where did you get all the clothes, are you a shoplifter?".
39. So [REDACTED] would buy me all the clothes and during this second outing he asked me to masturbate him in his car, in a car park. I didn't want to do it but he ended up talking me into doing it. I think there was someone else in the car that day. I'm sure there was another guy there. In fact, male or female, I'm not too sure.
40. A couple of weeks later he asked me if I wanted to go to a concert. I said yes, but I was thinking I was going to run away when I got there. So he took me to the concert, Steve Harley and Cockney Rebel, in Glasgow and I didn't run. He took me back to his house, with a female. I took it that it might have been his girlfriend or his wife. The house was in Clydebank. I know it was there because we passed by Yoker, which was where I lived. The lady disappeared when we went in. I was shown a bedroom where I was to sleep that night. I got my head down and in the early hours of the morning he came in with his boxers or underpants on. He got in the bed and

tried to kiss me and tried to have sex with me. He tried to do other things that an abuser would do to a kid I would imagine. He tried to have anal sex with me but it didn't work out for him because he was drunk by this time. He must have been drinking in the house because he wasn't drinking when we were out, I didn't see him drinking. He left the room I was in and I heard him snoring about an hour later. I followed the snores and found him in the living room, unconscious. I jumped out the window and went home to my mums.

41. I told my mum, but I didn't tell her everything. I didn't say he was sexually abusing me, I said he was doing stuff to me and that I didn't want to be there anymore. I asked if she would sort it out for me, but I don't know if I was believed. Before I knew it, I had the police at the door saying I'd escaped from Larchgrove. I told them I hadn't escaped from there, I'd run away from [REDACTED] house because he was abusing me. I didn't get a statement taken from me, but I had a conversation with them in the car on the way back to Larchgrove and told them what had happened. They didn't write anything down.
42. When I got back to Larchgrove I was asked why I had run away by Mr [REDACTED]. He added that I'd never run away before. I told him I didn't run away from here, I ran away from [REDACTED] house. Mr [REDACTED] told me that [REDACTED] had said I had run away from Larchgrove. I told him I had been at a concert with [REDACTED] and what he had done to me, that he had sexually abused me. I never saw [REDACTED] much at all after that. I was also moved from Bute to Arran dormitory. I saw [REDACTED] maybe another twice at Gilshochill. He wasn't the same person towards me again and didn't approach me. I don't think he worked there, he was chatting to the staff, maybe they were friends. I don't really know why he was there.
43. [REDACTED] made me masturbate him in his car a couple of times in car parks and tried to have sex with me in his house. I'd never been to his house before that time, after the concert. It was the first time I hadn't been at Larchgrove during the night. I don't know who the female was or where she went. I can't really remember anything about her. There might have been the odd occasion in Larchgrove where he grabbed a hold of me as there was nobody else there, but nothing really happened apart from



the times we were out. I think he was more worried about being caught in Larchgrove. The abuse continued for most of my time in Larchgrove, apart from the time I was moved to Arran. He tortured me, because I eventually told him that I'd told my brother about him abusing me and he thought [REDACTED] was a psychopath. He became a different guy then, he became more intimidating. I thought he would maybe try to kill me.

44. Mr [REDACTED] didn't speak to me about it again after I told him. He said he would deal with it. The police never came and spoke to me about it, so I gather he didn't report it to them. Looking back now, he gave me the impression that he knew what [REDACTED] was up to. I can see now that I was groomed by [REDACTED] for sure.
45. I didn't have any pals at Larchgrove. I think that was just a personal thing, I couldn't trust anybody. I couldn't turn to anybody. The only person I felt I could turn to was Mr [REDACTED]. He seemed to have a lot of sympathy for younger kids.
46. The only abuse I suffered while I was at Gilshochill was from [REDACTED]. He stopped me from going home, possibly from telling my mum what he was doing to me. Just from him being there and looking at me, giving me a certain look. It was quite intimidating. That reminded me of what he had done before. It was on one of the occasions I bumped into him at 'Gilshi' I told him that I'd told my brother what he had done. He didn't like my brother. He was a lot older than me in a lot of ways, in his brain and he had developed a lot quicker than me. He was a lot taller and bigger. He was fourteen or fifteen. He was very intimidating, although he was soft, he was like a pussycat. I knew this even though he gave off a hard exterior.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Springboig, Glasgow**

47. As I said, when I ran away from [REDACTED] house I went home and I told my mum that he had done things to me, although I didn't tell her everything. When the police came and took me back to Larchgrove I told them, but they didn't take a statement from me. When I returned to Larchgrove I informed Mr [REDACTED] of what had happened and he told me he would sort it out. He moved me to a different dorm and I never saw



LI in Larchgrove again. I don't think Mr KDX told the police though, because I was never spoken to by them.

### **Leaving Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Springboig, Glasgow**

48. I left Larchgrove and Gilshochill after a children's panel at Red House. When I went in there, I could smell alcohol, I could hear men laughing. That was the very last time I saw LI. The last contact I had with him. I stayed there about twenty minutes then ran away. I went to Drumchapel, which was a long way away. I knocked on people's doors and got help from some of the neighbours. Red House was near Edinburgh. I think I got a lift from a concerned lady. I told her where I'd been and she told me lots of bad things about it. She took me to a bus station and I think I got a bus from there to Glasgow then another to Drumchapel.
49. I went to my mums, but I was only there for a day. I was arrested by the police the next day and taken back to Larchgrove. A couple of days after that I was taken to Balgowan. This would have been about 1975 or into 1976. I can't remember how long I was in Larchgrove and 'Gilshi', but it did seem a long time. It seemed I was in there longer than any other care home that I was in.
50. Gilshochill is just a blur to me. Nothing physical happened to me there. The only problem I had was when LI was there now and again. On one occasion I remember being in a bed with another boy, I can't remember his name, and LI was standing at the door. I think it was set up by him. From the way he treated me I learned a lot very quickly.
51. About twenty years ago I decided to write to the Scottish Government and ask them about my time in care. They said they had found some paperwork from Balgowan and they sent it to me. It was a letter and at one part it had in brackets, "Mr LIH *thought himself as a hard man*". I looked at that and thought, from 1974, when I was ten, to the time I got to Balgowan, I wasn't a kid anymore. They had changed me that much. People's accents in Balgowan were different, they weren't Glaswegian. There wasn't anyone from Glasgow when I went in there.

### **Balgowan Approved School, Dundee**

52. Balgowan was a huge Victorian building. It had its own massive grounds with a big football pitch at the front. I lived in an annexe that had been built on to it. Mr and Mrs GMR-SPO ran the annexe. They were my staff, they looked after me. It was a typical boy's school. There was a headmaster and there was discipline. There were a lot of army type military guys there. One of them in particular was Mr JOH he had an imitation hand. He was a war veteran and lost his hand in the war. He used to march everywhere. We would march with these segs in our shoes. None of us liked marching. The art teacher there was a Joe Smernicki. I think he was a Polish guy. I don't remember the headmaster's name.
53. There were over a hundred boys in Balgowan. It was pretty open there. You could just walk out. I think I was in Balgowan from 1975 until maybe 1979. When I left there, I went to school for a little while. I must have only had a couple of months education since I was ten years old.

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

54. I slept in the annexe at Balgowan. We shared small rooms with maybe only two boys in each room. It was a brand new, modern type building. There were dormitories in the main building. I thought I was in the annexe because I was behaving. It seemed to be that type of a place. GMR-SPO lived in , but it wasn't a non-access type of place. I could walk into their house twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We were going up there regularly to watch Top of the Pops. This was when Jimmy Saville was presenting it.
55. It was quite fun there, because by the time I got to Balgowan my accent had got louder. People knew I was from Glasgow and I was the intimidating one. Even the staff told me to keep my voice down. I told them I couldn't. I had so much to say, I was a lively kid. GMR-SPO were really nice. Their daughter lived there too. She was maybe sixteen or seventeen. They were lovely people. It felt like home there.

56. I can't remember if I was on my own in the room. There were two beds in it with brand new cupboards and new beds. We had all mod cons. I had all the clothes that [LI] had bought me, so my cupboards were full. In Balgowan it was so easy to do anything. There were two guys from Falkirk there, two brothers called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were really nice lads. They told me they were burglars and asked me what I was after. I told them I wanted a pair of Dr Marten's boots. They came back one night after a burglary and they had all these Dr Marten's boots. Everybody in Balgowan had them on. What I didn't realise was, when I eventually got to the bag of stuff that [LI] had got me, I had two pairs of the boots in the bag. I don't know how I ended up with all the clothes [LI] got me. When I left Larchgrove they were in my property.

57. There was bullying in Balgowan by the older guys on the younger kids. I was bullied by one of the older boys for cracking a Polo mint when they were watching TV and because of it he punched me. I wasn't shy by then and told him I was going to get him back and we organised a fight for the next day. I battered him and it was resolved. I wouldn't have done that before, I'd have been terrified. I can't remember the boy's name.

*First day*

58. I went to Balgowan straight from Larchgrove. It was social workers that took me. I don't know their names. I started getting embarrassed around that time, for stupid things. Maybe I was getting a bit older. It got me in a lot of trouble, because if someone looked at me the wrong way my face would go red. I used to wonder why I did this. The same thing happened to my brother, but he would just explode with violence. I was the opposite of him. I kept everything in.

59. Initially I was kept in the main building for a couple of days, in the dormitories. This was maybe just an assessment period. I think I was moved to the annexe because I was so loud. I got a couple of beltings from the headmaster just for being loud, and I was cheeky. These happened in his office and he belted me across my hands,



backside and my back. Out of all the ex-military guys at Balgowan, he was the main man. He was a big six foot bald headed guy. He would punish everybody in there.

60. I got moved to the annexe after a couple of days and there were a lot of youngsters in there. I think GMR-SPO were there to look after the younger kids. They were in their sixties. There were a couple of kids younger than me and the ages went from that up to about fifteen. There were about twenty boys in the annexe.

#### *Mornings & bedtime*

61. I'm sure we were woken up with an alarm in the annexe. It might have been a bleeper. It wasn't a military style get up, it was a relaxed way to get yourself up and come down for breakfast. You could go down with your slippers and pyjamas on. We ate in the annexe, everything was in there.
62. After breakfast you would get washed, dressed and ready for school. It was like you were going to church, getting dressed up. We had school clothes, which was a dark blue blazer, trousers, a shirt and tie, and a suit for a Sunday for church. I was always in the choir as well. I got myself involved in lots of stuff to get rid of this hard man image, because I used to get called a hard man in there. I would say, "I'm not a hard man". I felt if they kept building it up I would become that person.

#### *Schooling*

63. The school was in Balgowan. There were portacabins all the way round the back of the main building. I didn't get any education. In one of the classes I went to the guy would record you. He would ask me questions and record it like an interview. He was the only one that was a bit abusive, because he had a list of all of us and he would say things like, "ILH, your dad is dead, don't worry about it". He would do this to everybody in the class, all the time. If one of your relatives were dead, he had a list of them all and would continue to say things like that. I can't remember his name. He was a tiny man, about five foot tall, with a massive moustache. I don't know what subject he taught, all he done was record us. It was all about us talking



about our lives before getting there. I had enough and walked out of his class a few times, but he would just say, "Oh, there's wee [ILH] walking away again in a big, bad mood". There was no sitting down doing maths or English. He just done this thing with his little recorder and microphone. I don't know what it was for. I did get art with Joe Smernicki.

64. We were in school all day. We would go back to the annexe for lunch, then back to school. After school we had recreation, which was chilling out with your friends, if you had any in the annexe. We couldn't play on the football pitch because they had big games on it, so they wouldn't let us kick about on it, but we had everything we needed in the annexe. In the evening if there was something we wanted to watch on TV we would knock on Mrs [REDACTED]'s door. I'd sit on the couch with her and her daughter watching TV and Mr [GMR] would smoke one cigarette after another. He was a chain smoker. I didn't drink or smoke at all then.

#### *Mealtimes*

65. The food was better there. I can't remember if [GMR-SPO] were cooking the food, but it seemed like that, because everything seemed to be getting done there. But the food was better there, everything was better there. It was like a special unit.

#### *Chores*

66. There were no chores to do in Balgowan, but I always had things to do. I was always cleaning and helping Mrs [REDACTED] to clean. As I was in the cleaning zone already, from Larchgrove, I just carried on. If I saw something that needed to be cleaned, I cleaned it. She loved me helping. I'd get little rewards. I had the best seat on the couch for Top of the Pops and stuff like that.
67. We got pocket money in Balgowan but I can't remember ever spending it in there. We had our own personal possessions in the annexe. I don't know about the main building. I had a radio that my mum had got me

### *Trips/Holidays*

68. We used to go on holiday to places like Islay, Arran, Glen Head and Glen Markie. They were beautiful places and you could smell pine everywhere. I absolutely loved it. We stayed in haunted houses. Joe Smernicki was with us. He was a very well-known artist. I'd never heard of him, but I Googled him recently. He was alright, he was a rocker too. He was in a band called Skeets Boliver, who were a big band in Dundee in the seventies apparently. He would tell us we were going to stay in haunted houses, adding we were all going to shit ourselves that night. We were terrified. He would do it in pictures because he was an artist. He wouldn't have to say anything, just draw the pictures.
69. We went on lots of walks in the highlands. I absolutely loved it. GMR-SPO didn't go. They were in their sixties. Everybody called them granny and grandad. They were just really nice old people.
70. We used to go to all the care homes and sing to the grannies. I was in the choir and I would sing, 'I've got a house in glory land'. It was like church type songs. We also sang, 'Tootsie Tootsie goodbye'. It was all old songs. We had loads of fun. I really loved doing that. I can't remember who took us to these places. It would have been the music person from Balgowan, but I can't remember who that was. It was always an occasion. Everybody in the place was waiting on us arriving.

### *Religious instruction*

71. We would go to church every Sunday. I loved going. It was just all about singing, expressing yourself and because of my big, loud Glasgow voice, everybody could hear me. We left the main building and walked out of the Balgowan area to the nearest church. It was Church of Scotland. We had our Sunday best clothes on. We had them on when we went to the care homes too.

### *Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

72. I had no visitors while I was Balgowan. I don't remember any inspections of the place during my time there. I think I used to go home for visits, but I can't remember. I remember going back to Balgowan with my brother on the train, but I'm not too sure if I'd run away.

### *Running away*

73. I ran away from Balgowan once. There was a mass run out this day. I hadn't planned to go, I just went with the flow. Twenty guys all ran and a couple of members of staff tried to stop them. I just got pulled in by the rush of the guys. I had no intention of running away and being a fugitive. My brother took me back on the train and dropped me off at Dundee train station. There was no punishment, they just joked with me. By this time [REDACTED] was in another place called Rossie Farm. He had a lot of problems, a lot more than me. He was a drinker and he ran about with criminals. After all that my mum got him in a grammar school in Dunoon. A lot of strange things happened in my family.

### *Bedwetting*

74. There were a lot of bedwetters in Balgowan. I can't remember how it was dealt with, but if there had been a punishment for it, I'm sure I would know. I'm sure they had their own laundry in the main building too. It was such a big building.

### *Discipline*

75. Discipline at Balgowan consisted of getting beltings from the headmaster. There didn't seem to be anything at the annexe. It appeared the naughty boys were in the main building and the good boys in the annexe. [REDACTED] GMR-SPO [REDACTED] were so laid back. There was no other staff member in the place, just them. So we didn't have the headmaster there every five minutes.



## Leaving Balgowan Approved School, Dundee

76. Before I left Balgowan [GMR-SPO] helped me get into Dundee College of Further Education doing painting and decorating just so that I would have something. I was fourteen or fifteen, just coming up to school leaving age. I went for the whole course, which I think was about a year. I don't know if I enjoyed the course, but I learned from it. I got a City & Guilds qualification.
77. After the course I think it was time for me to leave. I went home to my mum's in Drumchapel. I can't remember leaving Balgowan, but I remember going to school. I went to Kingsridge Secondary School. I didn't get on well there. I couldn't get on with anybody, including the staff. When I came out of Balgowan I became good friends with a boy called [REDACTED], who just moved to Drumchapel. His mum knew my mum, so he was expecting me to come out and hang around with him. I walked over to see him and we became really close. He was my best friend ever. We went to school together and he would stop people from bullying me. He was a boxer and his dad had been a boxer. He was from a big, hard family. We never done anything at school. I was there, then I wasn't. I never stayed long enough to learn anything.
78. When I left school, it was almost 1980. I stayed at my mums and tried to figure out what I was going to do with my life. It was always my intention to be like my sister [REDACTED] and join the military. My mum used to take me to lots of military tattoo's when I was younger, so it was drummed into my head and I had the discipline from being at these care homes, but I didn't want to do anything like that by the time I left Balgowan. I just wanted to be free, relaxed and be a kid. That's what I done. I started drinking a little bit when I was sixteen and trouble quickly followed.
79. Me and my friend [REDACTED] were drinking one summer day and we both got arrested in Drumchapel for being drunk. We were charged with a breach of the peace and went to Glasgow Sheriff Court. It was my first criminal offence and I was remanded in custody. I was sent to Longriggend for three weeks. After the three weeks I went back to court and was sentenced to Glenochil Detention Centre training. There's the

young offender's part and the detention centre, I went to the detention centre for a short, sharp shock. I was there for eight weeks and five days.

80. I left Glenochil and I was free and fit as a fiddle. I had a good build on me, I had been pumping weights in there and I was really healthy. I never smoked, didn't drink that much and I felt super when I got out of there.
81. I got myself into more trouble in 1980 and was sent to Polmont Borstal. I went to Glenochil for a second time after Polmont, but that time I went to the young offender's part of it.

### **Longriggend YOI, North Lanarkshire**

#### *First day*

82. My first day at Longriggend was terrifying. That was my first time in handcuffs and chains. My first time in the prison system. I'd heard about Longriggend. It was notorious, I was told about deaths and slashings and scars on people's faces. I was in there for ten minutes and saw these guys with broken noses. I was petrified. Fortunately for me I was remanded with [REDACTED] and he was a psychotic boxer. Anytime someone looked at me the wrong way, he would get them to stop, in his Drumchapel way, but he was nicked in the prison and got carted away. I never saw him again during the three-week remand. So I was on my own again.
83. It was prison staff that took me from the court in a minibus. I was handcuffed together with other guys who had been remanded. I was taken into the reception area and strip searched in front of everybody. They put a light down below to make sure you don't have crabs, you had to bend over to make sure you had no contraband on you. You didn't leave the reception with anything apart from what they gave you. If you had tobacco with you and you put it down it would be gone. There were other guys working at the reception who were lifers and spent all their jail time in there. It wasn't the screws that ran the reception it was these guys.

84. There were dog boxes, tiny little cells, and about ten people were crammed in to one. It was a nightmare, you couldn't breathe in there. You were issued with jaggy clothes and jaggy blankets, a cup, a toothbrush and a shaver, a sheet and a pillow. You were given a white vest and white pants with a number on them. Everything had your number on, even your blue shirt. I can't remember my number.
85. You had to slop out your cell every morning, so you were given a slop out bucket. After being put into the dog box for a while you are taken to your cell. I'd never been in this situation before and I'm looking around me at people I'd never seen before. I started smoking then and I found it hard to communicate to get a light for my roll up. I was petrified and would make gestures like pointing at the lights to one of the guys. He asked what I was talking about, and I said I needed a light, he said, "You need a light for your fag? Just come down and ask for one". So he said to the other guys, "Look, the poor kid is terrified to ask for a light". So they were alright with me. I made some good friends in there.

#### **Routine at Longriggend YOI, North Lanarkshire\***

86. I was locked in my cell all the time at Longriggend. There wasn't any recreation there. Your meals are brought to your cell. You would get a knock at your door and it was handed in to you. I was locked in twenty-four hours a day. Sometimes you would maybe get a decent screw who would open the doors and let you sit on the landing, that was just to get out and stretch your legs because there wasn't any exercise there, but you couldn't go away from your door.

#### *Mornings & bedtime*

87. The slopping out was basically getting up in the morning and slopping out your shit. If someone had a shit, that would be thrown out the window and they would have guys, called the bomb squad, coming round and picking up all the shit and disgusting crap that was thrown out the windows. I done it a couple of times. It felt really good just to get out for a little while. There was a massive, old fashioned square thing, almost like a huge kitchen sink. The tap would be on and you'd basically throw your



shit down and wash out your bucket. You would then have a wash then go back to your cell. Everybody slopped out at the same time, it wasn't done individually.

88. After slopping out and getting a wash, you would go back to your cell, get ready and go for breakfast, which I think was at the bottom of the landing. You just picked it up and took it upstairs to your cell.

#### *Mealtimes*

89. The food was really disgusting. Mince and potatoes all the time, stuff like that. I ate it because I was hungry.

#### *Culture of violence*

90. I met a few guys in Longriggend that I bumped into in the prison system as I got older. They were established guys. There was a couple who became notorious criminals in Glasgow. They sort of looked after me while I was there. Because of this protection I didn't get attacked in there, but I did see a lot of guys getting cut to bits. Some of the prison staff got slashed too. There was a lot of anger in there, particularly in summertime because of the heat and lack of exercise. Everybody was so frustrated. There was a lot of trouble there. There were fights and screaming every day.
91. I was terrified until I got that reassurance from those guys that I would be alright. After that I just got on with the routine of the place and kept my head down until I went back to court.
92. I can't remember any of the staff at Longriggend. I think that comes from the fact that I didn't get into any trouble while I was there. I made that decision, once my mate was taken away from me in there I was on my own. I had to make quick choices and I didn't want to have to carry a knife around with me and stuff like that, so I didn't get into any bother with the staff.

93. There's nothing much more to say about Longriggend. It was just a horrible, miserable, violent place from day one. Looking back on it now, it wasn't a system that worked. You had all that animosity and anger in the place, it was like a powder keg waiting to go off. Many guys went to hospital with open wounds when I was there. I got used to seeing that.

*Leaving Longriggend YOI*

94. After the three-week remand I returned to Glasgow Sheriff Court and was sentenced to eight weeks detention centre training at Glenochil. That was Margaret Thatcher's idea and a terrible experience.

**HMP Glenochil, Alloa**

95. From the court I initially went to Barlinnie prison either for the night or at least a couple of hours, I can't remember. I was strip searched again and put in a dog box. ██████ got the same sentence at court but because he had got into trouble at Longriggend he was segregated at Barlinnie, so I didn't see him until we were taken to Glenochil. The prison staff were telling us that we were not going to like Glenochil and that we should all be terrified. The experienced Glasgow criminals were telling me that if I allowed it, I would get intimidated there. They weren't wrong.

*First day*

96. On leaving Barlinnie the next day we were made aware we were going to Glenochil for shock, sharp treatment. We were told we wouldn't sleep for the eight weeks, we were going to be terrified and abused. We were put on the bus and I met ██████ again. We were game when we were going there. We thought we were hardened criminals from Drumchapel. As soon as the gates closed behind you at Glenochil it was like you were in a military camp. ██████ said, "Nobody is taking the piss out of me here", but as soon as we got out the bus this massive prison officer, who looked like a Sergeant Major, was marching towards us screaming and shouting, "By the front". I was laughing, saying, "What does that mean?" and he smacked me across

the back of the head. ██████ said, "What the fuck are you doing?", and he was dragged away and I never saw him for three weeks.

97. On entering the reception the prison staff just screamed at me, "Get your fucking gear". You had to run for everything. You got a bag with all your gear in it and your bedding and you were running. The prison officer who had hit me was running behind, you could hear his boots and hear him kicking people as he ran behind. His name was Mr ██████. He was a well known abuser in there. He attacked all the vulnerable kids.
98. We were stripped searched again at the reception in front of everybody else. They humiliated you. I don't think there was a dog box there. There was a big office in the middle of the hall and a lot of wings round it. I think it was like the shape of a fifty pence piece.

#### *Mornings & bedtime*

99. The prison officers would come round at 6:00 am, keys jangling, singing and dancing, all happy because they were coming to work to terrify everybody. They would unlock the doors, stand at the end of the hall and shout, "I'll count to five". By the time they had counted out you had to be standing outside your cell with your slippers and shorts on, towel over your arm, cup in your hand with your razor in it. I had never shaved in my life. I told them I didn't need a razor and I got slapped all over for saying this. I was locked up and I missed my breakfast and my dinner that day. They kept me locked up all day because I didn't want to shave. It was a horrible place, but that's what it was meant to be.
100. It was single cells in Glenochil and there was slopping out there too. As I said, we would get up at 6:00 am and on a Monday we had to run a mile. It was all about physical stuff, going to fitness classes and going to the gymnasium there. All tough army type training. You marched everywhere you went, you couldn't walk. If you were caught walking you would be locked up and beat up. It was an army regime.



101. I didn't get any education that I can remember while I was there. I certainly didn't go to school. There were work parties. I was in the gardens. They grew their own vegetables to cook in the kitchen. They had a few greenhouses. I would do stuff like that. I got to choose that. I was quite well behaved in there. Obviously, everybody makes mistakes at the beginning until they terrify you into being that person that complies. So I thought that it was better to do stuff and keep myself occupied rather than sitting in my cell all day and thinking about killing myself.
102. I was also in the laundry at the detention centre. That was a good thing for me because it was attached to the young offender's institution. They had a football team that played all the time, so they would send their football kits over. I would get them and use the press. I'd find things in the socks, like packets of tobacco. I hadn't had a cigarette for a while, so I would sell two roll ups for ten Mars bars. I was getting all the stuff that the young offenders were sending over for us because we couldn't get anything like cigarettes in the detention centre. Just before I left there, I had the reputation of being a dodgy dealer.
103. I wasn't wanting to stay in trouble, I was looking forward. I was keeping my head down, doing extra gym stuff. There were these fitness teachers there, if you liked the gym, they liked you. If you wanted to be fit, they loved you. If you could march like a soldier, they thought you were great. I quickly learned to do all that. I had a start with my sister. She was in the military and I had marched with her before.
104. There was a bathroom at the end of the hall where we all slept. It had about fifty sinks all together and about five showers at the back. Everybody had to shave. If you didn't touch your razor you were put on report. I didn't get the point of that. I ended up getting lots of cuts all over my face. I didn't even know how to shave.
105. After this you would go for your mile run, then breakfast. When you did the run, you had to beat your time from the week before or you went on report. You were put on report for everything, so you had to avoid that by doing everything right.

106. The food was absolutely terrible. The most stupid thing about it was when you went to the dining hall, your dinner would be on a tray and you would pick it up and have to shout, "Yes, thank you sir". There wasn't anyone in the kitchen, but you had the screw standing behind you and if you didn't say it you were put on report and you didn't get your dinner. If you didn't want your dinner you had to say, "No thank you sir". You sat in the dinner hall to eat. You had to lift your chair up then put it down, then sit, everybody at the same time. Everything was in line with the military.
107. There was recreation there, but I can't remember what there was. Maybe that's when I went for extra gym, I don't know.
108. We had two uniforms. One was like a suit, it was like old hessian bags, with epaulettes on the jacket. The other was like a military one, you would wear during the day. You'd have your boots, your gators, your pants and your little type of army jacket on, and it would have to be immaculate. I learned to be really good at bulling my boots up.
109. There were no trips there, they just wanted to shock the hell out of you. That's exactly what they did.

#### *Healthcare*

110. There may have been a hospital wing in the young offenders, but there wasn't one in the detention centre. I didn't get a health check while I was there and I can't remember seeing any nurses or anything like that.

#### *Religious instruction*

111. You could go to church there on a Sunday. There was bible classes and we would go there, but it was just to get out of our cells. They were always full, you had to be quick to get in. There were always outsiders that would attend and you could maybe get a couple of cigarettes from them. It was just held in a room, but it might have

been a little church in the detention centre. I volunteered for everything to get out of my cell.

*Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

112. You could get visitors while you were there but I didn't get any. I remember some of the lads having visits from girlfriends and things like that. I can't remember there being any outside inspections of the place. The only thing I can say about Glenochil detention centre is that it was the cleanest place I have ever been in.

**Abuse at HMP Glenochil, Alloa**

113. The floors had to be buffed in Glenochil, you had to see your face in them. You had to buff your boots, your gators, all the army stuff. If you didn't that was it, you were really badly beaten. Mr [ILJ] wore steel toe capped boots and made a point of kicking people straight in the chest. We didn't see this coming because we were too busy scrubbing the floors in this vulnerable position when he was checking the floors.
114. Mr [ILJ] was a horrible guy. He said to me, "A family full of wankers". I was wondering what he meant, then about two weeks later I saw my brother in Glenochil. He had been in two weeks and looked terrified. He had big black eyes. He told me it was [ILJ] that done it to him. I was about leaving when I saw him and I gave him all my letters that my mum had sent me, just to give him something to read, and all my sweets that I'd saved up. [ILJ] ripped all the letters up and threw all the sweets out. He was a horrible, evil man.
115. If you stayed in your cell, you were always worried that a screw would come in, because they always done checks on you. I was sitting drawing on my hand, I was bored, I'd done all my work. Mr [ILJ] spotted me through the spyhole, came in, dragged me out and beat me up. He dragged me to the office and said I'd tried to kill myself, so they put me down as a suicide risk, even though I still had the pen in my hand and the drawings on the back of my other hand. They took five days from me



for that. That's why I was there for eight weeks and five days. I liked to draw but they didn't give you any paper to draw on or any books, your cell had to be immaculate. There was a cell check every day at some point.

116. If you were put on report, it meant you were locked up and couldn't get out your cell, you wouldn't see anybody. This was for as long as they wanted. This only happened to me once. I wasn't a troublemaker. I was a good guy in there.
117. I saw a lot of guys in there just breaking down and crying. It wasn't the physical stuff, it was the humiliation. Older guys than me, they were brought down so much. So, rather than attacking the screws these guys just broke down.
118. The discipline was in the regime they had. There must have been a million people in there before me, all doing the same thing. They had their plan of doing things for years. You either complied, or you didn't. If you didn't, you took the consequences.
119. The system didn't work for me. It worked for terrifying people, for making people harder for sure, and giving people anger and seeking vengeance. It didn't show people how they should live their lives. It was the complete opposite of that. It turned you into a lunatic or a psychopath. Glenochil detention centre was all about abuse, from the minute you went in until the minute you got out. There wasn't anyone putting an arm round you and asking if you are alright.

#### **Leaving HMP Glenochil, Alloa**

120. You had a card on your door and it had your liberation date on it. It was confusing when I was going because my brother had just come in when I was about to leave and you have to sign your papers to get out. I went to sign mine and my brother was in signing them. They had the wrong [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] wasn't used to the system and thought he was getting out. I felt so sorry for him.

121. When I left I felt brilliant, so healthy and fit. I felt like a million dollars. I went back to Drumchapel and stayed with my mum. I was really close to her. It was around the [REDACTED] 1980. [REDACTED]
122. The first person I saw when I came out of detention was my friend [REDACTED]. We done everything together. Both of us started drinking, and I hadn't drunk much before that and we were smoking a bit dope as well. It was my first time trying something like that. It didn't agree with me and I stopped that quite quickly, but the drink led me into more trouble. I can't remember why I went to Polmont, but it would have been petty crime. It certainly wouldn't have been for violence. I think I went into Polmont around [REDACTED] of 1980. I'm sure I was in there at [REDACTED] of that year. I would have gone to Glasgow Sheriff Court again. I can't remember if I was remanded this time because I can't remember being in Longriggend again. I do remember spending a bit of time in Barlinnie, so I may have been remanded in there. I was sentenced to borstal training at Polmont. I wasn't given a length of sentence.

#### **HMP and YOI Polmont, Brightons**

123. I arrived at Polmont and it was the same routine. I was strip searched, given all my gear and away I went. It was quite quick and nothing like the military type of detention centre. That was a big difference. There was a lot of inmates in the reception area, 'C' Grades, they wore different coloured shirts from everyone else. They wore red shirts, everyone else wore blue shirts. They were given good jobs. They might have been lifers that had come from prison to work in there before release, I don't know.
124. I had never heard of borstal training before I went to Polmont. I was a bit scared because on the way others were describing it to me as similar to the detention centre, so I was expecting it to be stricter and more of a military style again. It turned out not to be like that. I got on with the staff there. I didn't associate with many inmates. I had an outstanding offence to go up for while I was there and it sort of overshadowed my time at Polmont because they put me on high security. This meant I had my cell light on all the time and I wasn't allowed to do a lot of the stuff

the other guys were allowed to do. Sometimes decent staff were on and they knew I wasn't a threat to anyone and I wasn't an escapee. It's just because I had an indictment hanging over me. I had to wear different clothes that had bright stuff on them. I can't remember what it was, but it was like a uniform. It had escapee written on it. It had that on my cell door as well. I was in a single cell again and also had to slop out again.

### **Routine at HMP and YOI Polmont, Brightons**

#### *Mornings & bedtime*

125. I always woke up at the crack of dawn as I was on high security. I wasn't the only one on it. There were other guys in the same predicament as me. So I'd be up about 6:00 am. A prison officer would bang the cell door to make sure you were awake. It was a more relaxed approach than Glenochil. I'd get slopped out and do everything that everyone else was doing in the morning. Once I'd washed, I'd go down for breakfast into a dining hall. You would see everybody you knew and have a chat. I didn't know very many people. I don't think there was anybody there from Drumchapel. I spoke with a couple of guys on the tighter security, like myself. I'm sure we would exercise together in an inner yard. The food was just the same as the other places I'd been in, steamed.

#### *Leisure time/Personal possessions*

126. In Polmont the staff were a lot more relaxed. They were more friendly and you could chat to them. During my time there I done a lot of art and focused on different things because they were always encouraging you to do it there. I sort of enjoyed it there. There were plenty of choices. I always liked art, the teacher from Balgowan taught me a little bit as well. I drew a lot and I could do all the old English writing with the ink and fountain pen, those with the big feathers. I done that most days. As I said, I was restricted. They wouldn't let me go outside, even when I was allowed, I would be handcuffed because I was marked as an escapee, because some of the officers in there didn't know me, so didn't want to take the chance with me. There were some

that were more relaxed, as they knew I wasn't an escapee. They just let me get on with it. But my cell light stayed on all the time.

127. There was a ball to kick about in the yard when you got out, sometimes there was weights and gym stuff. I used to go the gym as well, just to maintain the way I looked. There was a library where you could pick books up, but I liked my art, so I just concentrated on drawing. I spent a lot of time in my cell, but I think that was more my choice than anything else. I sort of went into myself. I don't know why I was like that, I was hard to approach.
128. You could have your own personal stuff like a radio. I had a good top of the range radio. My mum had it in her house and she gave me it.

#### *Work*

129. There was a textile factory there, so if I wasn't doing art I worked there. The reason I remember that was that I made some black out glasses out of the jeans, so that I could get to sleep at night. One night they came into my cell at three in the morning and took them from me. I was a sewing machinist. I loved that too. We used to stitch the insides of the jackets. I think the clothes were being made for the railway because they were bright orange. We were just making the orange jackets and they were going somewhere else to get the luminous strip on. They were not police jackets because they weren't good enough. I can't remember being educated there at all.

#### *Healthcare*

130. There was a hospital wing, or medical centre type place in Polmont, but I was always quite healthy in there.



*Religious instruction*

131. There was a church and bible study classes if you wanted to go. It was similar to Glenochil in that people from the outside would come in again. You would deliberately go to those classes because that person might have cigarettes.

*Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

132. I got some visits from my mum in Polmont. I think the visits were once a month. I remember seeing her a couple of times. I think one of my sisters came once. Prison staff supervised visits. I made her a cup of tea, I think we were allowed to do that. I can remember how it felt when I didn't get a visit, when I was expecting a visit. I was devastated. It happened a few times because by the time I went to Polmont my brother [REDACTED] was out and he was going down the right path. He was working, but still drinking and he said he'd come up and visit a few times, but never did. The state of him, because of the drink, stopped him from coming to see me. I can't remember seeing any inspections while I was there.

*Staff*

133. Some of the staff in Polmont were all right. There was one we called 'Geordie Bed Block', who was a big ex-military guy, he was ok. Although that was his name you did not need to do a bed block. As long as your bed was reasonably tidy, that was fine. They were quite lenient in there. There wasn't any screams or shouting or punching by staff there. Not for me anyway. The staff were relaxed. Some of them wore civilian clothes, sitting in their jeans and trainers. They welcomed you rather than intimidated you. It was a completely different scenario from Glenochil. It was hard to adjust to because I didn't believe it at first. I don't think there was such a thing as a routine there, it was just chilled out, relaxed. I wasn't abused there and didn't witness any abuse either.

### **Leaving HMP and YOI Polmont, Brightons**

134. I went to Glasgow High Court about [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] 1981 on my indictment, while I was still in custody in the borstal. I was found guilty of the crime and there were two sheriff officers there to take me into custody. However, because I was still doing my borstal training there was an argument between the borstal staff and the sheriff, so I had to wait in the court the entire day. It got resolved with me going back to borstal for three weeks while they got reports at court before sentencing me. I received good reports from the borstal, they said I was a model prisoner and they must have spoken to my mum, social work and done other background checks. I then went back up to the High Court for sentencing on the indictment and got four years imprisonment.
135. On being sentenced I initially went to Glenochil because I was only eighteen, then I was transferred to Dumfries jail. I was released when I was twenty, in [REDACTED] 1984. I did two years and four months of the four-year sentence. I went to Glenochil Young Offenders Institution to start the sentence.

### **HMP Glenochil, Alloa**

136. I wasn't in Glenochil long, maybe a couple of months, no more than six. I was in it long enough to know what the place was all about. I was in Dumfries by [REDACTED] 1981. There was quite a lot of chaos while I was in Glenochil. There was a lot of murders and gang murders in Glasgow around that time. I bumped into a lot of the guys responsible while I was in there. Looking back now, it was like a powder keg. There was fighting in the dining halls, things like that.
137. Glenochil had electric doors. You would buzz the screw at night time and he would let you out, which meant you would have access to all the other cells. I remember some guys setting fires under doors. There was just a mish mash of serious offenders all in the same place. I think for some reason they kept me as the same category as when I was still to go up for the indictment, so I was still segregated a bit. I saw guys being slashed and cut to bits. The staff knew. They were all big,

sleeves up, muscle men. They smashed people to pieces. Kicked them all over, dragged them away. It was just a routine of everybody screaming. There wasn't anything else in Glenochil. It was a horrible place.

138. I saw Mr [LJ] in there now and again. He didn't know me, or he didn't recognise me from detention. I think he was a senior officer, or something like that. I didn't see him kicking anyone with his steel toe-capped boots as it was a different kind of prison in the young offenders than it was in the detention centre. There wasn't many weak little guys in there, particularly at that time. He was being abused by the prisoners that were in there because they knew what he was like, that he was beating up all the kids. He got lots of offers to fight, but he would just stand there with a smug look on his face.

*First day*

139. The procedure was quite strict. They tried to scare you and intimidate you. It was mostly prison officers at the reception, maybe a couple of red shirted prisoners. There was always a couple hanging about to give you your bedding and all your bits and tell you what to do and steal all your stuff from you. As soon as you put your stuff down, they would steal it. That was their wage.

*Routine*

140. I was in a single cell with an automatic electric door. There was slopping out there too. You would get up and there was just a lot of screaming. It was a very violent place. There isn't any other way of describing it.
141. I just carried on with my art in there. I met a friend called [REDACTED]. He liked his art, he was a tattooist. He showed me how to make matchstick tobacco tins. We ended up doing that together. He was a really good drawer, so he would draw a picture inside the paper part of the tobacco tin and he would hammer it all out, so it might have been a picture of your dog, things like that. He was a really talented guy, but he was a violent psychopath. He was a double murderer but he actually got out while I was

there. I think he done about ten years. Maybe he got out on appeal, I don't know. There was a lot of guys like that in there.

### *Work*

142. I worked in the textiles again, although I didn't stick to that, I worked in the laundrette as well. I always liked working in a team. I done a bit of gardening there too. They grew their own stuff as well. I remember going out in the freezing cold and picking Brussel sprouts. It got you out of your cell though. It's good to get fresh air. When you are locked up it's just a good feeling to get out.
143. I filled my day on work parties. I done a little bit of textiles there, not for a long time. It wasn't long before I was told I was moving. I can't remember how long I was in Glenochil before I was told I was being transferred.

### *Recreation time*

144. I tended not to sit with certain people. You knew when it was going to kick off, even while watching TV. We were all watching Top of the Pops one night and a screw walked up and turned the TV to another channel to watch cricket and there was a guy called [REDACTED], he was from Drumchapel and he was a psycho, I knew it just by looking at him. He was a really intimidating, big six-foot guy and he said to the screw, "Put Top of the Pops back on or I'm going to batter you in front of every single person here". They ended up having a 'square go' and [REDACTED] beat the hell out of him. He never got nicked for it and the screw got up, shook his hand and turned the TV back over. That's the kind of place it was. I made sure I stood behind those guys. I was surrounded by them.
145. I was always terrified because the levels of violence you were witnessing right in front of your eyes was frightening. Even the way people used to talk to each other with the passion and anger was intimidating. There was a lot of people coming in, gang affiliated guys. The screw that ran the gym, I don't know his name, used to line up twenty guys on each side of the hall and shout out numbers, like seven from one



side and ten from the other and they were to come into the middle and fight. Other screws would come into the gym and applaud the fighting. That's just some of the things that happened.

146. There were slashings every day and we would be locked down. Everybody would be locked in their cells. Because we had electric cells the screws could speak to us over the Tannoy from their office.

#### *Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

147. My mum came to visit me in Glenochil, but I think around that time my family had decided to move to Newcastle. They were on the verge of moving when I was still there. I felt a bit lonelier then. I thought I was being abandoned. I had to process that for a while and I just became more of a loner after hearing that.

148. There were a lot of visitors to Glenochil. Outsiders who were shown round while we were having dinner or in the recreation area. It was a really busy place. They didn't speak to me personally but you could see them chatting to people and taking notes. It was a hive of activity, it was never quiet.

#### *Discipline*

149. There were those that were put on report for things in Glenochil, but I never was. I was in the zone, keeping my head down. I had a four year sentence and I had to get it done.
150. The system didn't work because you had all these violent guys enclosed in the one place and you could cut the tension with a knife. There was always a harder guy than the hardest guy in the prison. It just made people more violent and more aggressive.

### **Leaving HMP Glenochil, Alloa**

151. I was pulled into the office one day and told I was being transferred to Dumfries Young Offenders Institution, as it was then. It must have been because I was under twenty-one. I didn't want to go, I didn't realise my mum had moved to Newcastle. I wasn't thinking about that at the time. Dumfries is actually closer to Newcastle than I thought it was. So I was more thinking about my visiting rights and things like that. But it was out of my hands and I was told I was going the next day. I left with two other guys.

### **HMP Dumfries, Terregles Street, Dumfries**

152. Dumfries prison was known as Jessiefield. Every time I've seen it written down it has Jessiefield in brackets. This is because the prison had the reputation of being filled with 'Jessies'. So this has obviously carried on from way, way back when it was first built. It was reputed to be a soft prison, with no hard staff there.

#### *First day*

153. I was a bit wary of going but after half an hour of being there my feet were planted and I knew exactly where I was. It was the same routine on arriving, I was strip searched and there were a couple of the 'C' Grade prisoners there, the guys with the red shirts. When you first go in you get a blue shirt. The guys there made me a cup of tea when I was in reception and I thought, "What's going on here?". I was even given a couple of biscuits with my tea. That made me feel comfortable. I was still handcuffed and naked, but it felt more relaxed.
154. You get a full health check when you first go down and asked if there are any issues or problems. There was a doctor in the prison. I was put in a single cell initially. They had an old hall like the one in Barlinnie. It was called 'A' Hall. That's where everybody went when they first go to Dumfries. They would assess you there to see what you were going to be like over the course of your sentence and what work they might give you to do.

*Routine*

155. I was in 'A' Hall for about six months then went over to 'D' Hall, which was single cells and dormitories. I went into a dormitory, I liked the chat in there with all the Glasgow boys. They were all lifers in the dormitory. I didn't know that until I went in. There was always a lot of tension in 'A' Hall because it was in the old building, which had the slopping out routine. The screws were always on alert there. In the dormitory we had our own toilet, and even the screws were more relaxed in 'D' Hall.
156. There was always violence simmering in the place, like the others I was in, particularly between certain guys. We did get locked down a few times, with alarms going off. A few guys did get slashed in there. I knew the victims and the guys who carried them out. They were nicked by the police there, so it was a different scenario from Glenochil. There the screws would just punch their lights out and nothing else would happen, whereas you would always see the police in Dumfries. The CID would get involved and there would be an investigation. That's when we would all be locked down.
157. Most of the guys from Glenochil that were gangsters and psychos moved to Dumfries. They were all from Glasgow. They were all in gangs. The Govan team were in there. I was still a bit on edge because of this gang culture.
158. You couldn't work while you were in 'A' Hall as you were being assessed. All you did was sit in your cell and get your recreation. There was nothing else to do. Recreation was either pool, darts, or watching TV. This was all done in the hall. We had recreation until about eight o'clock at night. You would get your cup of tea and rock cake, then you would be locked up for the night. You would communicate by shouting between cells. Tobacco would be passed between cells too.
159. When I went to 'D' Hall I enjoyed my time at Dumfries because I could work there. I worked in textiles again. A guy called John Maguire was the manager of the textiles. He was an old guy from Dumfries. He had a strong accent. I loved being in the textiles there. We were constantly busy, always getting orders.

160. I remember a screw telling me that I was a terrible civilian but a model prisoner, but he didn't know me. He didn't know the circumstances as to why I was there. It is hard for people to listen rather than making up their own minds. I was always busy at Dumfries. I worked in the gardens again, picking all the frozen stuff. You got a wage when you worked. There was a tuck shop and you could smoke there. I didn't smoke then.

*Parole & prison trustee*

161. After about eighteen months someone applied for parole on my behalf. I think it was an automatic thing. I went in front of the board and I was denied parole but they said I could apply again at a later date. It wasn't too long after that that I got out. I think I done two years and four months, which included the time in Glenochil. I was twenty when I got out. When I didn't get parole after eighteen months I was marched to the office. I was worried but when I got there, I was handed a red shirt. I was told I was a model prisoner and told to have a happy life. Your life in prison begins then. As soon as I went out the door the prison officer I was working for in the gardens was leaving the prison for the day and getting into a tractor and trailer. He turned to me and said, "Get that shirt on your back and get in". I hadn't been out for so long and there I was going into Dumfries city centre delivering fruit and vegetables to a number of places. It was a great day. He took me back to his house and I met his wife and daughter. I had a cup of tea and my dinner there. He asked me what I was doing at the weekend and I told him I obviously wasn't doing anything. He asked me if I wanted to go and watch Queen of the South playing football. It was fantastic. What a great day I had. It continued, I went to all the home games. It wasn't just me he took, there were a couple of other guys.

162. So I was a 'C' Grade prisoner for about ten months because of my general behaviour in the jail. I could go anywhere in the prison by myself without having to give prison officers reasons as to why. I could sit in the reception all day making tea if I wanted to. It made me feel a lot more confident about myself by the time I left Jessiefield. They were building me up for getting out and I had a work ethic.



### *Visits*

163. My brother [REDACTED] would visit me with his girlfriend, but again he would be drunk, so he wouldn't get in. I would end up speaking to his girlfriend, who I hadn't met before. She was a Geordie and I had never met someone from there before, so I couldn't understand a word she was saying.

### *Peer violence*

164. There was no abuse that I saw on any prisoner by prison officers. There was a lot of violence by prisoner on prisoner, for instance they used to put people on remand from Dumfries right into 'A' Hall with lifers. Some of them were on remand for sexual offences and they would get battered. At recreation time you could wander around the hall and there were no screws about, so this happened a lot. It wasn't reported to the police. They only came if there was a slashing.

### **Leaving HMP Dumfries, Terregles Street, Dumfries**

165. I think after two years and four months I had come to the end of my sentence. They weren't halved then. I was released in [REDACTED] 1984. They took me to the train station and got me a one-way ticket to Newcastle. I had never been out of Glasgow before this.
166. When I arrived at Newcastle Central Station, I heard this drunken Scottish voice asking people, "Has anyone seen my brother?". I recognised it as my brother [REDACTED]'s voice. He was drunk and looking for me. I walked right into a celebratory atmosphere. I had a few relatives in Newcastle, so I had a few houses to go to, but I went to see my mum first. She stayed in an area called Scotswood.

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

167. I turned my life around in respect of violence and associating with violence. I've never repeated that, but I have been in bits of trouble here and there. While in

Newcastle I was adjusting, I suppose, to my new life to the accent and the fact that some of my family were speaking in that accent.

168. I decided I needed to go back to Glasgow. This was around my twenty-first birthday, about ██████████ 1984. I went there and saw my mate, ██████████. He had visited me once in prison, but he was quite rightly too busy enjoying his life. I spent a few months there, re-affirming my friendship with him. Things had changed. He had a partner and moved in with her. He was selling drugs and was a heavy drinker. The only way I describe people like that is they are part-time gangsters. I got dragged into the drinking culture. I wasn't violent, the only violence I saw was towards him. ██████████ had developed into a right hard guy. He was a boxer anyway.
169. Circumstances led me to stay in Glasgow until June 1985. One day we went out to make money. There was three of us, me ██████████ and another lad, I can't remember his name. We made some money and went home. We had stolen some vodka and we drank it. The other guy left the house and a short time later his girlfriend came round to the house screaming and covered in blood. I didn't know but the girl was ██████████'s sister. ██████████ lost his rag and went round every single house of the associates of the guy. He didn't find him, but he smashed all the houses up. During the aftermath of this mayhem we came across a gang of about fifty guys in Drumchapel running towards us with sticks and knives. I was hit on the face with a concrete slab, which knocked me unconscious. I woke up over ██████████'s shoulder. He was carrying me while running. He put me down and went upstairs to the house to get cleaning stuff. The police passed and saw me lying there covered in blood. They came over to me and as they were speaking to me a knife fell out my pocket and they arrested me for having an offensive weapon. They took me to the hospital and I got some butterfly stitches in my face and it was cleaned up. I was taken to Clydebank Police Station and told to get my head down.
170. At 3:00 am I was wakened by a police officer, who told me that ██████████ had been killed. I didn't believe him. Half an hour later ██████████'s mum came to the station and said to the police that she needed me to go to the morgue with her to identify his

body. Via a screen I was shown ██████'s body lying on a slab. He had been stabbed to death. He was twenty-one.

171. I was remanded in custody for the offensive weapon, not for the offence, but because the guy's responsible for ██████'s murder hadn't been caught. There was a gang of them. If I had been out that night I would have been killed too. I was remanded for my own safety. When they got caught, I was released. I was actually on the same bus as them. When they were being brought in to Barlinnie, I was leaving. That had a major impact on my life. I waited until after the funeral and then my girlfriend and I left Glasgow to make a new start in Newcastle. Our relationship crumbled because she had never left Glasgow. I was forcing someone to do something they didn't want to do. I felt so bad about it, so I let her leave. I went back to Glasgow to try to find her, but it was too late by then. She had moved on and met someone else.
172. I met a girl in 1988 in Newcastle and we had two boys together, ██████ and ██████. We moved to London. We stayed in an area called Penge with my sister-in-law. She used to be married to my brother ██████. We were there for a while before getting our own place. I got a job with Wickes and they put me on a fork-lift course. I was getting good money. I liked working nights, so I had had a few jobs doing night shifts with haulage companies, loading and unloading, and cleaning jobs. I've done some cash in hand jobs too. I've always had work. I then started doing crime scene cleaning work and I was in my element. It was the best job I've ever had. I stayed in London for about twenty years.
173. My partner, ██████, already had a daughter, ██████, when I met her and she went back up to Newcastle to help her granny who'd had a stroke. She met a guy there and became pregnant, so that gave me the pull to come back because I was really close to her. I was close to all my kids. ██████ had chosen to go down another route and we separated. I always tried to do the right thing by the kids and always have a job. I succeeded that way because I was always working.

174. I have a good relationship with my kids. [REDACTED] is a teacher. He stays in Birmingham, but he has been all over the world. He comes up now and again. He is working as a comedian at the moment. [REDACTED] went down the line of being a want to be criminal. I stay by myself at the moment with my two French Bulldogs.

### **Impact**

175. I consider myself to be a loner. I had a best pal in London and he would ask me to go and see him on a Friday. I would say I'd go, but then I wouldn't. Something just made me not want to go. I get silly feelings, I can't really explain. I like being on my own.

176. I don't trust people. That was instilled in me as a kid because of [REDACTED] in Larchgrove. That has never left me. It's always been there. [REDACTED] would have been around in Clydebank when I was out and about in Drumchapel but getting the sentences I did for the crimes I committed took my mind off the vengeance and anger I had, but it has always been there. When I left his house that day, I always wanted to get older and wiser and do something about it. So I got older and wiser and this is what I'm doing about it. Giving my statement to the Child Abuse Inquiry. I feel I'm doing the right thing. I still think about what he done to me. I don't have an option. It's always there. Because I'm a loner, I do a lot of thinking about why stuff happened and why nothing was done about it.

177. I don't sleep at night, I'm always awake by 4:00 am and just try to work out what I'm going to do that day. I wondered what I would be like when I had kids, would I be a horrible, evil dad? I wasn't like that. As my kids have got older one has done really well and the other one hasn't. I wonder if it comes back to me as not being a very good parent. That affects me. What vibes do the kids pick up from me? I think I might have passed this on to [REDACTED]. He was too focused on material things, he wasn't concentrating on relationships. A bit like me I suppose. I wasn't bothered about my relationship with my partner. As long as I was out of the house and making money, that's all I was bothered about. I wasn't even sleeping with her, I was sleeping on the couch. There was that distance, and my kids knew.



178. I think I had institutionalised aggression. There was no other reason for me to be angry. I don't think I suffer from that now, I'm pretty laid back. When you are in the jail you know who the bad people are and where they will be, and you know where to go to be around good people. It makes you hyper vigilant. It's all had an impact on me.
179. I was on the verge of getting counselling a few years back. My GP put me on to a group called Talking Therapies. I had a long conversation with one of the consultants there. This was just before the pandemic. After the conversation he said I am suffering from some form of trauma. He said it could be Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from identifying the body of my friend, or from when I was a kid. He wanted to see me in six months' time after the phone call, but then we had the pandemic, so it never happened. I'm not one for following stuff up after such a long period. I think I might benefit from counselling. I have been treated for depression through my GP. I was on medication up until two years ago. I had a heart attack then. I was taking seven tablets for my heart, preventative tablets, and I'm not one for mixing tablets.
180. I have not had an education. I am self-taught. I can't remember ever doing mathematics in a jotter and giving it back to a teacher. It never happened. Even at Balgowan, everything was being recorded there for some project. There wasn't any actual schooling.
181. I had nightmares about that Mr [LJ]. I wanted to find him, I looked for him on Google [LI] as well, but I'm not very good at these searches.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

182. I've spoken to the police twice. I spoke to them the first time after contacting the child abuse Inquiry. I divulged [LI] name when I applied and the lady from the Inquiry gave that to the police and they contacted me. I have since been contacted by Livingston police station, who said they would get someone out to investigate it. I haven't a clue when that will be. It could be way into the future some time, but it is going to happen. They just really have to take a statement from me. They asked me

if I would go to a Newcastle police station, but I told them I wanted to speak to Scottish police about it.

### **Records**

183. About twenty years ago I thought I was old enough to do things for myself in respect of looking up my past. I was wanting to know why I went to Larchgrove in the very first place, the actual reason. I don't think my dad dying was a reason to put me into care, particularly when I had all my sisters there and none of them went into care. I thought it was a weird thing. I applied to the social services in Glasgow. It was my only lead. I remember getting one letter and them saying this is all they could find. Maybe I didn't give them the right information. It was a letter from Balgowan.
184. I'm in the process of re-applying. I'm going to get my own identification verified. I'm going to the post office and getting my passport verified. I am doing the re-application through Wellbeing Scotland. I've got some forms in the house that I have to complete and send back.
185. I've had three applications for redress and I've ripped them all up. Maybe the handwriting wasn't great or I haven't expressed myself the way I wanted to. I got the ball rolling by speaking to Thompson's solicitors about three years ago and there was no mention of redress then. I gave a statement to them over the phone, it was to a lady. But when I received the statement, it was all wrong. I called them and told them I must have the wrong statement. To me it looked like someone had quickly scratched something down. I was asked to send it back to them, but I didn't do it. I told them about the problems with it and they said the girl who wrote it has left the company. I have put them on hold for now.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

186. Apart from when I done my four year sentence, I never felt safe in any of the establishments I was in. They should have known more about people's backgrounds. I don't think there was much in the way of staff background checks. They didn't really

cater for vulnerable kids coming from the care system into the prison system. I've seen and heard so many stories of kids like me starting off in care and spiralling out of control. I don't think I spiralled too much out of control. I think I was fairly level-headed. I always try to be straight forward. Staff only dealt with people one way. They didn't treat you differently because you were vulnerable. There should have been more sympathy towards those types of kids. You can see when they look scared. I looked scared when I went into these places. Standing in a corner and if someone looked at me, I'd feel embarrassed. You can't control it. It only stopped when I got my four year sentence.

187. You have to vet staff better. You have to get rid of the bad people because they are lurking in the background. There's never been that sort of vetting of people. Even now they are investigating police officers, and they are talking of it happening in the fire service.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

188. I hope when the Inquiry is complete and it's all been looked at that I'm proved to be right. I want someone to reassure me and tell me that they know that what I've told you did happen to me. An acknowledgement. I want to know what happened to [REDACTED] I'm not that bothered about the institutions. To them you are a number, and you stay a number until you leave. You're not human, you are like cattle, and like cattle, you get prodded.

**Other information**

189. 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..... [REDACTED]

Dated..... 12/06/2023