

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GRF

Support person present: No.

1. My full name is GRF. My date of birth is 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. I'm known as GRF but get called GRF. I'm currently serving a life prison sentence at HMP Gartree. I am quite open about my personal life and have had a life of criminality. As a result I've been in and out of secure accommodation and prison throughout my childhood and adult life.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Falkirk, my mum was or and my dad was. My mum died on 1993 and my dad died in 2009.
3. I am one of five children, the oldest is who's 60, then me, then who's 57, my sister who's about 51 and the youngest is who's in his early forties.
4. My early life in Falkirk was really good. We were poor and didn't have very much but we would never want for anything. We were always fed and things like that.
5. My dad was always working and my mum was working but was also a housewife. My dad worked in the Carron Factory in Falkirk, it's an ironworks and used to make cannons and things like that. Then he went on to work on the railway. When she wasn't pregnant my mum worked for the British Aluminium Company in Falkirk. I remember she did other work as well like cleaning people's houses.

6. I remember we lived in a place called Langlees in Falkirk and we left there when I was about eight years old. We moved to the [REDACTED] in Falkirk which is near to where [REDACTED] are now. That was a four bedroom house and that's where I was brought up.
7. I went to Langlees Primary School first of all, then I went to Victoria Primary and then Graeme High. I was only there for a wee while because I did what I did which pretty much kick started me going in to care.
8. I would say I was a wee shite and was always getting into trouble but nothing horrible or nasty. I would just sneak out the house and run away. I suppose I started hanging about with the wrong people, but we were just young and daft. I started dogging school, doing a wee bit of shoplifting and sniffing glue. That all lead to an arson incident.
9. I'd been sniffing glue with some other lads and we kicked in a window at St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Primary School in Falkirk and went inside. My mate put some paper in the corner of a room, lit it and then we all ran away. The next thing the place was ablaze. We were daft wee boys and everybody started telling everybody else about it so eventually the police heard about it and came and took me away.
10. There was no police or social work involvement with our family at all until I got involved in the fire at St. Andrew's School.
11. I ended up being the only one charged with the arson. I went to Falkirk Sheriff Court to get sentenced but it got referred to the Children's Panel for them to find me a place somewhere. I think I was eleven then, I was young and daft with no sense of responsibility but I never thought I'd be taken off my parents. I was sent back home for about a month after that, for background checks. I was also expelled from school for that month.
12. My mum and dad then took me to that Children's Panel which was in Falkirk as well. I remember I was asked about my glue sniffing, the truancy and the arson. The Panel told me they would try and find me a place. I actually went home first and I took an

overdose so I had to be taken to hospital to have my stomach pumped. I was in hospital for about two days. I was just scared about being taken away from my parents, I was crying and didn't want to go. I never knew of anybody getting taken off their parents, so I was just scared.

Bellfield Remand Home, Dumbarton

General

13. I remember I was in the hospital for those two days and next thing I had these two strange guys in my room telling me they were taking me to Bellfield. I asked where that was and they told me it was in Dumbarton. They were probably social workers and my dad was there as well. We all travelled to Bellfield together in a car.
14. The plan was for me to go to Bellfield for two years but I was told that if I behaved myself for a year I'd be allowed to go back to my parents. That turned out to be a lie.
15. I do remember I was scared at the thought of being taken away, I couldn't understand what that meant to myself or what the implications were. I was just a daft laddie, I was young and scared. Looking back now I'd say it was probably because I'd have been a danger to myself.

Routine at Bellfield Remand Home

First day

16. I can remember I was really upset, this was the first time anything like that had ever happened to me, and at the time, although it is you that's caused it all, you don't think like that as a child. You just wonder what's happening and get scared.

17. I remember arriving, driving up to the main door and seeing all these wee Glaswegians running about. It wasn't like a school because all the doors were locked. I did notice that everyone talked differently to me.
18. I was taken into the headmaster's room, he was old fashioned and formal looking. I can't remember his name. He said they would look after me and told me the rules and what I could do and what I couldn't do.
19. It was all okay until my dad left and I felt totally lost and alone. I know my dad felt it as well. I could tell he didn't want to leave me there. He wasn't one for showing his emotions but I knew he was a good dad. Apart from having all my own kids I would say my childhood, until I started going to all those places, was the best time of my life.
20. I can remember the place, the layout and the routine but I can't remember the names of many staff or boys. It was all boys, all the places I went to were all boys except for Devonvale.

Layout / staff

21. Bellfield was a nice big country house and was on a hill. It was very like Devonvale, where I went later. It was all dorms, maybe five beds in each one and there must have been twenty to twenty five boys there.
22. As you came up the main drive to Bellfield there was a wee building there, like an outhouse type of thing, and that's where all the boys went for teaching. It was what we called the school. That was where I was abused.
23. The ages of the boys ranged from about ten to fifteen or sixteen. I'm not sure how many staff were there, they didn't live there but there was a night clerk, who I'm sure was a woman. I don't know much about night-time because as soon as you went in your room that was you, you weren't allowed out until morning unless you were going to the toilet.

24. We could get up and go to the toilet, we weren't locked in the dorms but I'm pretty sure the building was all locked up at night.
25. I don't remember the names of any of the staff. The only person that made any impact was my abuser, GRI, that's maybe why he is the only one I remember.

Mornings/bedtime

26. I remember getting up in the morning, having a wash and going down the stairs for breakfast. I can't remember anything about the food. I remember having breakfast and a sandwich at night but I don't remember any other meals at all.
27. In the evening we got a wee sandwich before we went up to bed. Then it was up the stairs, washed and into bed, that was it.

Leisure time

28. At weekends we would sometimes go to Dumbarton baths for swimming. We would also go for walks at Dumbarton Rock, I think that's what it was called. I remember we also went to these water pools near Loch Lomond. We went there one day when it was really hot and the staff made us all get naked and jump off the rocks into the pools of water. I remember the shock of hitting the water, it was so cold.
29. There wasn't much for the boys to do at Bellfield. In the summer we were allowed outside and we did wrestling on a tennis court out the back. I remember a member of staff wrestling this older wee stocky boy, and what happened was he threw the boy and dislocated his shoulder. That was the first time I'd seen someone actually get injured and it was the most horrific thing I'd seen in my life.
30. There were no games to play or books to read so I can't remember what we did. We just sat and spoke I suppose.

Work / school

31. After breakfast we had to do a bit of cleaning. All the floors had to get scrubbed and we used these big bars of carbolic soap and a scrubbing brush. We had to scrub and dry the floors and then we used to polish it with buffers which were big blocks with pads on them. I remember they were really heavy and that was hard work.
32. After we'd done the cleaning we would either go off to school or sometimes we would be allowed to go into the gardens. There were only about five at a time at the school and we only went there for a couple of hours. I think it was a woman teacher.

Family Contact

33. My mum and dad weren't allowed to visit me at Bellfield for the first six weeks. My mum was ill following child birth so I don't think she could come through anyway. I started to get weekend leave after a while though.
34. My dad came to get me the first time I was allowed home and then I was allowed to get the train through and make my own way back. I went from Dumbarton to Central to Queens Street to Falkirk. That was a wee adventure for me as a wee boy so I enjoyed that. I did that when I was at Kibble as well.
35. I never wanted to come back from my weekend leave, no matter what place I was in I wanted to be back with my mum. My mum was always upset when I was leaving so my dad would get me out the house quickly and take me to Glasgow.

Social work contact

36. There was a lovely social worker called Helen Petrie who came to see me. She picked me up and took me to Dundee when I went to Balgowan and she was alright. The first time I saw her was just before I went home, before I went to Balgowan. I didn't see any other social workers throughout the rest of my time at Bellfield.

Running away

37. I didn't run away but some of the older boys did. Boys that ran away got battered by staff and you would see them with black eyes. The boys would tell you they were battered by the staff for running away. Some boys ran away and we never saw them again.
38. I don't know why they were running away, they probably just didn't want to be there like me. Probably the same as me when I started running away from places a couple of years later.

Bed wetting

39. I think I did wet my bed at home, like most kids, but when I was at Bellfield I did become quite a regular bed wetter. I've never really thought about it but that did get worse once the abuse started there.
40. Other boys would just take the piss out of you and bully you. I can't really remember how the staff dealt with it but it wouldn't have been that bad.

Abuse at Bellfield Remand Home

41. Right at the start there was another resident, a wee guy, who used to terrify me. At night he used to jump out at me and tell me he was going to strangle me like a rabbit. I was terrified of him but he was just saying it because I was the new boy and didn't have a clue. He never did anything to me. I still couldn't get to sleep because of what he was saying though. All I wanted was to go home to be with my mum.
42. I have two names in my head for the guy that did the real damage to me. One is GRI [REDACTED] and one is GRI [REDACTED]. It was definitely a [REDACTED] something, and I may be wrong with both of those but that's the name I have in my head and that was the first guy that ever abused me. He was in his thirties or forties back then and he looked a bit like a

'Teddy Boy' with the black hair that was flicked back. He was a member of staff but I don't know what his exact role was.

43. It didn't happen right away as I think there was a bit of grooming beforehand. He used to call me 'The Womble' because he used to take me out to pick up rubbish all the time. I think The Wombles was on the TV at that time.
44. There were boys coming in to Bellfield from poor families and because of that boys would get nits so every Tuesday night we all got deloused. We called it 'Jungle Juice Night' and we were all taken down to the showers stripped naked and told to have a shower. That was all of us and we were all wee boys. We had this juice rubbed into our hair that killed the nits, Jungle Juice, then we would all have to stand bollock naked for about five or ten minutes before getting sent for a shower.
45. Mr ^{GRI} would start rubbing the stuff it into my hair but then he would start rubbing the back of my neck and my shoulder all that type of thing. I didn't know what was happening, I just thought he was being a nice older guy. After the shower he would also dry me off and I think that's how it all started.
46. I don't know why he targeted me but he did and then he used to use the excuse that he was taking me out to pick up the rubbish whenever he wanted to do anything to me. He would say he was taking the Womble out to pick up the rubbish.
47. After about three or four weeks he also started giving me cigarettes when I got up in the morning. That was good and I thought he was being nice to me. I never knew there was another thing to it. ^{GRI} always used to give me fags then take me down to the school for an hour or two where most of the things would happen to me.
48. He would sneak me into the school building. It was always in the afternoon, because we were at the school most mornings. It started with him sitting me down and giving me a fag, then he started touching me and getting me to touch him. He got me to masturbate him. The first time he tried to have sex with me was quite bad, he just flung

me on the floor but he couldn't get inside me and got all frustrated. He ended up hitting me, slapping me with his hands on my backside, my arms and the back of my head.

49. He did keep trying though and eventually he managed full penetration. I would describe it then as getting a piece of wood put inside you. It was so painful. Every time I saw him I used to get terrified, and my whole body would go sad and numb.
50. After the first time he penetrated me I couldn't get out my bed in the morning, there was this pain in my backside and down the back of my legs. I used to bleed from my backside as well but I just put toilet paper in there. I learnt that if I relaxed it wasn't as bad, it was still sore, but not quite as bad, so I just did that and let him get on with it.
51. I didn't ever tell anyone. I didn't get any medical attention or see anyone else getting any medical staff at any of the places I went to until I was at borstal.
52. I used to be quite a lively wee guy, always bouncing about but when that started I got all withdrawn. My mum and dad noticed that I'm sure. That was the first time I was sexually abused. I was at Bellfield for about three months and that happened to me at least once a week. I don't know if he was doing the same to anyone else, he could have been but I hope not.
53. That Mr ^{GRI} used to tell me not to say a word to anyone or he would kill me and throw me in the river Clyde. I really was terrified of that guy. I was shocked, bewildered and confused for a very long time after that abuse.
54. There was other physical abuse that went on at Bellfield. I used to get slapped and hit by older boys and by staff. I've got big ear lobes and I think that was because I used to get picked up by the ear lobes when I was a kid. That seemed to be a thing at Bellfield and other places I stayed. ^{GRI} and another couple of guys did that to me all the time at Bellfield. There wasn't punching it was more slapping now and again, across the back of the head. They were just showing off in front of their mates and other boys, that's all that was.

Reporting of abuse at Bellfield Remand Home

55. I didn't speak to anyone about the sexual abuse that happened to me at Bellfield. I couldn't, I was too ashamed, that's how I felt. Nobody spoke of sexual abuse and I didn't see or hear of anything that happened to me, happening to anyone else.

Leaving Bellfield Remand Home

56. When I went to Bellfield I had no idea I'd be going to Balgowan, nobody had mentioned that at all. I remember something happened, I don't know what but I was suddenly told I could go home for two weeks. I left as quick as I arrived and I never saw GRI again.
57. I surmise now that a place had been found for me somewhere else, which was in Dundee, when I was at Bellfield and that I was sent home to be with my parents before starting there. After those two weeks at home, that was me off to Balgowan in Dundee. Those two weeks at home were brilliant too. I didn't want to go to Dundee.

Balgowan School, Dundee

General

58. At Balgowan there was the main big building and the cottage which was also in the grounds. In the big house there was four houses with names. I don't remember the names of all the houses but one was called Scott House and there were boys living in each house.
59. The cottage was a white building which was 'L' shaped. There were about nine rooms with three boys in each, so about 27 boys in total at the cottage. It was all boys and they were aged from about ten to sixteen.

60. The cottage had the bedrooms, a TV room, a dining room and a kitchen. It was a lot better and more modern than the house I was brought up in. Mr and Mrs **GMR-SPO** who we called ma and pa lived upstairs with their daughter, **[REDACTED]**. She was older than me but was still at school.
61. Another member of staff I remember was crazy old captain **LID** that's what we called him. He was a Second World War hero and took the army cadets. He was a major or something in **[REDACTED]** There was a Mr **GRZ** as well. There were other staff who stayed in another building within the grounds.
62. I can remember that my mum had to pay for me to go to Balgowan. She had to send them a fiver a week. I don't know if that was just bullshit I was being told, but I do remember her telling me she had to pay for me to go. It was local authority so maybe she didn't pay, I don't know.

Routine at Balgowan School

First day

63. My social worker, Helen Petrie, took me up to Dundee, with my mum and dad in the car. I remember we stopped at a pub on the way and Helen bought us all a meal.
64. All I remember about arriving there was this big gateway, big pillars and a big driveway, to me it was just like a big castle. There was a massive main building and a wee white building down at the bottom. I was excited but it was daunting, I'd never seen a place as big as that in my life, so I was having to take it all in.
65. We went through these big old teak doors and down a big dark corridor and into the headmasters room. We were told to sit down and then the headmaster came in. He was a big tall baldy guy, I can't remember his name, but he was like an army guy. I didn't see him much until after my first year.

66. He told me I'd not be living in the big house but in the cottage. I remember getting taken down to the cottage and being shown my room. There were three beds in my room. One thing that sticks in my mind is the quilts. I'd never seen one before and it was like sleeping with a big bit of cotton wool. That had a big impact on me.
67. I do remember I was devastated when my mum, dad and Helen Petrie left me at Balgowan that first day. It couldn't have been nice for my parents either, just taking their kid to a place like that and leaving them there. My mum was always upset about that, she hated me going back to those places.
68. I was told by Helen Petrie that I would be at Balgowan for a year and that I'd then get to go back home, but I ended up there for three years. I decided I would just get on with it, and it was okay once I got my home leave but things happened quite quickly to me in there.

Mealtimes/Food

69. The food was alright as far as I remember. There was never any issue for anyone if they didn't like what was on their plate. We had all our meals in the cottage but there was a massive kitchen up at the castle building as well and that's where we had meals at the weekends.
70. I do remember at the cottage that they sometimes asked if anyone wanted any extra food because there was food left over. The first time they asked I said yes and asked for some more tatties. Then I was asked why I wasn't getting enough food at home at the weekends, so they thought that because I was asking for more food I wasn't getting fed at home by my mum. Yet it was them that asked if we wanted the extra food. I never went up for extra food after that because they actually sent health visitors to check my mum's cupboards. That was crazy, my mum always looked after us and fed us. We didn't have a lot but we were always fed.

Leisure time

71. Balgowan was alright apart from the horrible stuff that went on. We played football and had a trampoline and we used to go sailing down the River Tay. I don't remember watching much television but I was into music and I liked all the punk rock stuff. I remember listening to the Sex Pistols song 'Pretty Vacant' at night. We would just sit about and we got pocket money that we could buy sweets with, so that was okay.
72. We went hillwalking with Mr LID up in the mountains and stayed in these wee crofts. There were two staff and about fifteen boys and there was no electricity. It didn't get dark it got black. We had gas lamps and we would build a fire and Mr LID would tell us stories about the 'faceless monk' and the 'headless piper'. I remember that was terrifying. Then he'd say 'right lads bed time', and you'd take forever to fall asleep. Eventually you did fall asleep and then he would go out into the fields and grab a sheep and throw it into the room. We knew it was a sheep but we would all be running about scared shitless.
73. I also used to like going out into the garden with Mr GRZ because he was alright.

Education

74. We were up early in the cottage, then it was up to the main building and a wee bit of education at the school. Later on we could do woodwork or go into the gardens or sometimes go to the gym. It was more like a normal school day. Balgowan was good when it came to education but thinking back now, I think that's where my education came to an end and after that I stopped developing mentally.
75. We were taught English and maths and those kind of subjects at the school. The teachers were the staff who worked at Balgowan. That part of it was alright as I never saw my main abuser during the day. I'm not sure what he did during the day.

Bedwetting

76. My bedwetting continued at first at Balgowan and the staff were okay about it no one got into any trouble for that. There were quite a few people who did that so I'd say it was quite a normal thing for people to do. I stopped that when I reached about fourteen, so I didn't do it after Balgowan.

Family Contact

77. You weren't allowed home for weekends until you'd been at Balgowan for about six to ten weeks. That was to give you time to settle down and get used to it.
78. I remember in my first year the staff at the cottages once got my mum and dad to come in to Balgowan and we did this role playing thing where we had to re-enact a scenario from being at home. It was really weird and embarrassing.
79. They had my dad standing pretending he'd just come in from work, and my mum sitting down after her day of housework, waiting for my dad to come home. I was to act out how I would react when my dad came home from his work. It was really awkward and didn't feel real, all I could think was 'why are you doing this to me?' as it made me feel weird, in fact it still does now just talking about it.
80. It was some psychology thing, to do with our family unit or something, but I don't have a clue why they were doing it or what it was meant to do, it just made me feel awkward that's all.
81. That time my mum and dad visited for the psychology thing was the only time I saw them at Balgowan. I would just see them whenever I got weekend leave.

Running away

82. I became unruly and the staff couldn't control me and used to put me into the castle all the time. That was a punishment and meant you couldn't get home at weekends. Sometimes I didn't get home for three months. All I did was run away all the time.

83. I would get asked why I was running away and it was because of the abuse but the shame thing stopped me saying that to anyone. That was the only reason I was running away, because of the abuse.
84. Once when I ran away I was taken to Falkirk Police Station and it was the social work that came and took me back to Balgowan. When I ran away that was the only time I ever saw social workers. I remember once there were three of them sitting on me or holding me in the back of the car as I wasn't wanting to go back. That wasn't very nice as I was a bit claustrophobic as a child and it didn't get any better after that because my face was shoved into the corner of the seat for the whole journey from Falkirk to Balgowan.
85. Another time I ran away with a mate in the winter and the snow was that deep we could have died. We walked from Dundee to Perth and when we got to Perth I just walked straight into the police station and handed myself in. Sometimes we could get further, maybe to Blackford or right down to Gleneagles, and sometimes we got picked up by lorry drivers. I knew I shouldn't be doing that but I did. I was just thinking like a kid, trying to get back to Falkirk, that was all I was trying to do.

Discipline

86. If you were caught smoking, or fighting or something like that, the punishment was to not let you go home at the weekend. That was all they could really do to you. You would get your name put in the 'Red Book' and put on report but they didn't tell you that you weren't going home at the time.
87. Everyone went to the office on a Friday afternoon at about one o'clock and you would be given 50 pence for your bus and train fare or you would be told you were staying in for the weekend and not getting to go home. That was the first time you found out. It didn't bother me as I would just run away and go home anyway, which meant my mum would end up having to send me back.

88. We would also get the belt, SNR ██████████ had an old leather belt and, after my first year at Balgowan, I remembered that belt very well. In my second year I was belted by SNR ██████████ many times. That started to happen more and more as I ran away more and more. It actually got quite violent and that instilled the fear in me. I think they were trying to scare me into not running away. That didn't work, it just made me worse.
89. When you went on report, that's what they called it, then that's when your name went in the 'Red Book'. I think each dorm had a book but we had one in the cottage as well. It was kept down the stairs in the office. I'm sure all the staff had a red book, they kept them in their pockets. It was like a wee notebook and they were all red and they would just write down whatever it was you had done that meant you couldn't get home that weekend.
90. What I did hate about being kept in over the weekend was that you had to go to church and then we had to read out the bible and stuff.

Abuse at Balgowan School

91. The guy that abused me at Balgowan was called ██████████, ██████████ is what they used to call him. He was another resident at Balgowan and stayed in the cottage as well. He was about fifteen or sixteen. He was the ugliest person I'd met in my life, a horrible looking guy. I know he's still alive and lives somewhere in Perth.
92. It was definitely sometime in ██████████ 1975 that I went to Balgowan and the abuse from ██████████ started fairly quickly after I started there. I'd say after about two weeks, so I must have been about twelve.
93. The first time it happened, the place was quiet and I'd just come out the shower and walked into my room. ██████████ came in to my room, threw me on the bed and raped me. I know he was doing that to quite a few of the younger boys at Balgowan. The ones I know of are dead now. They were ██████████, ██████████ and

██████████. They all told me ██████████ was abusing them. There were another couple of boys but I can't remember their names.

94. He did it to boys all the time and to me just whenever he felt like it. There was nothing you could do about it and sometimes it could be as many as three times in one week. He was a bad man and very intimidating to look at. He was just a lunatic and on a different level. He didn't care and all the boys were scared of him.
95. It was always quiet when he did things, so he knew what he was doing. People would be out playing football or at classes or whatever, but there was never anyone else about. There was nearly always something for you to do at Balgowan, but when you didn't, that's when ██████████ would appear.
96. GMR-SPO ██████████ would do their rounds at night, when you went to bed, but you couldn't lock your bedroom doors so once they were gone, that was it.
97. I did get bruised and sore as a result of what ██████████ did to me but I never needed any medical attention. I couldn't move when he was on top of me, he was a big lad, almost built like a man so there was nothing I could do.
98. We only had showers at Balgowan, no baths, and we always had them at night. I always took them with my mate ██████████, because of ██████████. He was always hanging about the showers and depending on which way we went after our shower ██████████ would sexually abuse me or ██████████.
99. The abuse from ██████████ continued until about three months after my first year. That was when I just lost it one time and beat him up with a skateboard I'd made. I did that with another boy ██████████ he was with me when we battered ██████████.
100. That wasn't the end of the abuse though because something else started to happen to me. I had hit ██████████ with the skateboard and I had started misbehaving so I wasn't getting home leave and had to get taken up the castle building to stay at weekends. The cottage was shut down at weekends because that was ma and pa

GMR-SPO time. I would say about 90% of the people did go home at weekends but if you didn't adhere to the rules you didn't get home leave.

101. The castle was a completely different place altogether. When I was in there, sometimes I would wake up and someone could be at the side of my bed touching my private parts or sometimes they could be in the bed beside me. I didn't know who that was but I'm sure it was older boys, not staff. We were in single bed cubicles up at the castle, there was a boy in each bed and they were all partitioned off from each other.
102. Sometimes that was just one person touching me but sometimes it could be three and they would hold me down and rape me. They would all rape me, they'd all take a turn while the other two would hold me down and I would always have a pillow or a blanket over my head.
103. It all depended on who and how many were not getting weekend leave and what house I was in. The castle was split into four houses and it was always when I was staying in Scott House that I would be abused. I remember one other house was called Munro but I can't remember the other two house names.
104. There was other bullying and abuse at Balgowan as well. I remember I was once grabbed by these older boys when I was in the courtyard just heading to school or between classes or something like that. They would drag me along the ground, one boy pulling each leg and ram me up against this big long pole that was used to hold up the courtyard. That hit my testicles off the pole and was agony. I didn't need any medical attention but I remember that and how much it hurt. It was like getting a hard kick in the balls.
105. Balgowan was bad but it wasn't all bad and I did meet some good boys and some good members of staff there. Had it not been for [REDACTED] and the boys up at the castle in Scott House it would have been an okay place. I would still have missed my mum and dad and my family but there was also the big lie. They lied to me when they said I would get home after one year.

Reporting of abuse at Balgowan School

106. Anytime [REDACTED] came into your room you knew what was going to happen to you and the look he would give you was enough for you not to say anything to anyone. I didn't tell anyone at Balgowan I was too ashamed.
107. I did tell ma [REDACTED] but she told me to stop spreading stories or I'd not get to go home at the weekends. I didn't tell me parents anything like that. For the first year, until I went down to the Children's Panel, I just suffered it as I thought I was only going to be there for a year.
108. Helen Petrie had gone by then as well and I had a guy who was my social worker. His name was Douglas something, or something Douglas and he was just a dafty. He was completely different from Helen. It was just a job for him he wasn't interested.
109. There was a member of staff at Balgowan, Mr ^{zIPR} [REDACTED] that was alright. I think he knew what was going on. He used to take me out every now and again at weekends to his home and I would sit with him and his family and get a meal and spend the night. There was nothing wrong with it, he was just a nice member of staff. He had long hair and a beard and used to play the guitar. I have this feeling he knew something about what was going on and that's why he was being so nice to me, but I don't know, I could just be surmising that. I just wonder why he always picked me to go to his house to spend time with his family and that all started after my first year when I was being abused.

Review of detention / Children's Panel

110. After one year at Balgowan I was thinking I was getting home. I remember I went home for weekend leave and stayed there an extra couple of days until a Children's Panel that had been arranged by my social worker Douglas.

111. I was at that Panel with my mum and dad and I was told that I was doing really well, attending all the classes, socialising and everything was great. Then they said I had to go back to Balgowan. My mum and dad were devastated, my mum burst into tears, because they couldn't wait to get me back. I wasn't going back to that so I went to the toilet, sneaked out the window and ran off. I did get caught though and ended up back at Balgowan.
112. After that I totally changed, my mum's said that as well. I went from being the best in the school to the worst in the school. Every time I went back to Balgowan from home leave, things would change. As I've said the abuse carried on for about three months or so after my first year, until I hit [REDACTED] with the skateboard. I kind of got left alone after that. He had other boys he could go to anyway.
113. I'd gone from this wee quiet shy guy into this wee angry guy. I was still a wee boy and he could probably have done something in retaliation if he'd wanted to but he didn't.

Leaving Balgowan School

114. I was running away from Balgowan more and more and it was always to get away from the abuse and from [REDACTED]. I just hated it there, I couldn't handle it and although I'd fought back, which I'd never done before, it was still happening with him and up at Scott House in the castle. It wasn't happening as much with him but he was still abusing me. I didn't have a choice, he took what he wanted and left.
115. I actually started to get introduced to Devonvale before I was sent there. Sometimes when they couldn't get a hold of a social worker to take me back to Balgowan after I'd been caught running away, I would get taken to Devonvale for two or three nights before going back to Balgowan. I once stayed there for about two weeks before getting taken back to Balgowan.
116. It was towards [REDACTED] 1977 when I was fourteen, that I went to Devonvale permanently. I had run away again and I was caught by the police in Glasgow and

taken to Baird Street police station. The police then took me to Falkirk police station where the social workers came and they took me to Devonvale. I was made unruly because I was out of control and that's why I was taken to Devonvale. The social workers told me Balgowan wanted me gone. I don't know who said I was unruly but those decisions must have been made somewhere. I was never told about anything so I don't know how or when that came about but it did and I was taken to Devonvale. I didn't have a clue how long I was going to Devonvale for.

Devonvale Assessment Centre, Tillicoultry

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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135.

I was told I was getting moved to Larchgrove. I went straight to Larchgrove that day.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

136.

Larchgrove Remand Home, Glasgow (first time)

General

137. Larchgrove was in Glasgow and I was the first person from my area to be put in a place like that. I had never heard of it and I had no idea how long I was going there for. First I knew of it I was going down this wee driveway and it was like a miniature jail. All the windows were small and they were all the same size. Larchgrove was a secure place as well, we were always locked in. It was next door to St. John's Approved School.
138. It was a big building and it was all boys, a lot of boys. The ages of the boys were from about ten to sixteen.

Routine at Larchgrove Remand Home (first time)

First day

139. I don't remember being told why I was going to Larchgrove but I think it was because I was a bad influence at Devonvale. I was there twice but that was my first time.
140. I was taken there by a copper and two guys, I don't know who they were, probably social workers but I'd never met them before. It was about half ten at night when we arrived. I was taken right down to what they called the 'digger' and I remember hearing all these mad Glaswegian voices. I was just this wee teuchter from Falkirk.
141. The 'digger' was a cold cell with a light, no windows other than a wee spyhole on the door. It had no bedding, no toilet or sink, nothing. I was locked in there for about two hours before being taken out. I just sat on the floor wondering what was going on. I think I was just in there while they got everything sorted for me. I remember lots of shouting and bawling which was all so aggressive but I've learnt over time that that's just how they talk.
142. I was taken up to a dorm after that but I can't remember much about the set up. I know there was quite a few dorms.

143. The guys that worked there all looked like big hard guys. It was in there I started to meet guys that I would end up meeting again, years later at Barlinnie or wherever. I was always meeting guys my age who had been in my past.
144. I remember I didn't like talking when I first arrived because I was an outsider and didn't talk the same way as the other guys in Larchgrove. I don't speak that way now as I've trained myself to speak differently, I don't say 'ken', I say 'know' that kind of thing.

Daily routine

145. We would get up and washed and go for breakfast every morning. The food was alright, but I don't remember much about it. I can't remember if we went to school or not but I do remember we used to make carpets all the time. We got loads of wee bits of cotton and we would thread them through this thing.
146. I was always looking for ways to get out the place to be quite honest but that was impossible. It was very secure.
147. I remember it was winter time and there was loads of ice on the driveway and I was a trustee with the staff so I was helping out with breaking up the ice and other jobs about the place. I remember having these brogues with segs on them and I was slipping everywhere.

Leisure time

148. We used to get visits from Rangers and Celtic players and I remember we got a visit from Billy Connolly as well, that was the first time I saw him. There was also a ventriloquist with a bear and comedians that came in.
149. I also remember playing bingo and cards and getting sweets and things like that so Larchgrove really was alright. There wasn't much else we did.

Running away

150. When I was helping the staff break up the ice on the driveway I remember we were getting closer and closer to the gate and it was an open gate. I saw the chance to get away and as soon as the staff turned away I was off. That was after about two months there.
151. I got myself on the Edinburgh Road which was a long road, and it was dark and cold. I eventually got a train into Glasgow Queen Street and then another to Falkirk where I went to my dad's. I remember I was freezing cold and my dad gave me a couple of shots of Port to warm me up. I opened some Christmas presents and then my dad made a phone call and I was picked up and taken back. At the time I felt I had gone through all that for nothing but I did end up getting home leave as a result, so maybe it was worth it.
152. The staff were brilliant when they got me back from my dad's. We had a big meeting the next morning, they said they understood and then they came to the decision that I should get weekend leave. After that I got weekend leave to go and see my family.

Leaving Larchgrove Remand Home (first time)

153. Larchgrove was alright, there was no abuse I can speak of and certainly nothing sexual, nothing like that happened to me there. Then they found me a place at Thornly Park which was the total opposite. Larchgrove was a remand home so when they found me a place in an approved school I had to move on.
154. I would have been fifteen when I left Larchgrove and went to Thornly Park.

Thornly Park School, Paisley

General

155. I was taken to Thornly Park by my social worker, I can't remember who that was. At Thornly Park we lived in these porto-cabins. There were about ten of them all lying at different angles with the school and the main building at the top end.
156. It was all boys at Thornly Park and they were the same sort of age about twelve to seventeen. There were about four to each porto-cabin so about forty boys. There were staff at Thornly Park but not in the porto-cabins, they were all in the main building.
157. I remember I was kind of upset at the beginning because my Uncle [REDACTED] had died down in Milton Keynes and I hadn't been allowed to go to the funeral because I'd only just arrived there. I was still getting home leave though. I was there for about three months and it was alright up until about ten weeks, when the abuse started.

Routine at Thornly Park School

First day

158. I remember I was gutted the day I arrived as I found out that if I'd been two weeks earlier I would have got a free holiday to Cologne in Germany. I couldn't go because of something to do with passports.
159. At first I actually thought Thornly Park was going to be alright. I don't remember much about the routine I just remember it was alright to start with.

Running away

160. I only ran away from Thornly Park once, and that was after the sexual abuse had started again. It had happened about eight times, I'd had enough and had to get away. There were some mates staying in Barrhead so I was off and ran about with them.

Abuse at Thornly Park School

161. After about a week of being at Thornly Park all the boys who'd been in Germany came back. They were with German children who had come back on some exchange thing but after about a week the Germans went back home. That was when the sexual abuse started to happen to me again.
162. Once again I would wake up during the night and there would be someone in my bed. It was older boys again so the sexual abuse was happening all over again. That all started after I'd been there about ten weeks but by then I was a bigger lad and I could put up a better fight than before. So I was fighting with the boys who were abusing me. Sometimes it worked but sometimes they got the better of me. I usually always ended up getting done anyway.
163. The fighting got my weekend leave stopped so eventually I just went on the run and stayed with a couple of mates up in Barrhead. I couldn't understand, I had managed to get away from the abuse and now I was back in it again. It just drove me mad.
164. The boys that were abusing me were older than me, sixteen maybe seventeen and they stayed at Thornly Park. It happened about eight times in Thornly Park and I did try and fight them off but I would be held down by two guys while another raped me so there wasn't much I could do.
165. I do think the sexual abuse there was quite a big thing and there was a few of them all at it together, so it wouldn't surprise me if other boys were being abused the same way I was.
166. There was nothing like that going on until the older boys all came back from Germany. There were still boys staying in the porto-cabins then, I was there, and there was no abuse then at all. I'd say that whoever was involved in that abuse had to have been on that trip.

Reporting of abuse at Thornly Park School

167. I didn't tell anyone about what was happening to me at Thornly Park. I think the sexual abuse there was quite a big thing and there was a few of them at it.

Leaving Thornly Park School

168. I ran off after the last time I was raped at Thornly Park and then I was caught after a few days in Ferguslie Park in Paisley. My mates mum and dad weren't happy that I was on the run living with them so I had to leave. I was freezing and hungry so I kicked in the window of a shop but I got caught outside the shop by the police. I got charged with that and that's when I was taken back to Larchgrove for the second time.
169. Next morning I was in Glasgow Sheriff Court and although I was fifteen and a schoolboy I was still old enough to get a remand. I was told that could be a possibility and that I might end up in Longriggend.
170. I remember I was photographed and fingerprinted at the Sheriff Court and put in a cell with all these alcoholics and junkies and I was just this wee boy in the corner. I was there all day and eventually a social worker came in and told me the charges had been admonished and the sheriff was sending me back to Larchgrove.

Larchgrove Remand Home, Glasgow (second time)

171. I was taken to Larchgrove by the social worker but I can't remember which one, I've had a few over the years. Helen Petrie and the guy Douglas are the only ones I remember.
172. Larchgrove was a bit different that second time because they'd previously given me a chance and I'd obviously messed up. I wasn't allowed any home leave and I wasn't allowed to go outside at all. I was there for about two months the second time. I wasn't allowed outside during that entire two months.

Abuse at Larchgrove (second time)

173. What they did do that second time was take me up to St. Mary's Closed Block in Bishopbriggs. It's a secure place, a separate unit, where all the really violent kids are taken. I think they were just trying to terrify me by showing me the place and it worked. There was a member of staff in there called Mr **GRG** I'll never forget him, he was an animal.
174. He looked after all these really violent people and he took me down into this punishment cell where everything was painted red. Then he took me by the back of the head and smashed my face of the red wall. He said that's so we can't see your blood and he shut the door.
175. They left me in that cell for two days without telling me a thing. I was terrified in there, I'm sure they weren't allowed to be doing that. I was given crisps and pop and I had a piss pot to use, that was it. I was wearing track suit bottoms and a t-shirt and it was cold. I only remember seeing Mr **GRG**, no other staff, and I never saw him again after that.
176. He was such a scary man and I wasn't expecting to get my face smashed off a wall and then to be left in a cell for two days. That broke my nose and there was blood everywhere. I didn't get any medical attention I was just left there. I don't think I should even have been at St. Mary's at all. I just think it was to scare me.
177. After my two days at the closed block I was taken back to Larchgrove in a van. I don't know who it was that took me to or back from the closed block but it was definitely staff from Larchgrove.
178. Larchgrove was a different place and a different experience that second time. I would get a wee slap on the back of the head now and again from staff but it was nothing

major and there was no tampering or anything sexual, nothing like that. I couldn't tell you the names of anyone who slapped me.

179. I do remember that one night the staff were having a Christmas party and to make sure we all went to sleep they gave each of the boys a half pint of Benylin. It was in big bottle and we were given half pint beakers full of the stuff. I knew it was Benylin because I know the taste of Benylin, because I liked it.
180. Every kid got it I'm sure, certainly every kid in my room. They could have done anything to us during the time we were all knocked out for the whole night. We will never know if they did do anything and thinking about it now that could easily have killed someone. Nobody did have anything wrong with them I think we all just had a good sleep. I couldn't tell you which member of staff gave us the Benylin.

Leaving Larchgrove (second time)

181. I was told at Larchgrove that second time that they would find me a place to stay but that it was my last chance or I would have to go to somewhere like Longriggend. That's when they came up with the Kibble.
182. Once my face healed from what **GRG** did to me I was taken to The Kibble to see the place. It was an approved school in Paisley. It seemed alright and I met Mr Knight the deputy governor on that visit and he was alright and gave me a tour of the place.

Kibble Approved School, Paisley

General

183. I was fifteen when I went to The Kibble and I was there for about six or seven months. It was a big old building with some cottages at the back but I was told I would be living in the big old building. It was boys only and there were about a hundred boys in total.

The ages were from about thirteen to sixteen. I can't remember who ran it but the deputy governor was Mr Knight.

184. There were some older guys there who had been living there and had moved away but were then back there working.
185. You could walk about the place but the main building was more secure. I was in the main building and we all slept in these cubicles upstairs. There were two beds to a cubicle and I would always sleep in the bed nearest the door as I was paranoid and had all these issues with people sneaking into my bed. I would wrap myself up in my blankets after what had happened in the past. I had learnt to make sure I was secure in my bed at night.

Daily routine

186. The routine was much the same as the other places I've talked about. We got up, washed and went down for breakfast. The food was alright as far as I remember. Downstairs was where our classrooms were and we had classes every morning.
187. In the afternoon we would play football or go to the gym, they had a wee gym there. We could also do judo or swimming or we would go on trips. We would watch TV in the evening or play cards, it all depended as they had a kind of rota of activities. We sometimes went to the YMCA in Paisley as well.
188. One of the trips was to Quarrier's Homes, it was a massive big place, like a village with shops and a school and church and loads of kids. I think it was a place for kids without mums and dads.
189. We got four cigarettes a day. We would buy a packet and give it to staff and we would then get a fag after breakfast a fag after dinner and a couple more at night. That was your perk every day.
190. I went home most weekends at The Kibble as I got weekend leave.

Running away

191. I ran away from the Kibble just the once, which was enough to get kicked out. I was told when I went in that I would be chucked out if I messed up and it was just before my sixteenth birthday that it happened.
192. I was with a wee pal called [REDACTED] who I was helping get back to his mum's because she was ill and he didn't know how to get there. We ended up breaking into a shed and stealing some glue. We had a wee sniff of the glue and then we got caught by the police.

Abuse at Kibble School

193. There was the odd fight at The Kibble and staff would give you a kick up the arse now and again but it was alright and there was never anything sexual, nothing like that.
194. I can't remember anything I would call abuse or any bad treatment at The Kibble. I would say it was just peer pressure that made me run away with wee [REDACTED] and then I was kicked out.

Leaving Kibble School

195. I was taken to the police station for breaking into the shed and stealing the glue. I then went to Gourrock Sheriff Court the next day where I was remanded to Longriggend. Back then everyone went to Barlinnie, D wing before going on to other places like Longriggend, so the police took me there first.

HMP Barlinnie, Glasgow

196. You never forget your first time in Barlinnie. I was stripped naked for the medical and they stuck this ball with a bit of wire on it between my legs. It was to check for VD, TB, crabs, or anything like that and everybody got it.
197. Then I was sent for a shower and given prison gear to wear, starched shirts and itchy coats. Everyone had athlete's foot because you had to wear these old horrible shoes, which probably a thousand men had worn before you.
198. If you were going on to Longriggend then you could be sent there that night or it could be the next again morning. If it was later that night you were put in a wee box, they were called 'dog boxes' until you were transferred. You could spend half an hour in the dog boxes or be in them all day. I was only ever in one for about two and a half hours.
199. The dog boxes were very small and they had this big pipe going through them which was burning hot. I was also given this food which is called the 'mystery bowl' which was alright but everything gets steam cooked in there so you couldn't shit for about a week. It was just all the food from the last few days which was put in a pot and it actually tasted quite nice but it looked like dog puke.
200. I was kept at Barlinnie for two nights before being sent on to Longriggend so I was put in a cell not the dog boxes. There were three of us in the cell. We had piss pots and if you needed a crap you did it in the pot, wrapped it in paper and threw it out the window. That's just how it was.
201. There was no physical or sexual abuse at Barlinnie. I was transferred to Longriggend in a single decker bus with other boys after my two nights there.

Longriggend Detention Centre, Airdrie (first time)

General

202. I was fifteen when I first went to Longriggend but I was in and out of there right through my teenage years up until I was about twenty. I don't know if it still happens but back then whenever you went in front of a sheriff and you got remanded for reports then you always went to Longriggend. It could be for Social Work Reports or Borstal Reports. I plead guilty to that break-in and I was sent to Longriggend for Borstal Reports that first time.
203. When I went that first time I was in the schoolboys wing because I was still fifteen. I was admonished for that break-in and stayed at Longriggend until I was sixteen. I was nearly sixteen by then anyway so I was only at Longriggend for about two or three weeks.

Daily Routine

204. We all had single cells at Longriggend. We would get up, washed and get breakfast. We just took our breakfast back to our cell and after we'd eaten it we would go to the school, which was up the stairs.
205. After school we were locked up again. We weren't allowed to mix with the older boys so we didn't get to do much. We had a wee area where we could all mix but we spent most of our time in our cells in the boys wing.
206. I didn't get any visitors at Longriggend and I didn't want my mum to come and visit me at any of the approved schools I was in. She was busy looking after four kids so she didn't have time anyway.

Abuse at Longriggend Detention Centre (first time)

207. All that happened at Longriggend was fighting. I just got involved in fights all the time. There was no abuse or violence towards me or any of the other schoolboys by any staff, not that I'm aware of.

Leaving Longriggend Detention Centre (first time)

208. As soon as I turned sixteen I went to Polmont Borstal. I was always up to no good in Longriggend so they couldn't get me out of there quick enough. I went to Falkirk Sheriff Court and they sent me to borstal. I had to go to Barlinnie first of all, that was the process back then, and it was for four days that time, then I went to Polmont.

Polmont Young Offenders Institute, Polmont

General

209. Borstal is training so you get nine months to two years. I was there for nine months before I got my first parole.
210. There's a place at Polmont called the 'Alli Calli' which is the Allocation Wing and that's where you go to start with, to get processed. You go in there for about eight to ten weeks before being sent to either the north, east, south or west wing or Carrick House which were all at Polmont or you could be transferred to Castle Huntly which was in Dundee.
211. Before you knew which wing you were going to you had to go and see the governor. Every time anyone went to see the governor it was mad. The officer would throw you into his room and you would land on this mat that slid across the polished floor in this room and you ended up right under his table. The governor would then shout at you to get up. I don't know why but that was the way they had that designed.
212. That happened to me when I left the 'Alli Calli' and the governor shouted at me and told me I'd been allocated to Carrick House. That was known as the place all the nutters and violent guys went but I was told I was going there because I didn't like being in big groups. I remember getting told that.

213. Carrick House was a box shape and we all had single cells. The cells were around the bottom and the top and the exercise yard was in the middle. There was no toilet in your cell you just used a piss pot which was emptied every morning or whenever it needed to be. If your door was open you could go and empty it.
214. The staff I remember from Polmont are ^{GQJ} [REDACTED], Rab Oliver and James Oliver, they were brothers, one of them was killed in a car crash. A lot of them just shouted at you, that was the main discipline they seemed to use.

Daily Routine

215. It's a military type of thing at Polmont. In the 'Alli Calli' we got up, went down for breakfast which was pretty good, we had porridge, a bit of bread, egg and a bit of bacon.
216. After breakfast we went back up the stairs and we could go to the gym, go to meetings or talk with staff about things. We also learnt how to march so we did that some days. I can't remember much about the routine, I can't even remember any school. We did have work, everybody had a job, mine was a cleaner.
217. In the evening after dinner we would be banged up in our cells from about five or six. You were going into the prison type system so you were banged up quite a lot.
218. Once I was in Carrick House we could get an education if you wanted and I got into the workshop which was great. I was a marquee erector that was my job so in the summer I was never in the borstal because we used to have to go out to set up gala days and those kind of events.

Family Contact

219. My dad used to come up and visit me at Polmont with my brother. My mum wanted to come and see me but I didn't allow that, I didn't ever want her to see me in those

places. I couldn't avoid it as a kid but once I was in Polmont and after that I never let her see me.

220. Sometimes my dad would come up and spend all his time sitting chatting with the screws as he knew some of them. To be honest I think that's how I got my nine month parole because I was fighting all the time so I was quite surprised to get parole.

Abuse at Polmont YOI

221. I got battered by staff a few times at Polmont. The worst was ^{GQJ} [REDACTED], we called him ^{GQJ} [REDACTED] and he was a bad guy. If you were a Protestant you were done. He battered all the proddies and of course I was a wee proddie so he battered me a few times. He would just kick me in the guts or punch me. It was just because I was a Protestant and he would say that when he hit me. He probably battered me about four or five times at Polmont.
222. If you did anything wrong, like fighting, you would be sent to another wing as punishment its was known as 'wing punishment'. They also had the 'Digger' which was underneath the north wing. It was like the 'Digger' at Larchgrove but you could see outside.
223. I remember I was once sent to east wing for wing punishment where ^{GQJ} [REDACTED] worked. I remember there was a boy there who had a tattoo of 'King Billy' and ^{GQJ} [REDACTED] ^{GQJ} [REDACTED] ran up and kicked him right in the face, took him right out the game, he was unconscious. I was standing next to the boy when that happened.
224. I think that once the staff realised where I came from they kind of backed off me because I just lived in the [REDACTED] from Polmont. My dad used to come up and visit me and I think the staff knew him so they stopped battering me.
225. There was also a lot of fighting between the boys, I was always involved in fights with the Glasgow Division in Polmont. The staff loved that. They had this game called

'Murder Ball' where they would take us all down to the gym and give us this big medicine ball.

226. There were the Glaswegians, the Aberdonians, the Dundonians and us. The staff would say it was time to get rid of our stress and throw us the ball but it just stayed where it was and we all started fighting. There were no weapons or stabbing, it was just fist fighting. It felt good if you won, not so good if you got battered. When you were young you weren't bothered as the punches just bounced off you. The staff encouraged that, but I can't remember any of the ones that were involved in all that.
227. There was nothing sexual at Polmont. It was a different set up altogether there and although I witnessed things I wasn't that bothered about anything that went on. Was it bullying or abuse or was it just the staff showing their authority because that's what borstal was all about?

Reporting of abuse at Polmont YOI

228. I wouldn't have reported anything at Polmont, that wasn't what you would do back then. You just took it as it was and that was it. I didn't ever see a social worker or anyone like that anyway. That had all gone by then and it was more a probation thing.

Leaving Polmont YOI

229. I knew I could do up to two years at Polmont but you can get your first parole at nine months. I got mine at nine months, and as I say, I think that was because of my dad.
230. I went back to stay with my mum and dad in Falkirk, from Polmont. I was home for about three months then I broke into a bowling alley in Falkirk one night and I was caught inside by the police.

231. I went to Falkirk Sheriff Court for that and got remanded for Social Work Reports so I went to Barlinnine for that night then back at Longriggend the next day.

Longriggend Detention Centre, Paisley (second time)

232. I spent about three weeks at Longriggend. I was getting assessed for my fitness and suitability to go to a detention centre. Longriggend was different that second time as I was no longer in the schoolboys wing because I was sixteen.

233. It was quite violent that second time, there were loads of stabbings and slashing's and basically every single one of us got battered. If you thought you were a 'ticket', that's a wee hard guy or loud mouth, then the screws would say 'you think you're a wee ticket, well we're the bus conductors' and smack, you'd get a whack on the back of the head.

234. Everyone was getting 'stamped' which was a punch on the back of the skull, we all got that, including me. We got that and we just got battered, that could be punching and kicking, but I don't remember anyone getting kicked unconscious.

235. I couldn't tell you any names, but they all did it, and they were all big men. I was just a wee skinny boy. I do remember learning quickly which staff not to upset.

236. I did my three weeks assessment at Longriggend that second time and went back to Falkirk Sheriff Court where I was sentenced to Glenochil Detention Centre, which we called DC. I was sentenced to three months which you can't do any more than unless you get other charges. If you behave yourself you do eight weeks five days, that's what I did.

Glenochil Young Offenders Institute, Alloa

General

237. It was sharp shock treatment at DC and it was way worse than borstal. When I say shock I mean it, because as soon as you arrived in that reception on day one, your life changed.
238. As soon as you went in to DC you had your hair shaved off but before that, after you're sentenced and first arrive everyone gets the same treatment. At least I think this happens to everybody. You're taken through the gate into the reception area and then it's just the police and DC staff, all in their uniforms.
239. You walk through reception and a member of staff walks up to you and it's an automatic crack in the jaw. I got one and I was knocked clean out. Everyone you speak to who's been in DC will tell you that story, because that happened to about 95% of the people that went in there. I don't know who did it but that was the shock part of the treatment for you.
240. I woke up and was seen by the doctor who said I was okay and then I got dressed into this kit they have. After that the shouting starts and it doesn't stop until you're locked up at night. I was shown to my cell and I remember it was mayhem, the noise with all the shouting and it was all staff who were doing the screaming. They shouted at everybody, none of the inmates were saying a word.
241. It's like a boot camp type of thing at DC you start in an Induction Wing and then move on to different places until it's time for you to go. You get shown what to do and how to do your bed block and that kind of thing but I was okay as I'd already learnt it all in borstal.
242. I remember getting an induction in the gym, you were told what was going to happen and what you would be doing and you did get fit at Glenochil, that was great.
243. After all that it was back to your cell and you would be told about lights out which was ten o'clock.

244. You were marched about and shouted at everywhere you went that never really stopped until night-time. To be quite honest I actually enjoyed DC it was the quickest sentence I've ever done. You were well fed and you came out super fit but you did get battered.
245. It was all about installing discipline in you at DC. A lot of the boys were used to borstal and living like animals so it was invented by the government to change the boys and discipline them, that was the purpose. If you speak to anyone who's been in borstal and DC they will tell you the same.

Daily routine

246. Your feet never touched the ground at DC, from as soon as you arrived in that reception on day one. You were getting shouted at all the time, you were on the move all the time, you couldn't even talk. It's the quietest I've ever been in my life.
247. Everybody was in single cells and when we got up everybody had to have a shave. Even if your body wasn't ready for shaving you had to have a shave, as it was getting you ready for shaving. You had to be clean shaven all the time.
248. We would go down for breakfast then you would be working, going to school if you wanted to, or going to the gym for marching or training things like that. It was all very regimental and you just went wherever you were told.
249. Everything had to be perfect, you had to bull your boots and have your bed block perfect. The lights went on in the cells at half five every morning and I used to get up at six. I had everything folded and perfect. That stays with you, if I was to take you to my cell now you'd see everything folded and perfect in all my cupboards.
250. I was very good at all that, but that was because I'd done borstal before DC, I'm glad of that and the army cadets, that taught me how to march as well. You had to learn to march and if you couldn't march you got battered until you did learn how to march.

251. So you had to have everything perfect in your cell by the time your door was opened in the morning. You could be alright and the next four cells could be alright but if there was one guy whose stuff wasn't right then everyone's kit was chucked out and it was all mixed up together.
252. I mentioned the shouting and it's all you hear in DC, shouting and shouting and shouting all the time. I was thinking what's going on here but you can't stop to think, and you can't talk, or the staff are screaming at you "don't talk, you've not got a voice, you belong to us now".
253. The food was amazing, I'm never eaten so much food in all my life, but you need it because you're always on the move. You had to eat everything but everyone did, you were young and hungry that was never a problem.
254. We were in the gym or running every day. I was super fit by the time I left DC. We did a timed mile run which I was good at as I was pretty fit. They made us all run the mile as fast as we could and told us not to be last otherwise we would be introduced to 'Big Freddie' and 'Little Freddie', which were a cricket bat and a wee rounder's bat. They told us if you were lagging behind you would get hit and if you were really slow it would be Big Freddie and if it was just a wee bit slow it would be Little Freddie.
255. There was a wee beefy lad and all the boys were looking at him knowing he was going to be getting it. Right enough he was lagging behind and I could hear him getting hit while we were all running.
256. I was off thinking I wasn't going to get hit but there was a guy taking all the times and after we finished we were told that if you didn't get a faster time the next time you would get hit by one of the bats. They were fly you see that was their trick.
257. The staff also like to play this tag game with a tennis ball. They would throw the ball at us while we were running about in a group and if that ball hit you, you knew all about it. It was a bit like paintball and it was fun but you could be covered in all these red marks.

258. Another thing we did at gym was the Liberation Gym which is your last gym session before you get out. You have to do everything backwards. We were all super fit by then and you had to be as we had to climb up ropes upside down and go up the wall bars backwards so it was pretty scary and a bit strange. If you fell you landed on your head and that did happen to people.
259. We did cleaning and things like bible studies and we got graded for the things we did. You started with nothing then you go to a yellow grade and then you go up to red grade once you'd done all your bible studies and all that. The red grade is just for the last three weeks or so but you weren't treated any different with the grades.
260. I got my yellow grade quite quick and that got me the job of Kit Storeman. That was my job during the week making all the kits up for all the guys in DC. Another thing I did was to go over to the gatehouse and do some of the cleaning over there.

Abuse at Glenochil

261. I once saw a boy run at a screw with a fire extinguisher. The screws got it off him and started hitting the boy on his legs with the fire extinguisher. Up and down, that was a sore one. I don't know who the boy or the screws were.
262. If you needed a crap when you were in your cell you had to take it in your pot. I remember this lad who was that scared in there. For some reason he wasn't shitting in his pot and he'd been wrapping it up in newspaper and saving it in the back of his locker. When the screws found out you could hear him screaming from the battering they gave him and they were rubbing his shit in his face. It was terrible. I remember standing watching that, we were told to stand and watch. I think that lad might have tried to hang himself actually. There were a lot of suicides in DC. I don't remember the lads name or any of the prison officers.

263. Boys were always getting beaten up in DC. I remember there were two Irish screws that got me, I'll never forget them, GMV and GRK were their names. They were two well-known characters at DC. I'd been in a bad mood and I'd told one of them to fuck off. There was a cupboard at the back of the toilets and the two of them took me in there and battered me. They kicked me in the back and on my head and face. I had a burst nose and I was just knackered. It was a regular thing for them to beat people up.
264. I remember I was in the toilets one day and there was a guy sitting in one of the toilets and the screw GMV was shouting at him to hurry up. The guy told him where to go because he was doing the toilet and GMV kicked the door in and set about the guy. He had him on the floor and was kicking his head and body, it was a right do in. That guy was never the same in the head after that his eyes were rolling in his head, he just wasn't right. I don't know who the boy he was but GMV did that to him.

Reporting of abuse at Glenochil

265. DC was just the same as other places, you just didn't report things. We didn't speak to one another much at DC anyway, you couldn't or you'd get battered. Nothing was spoken about or reported.

Leaving Glenochil

266. We had no training or preparation for leaving DC and going back home, there was nothing like that. We did go to the careers office in borstal just to get a National Insurance number.
267. I did my eight weeks and five days and then I was sent back to my mum and dad. I was driven down to Stirling railway station then I got a train to Falkirk. It was only a ten minute ride home.

268. It was alright back home but I just went out and got back into trouble again. I was breaking in to places, shops mostly and just taking money out of tills. I ended up getting caught again and the next place I went to was Friarton, I never went back to DC again.

Friarton Young Offenders Institute, Perth

General

269. I was always sent to Friarton after DC and I was there a few times. It was never any more than a three month sentence otherwise you had to go to DC. I would look to get out after eight weeks and five days again but I did do a couple of three month sentences. I would have been in there about six times, up to the age of twenty one.
270. Friarton was alright really, you got into fights with the boys more than you did with the staff. I might have got into trouble once or twice but nothing I can remember.

Life after being in care

271. I was a punk and a skinhead around the time I was going in to Friarton. That was the time I also started getting into assaults and I was getting a bit violent. My previous convictions from back then are just about all for fighting with coppers.
272. I was into the drink most of the time, since I was a kid, but in 1993 I also got into drugs. I would get violent with coppers because they would take me away and beat me up.
273. I met a girl called [REDACTED] and we had two kids together. When I turned twenty one I met another girl called [REDACTED] who calmed me down a lot. I had two kids with [REDACTED] as well. When [REDACTED] and I split up I reverted back to getting drunk and going out fighting. I've actually got six kids and I don't see any of them. I didn't see them much when they were young, I'm their dad but I'll never be their father. It's quite sad to say that but I

just couldn't have anything to do with kids with my lifestyle. I've been in and out of the jail all my life.

274. I did work on and off as an industrial cleaner and I've done labouring and some seasonal work with the council.
275. I was convicted of murder in 2012 and sentenced to life in prison. I will be in custody for a minimum of twenty two years before there will be any parole considerations.

Impact

276. I wish I had told my mum and my dad about the abuse because that would have helped explain a hell of a lot about how I used to behave. My aunties used to tell me that my mum would say there was something not right with me.
277. When you're doing a life sentence it does tend to start sucking the life out of you. You just have to try and keep it at bay. You have loads of time to reflect and think about where everything went wrong.
278. When I was sentenced and came to Gartree, I was told I had the education of a fourteen year old and I was that age when I left Balgowan. That shows you how much impact being in care has had on my education.
279. I have trust issues with anybody really, but especially in relationships and with authority. When a relationship starts I feel it's what I need and having kids is then even better but as soon as I feel I'm getting controlled it all gets too much for me and I'm off. I've not been very good to women, to be quite honest with you, and I have been involved in a bit of domestic violence.
280. With authority I just don't believe anything anyone says to me because I was lied to as a kid. I just don't like talking to some people, and I think that's down to what happened to me as a kid.

281. I used to always say to myself how come my brothers and my sisters met people, fell in love and had children and that didn't happen for me. I love my brothers and my sister but I don't know them. I wasn't brought up with them, I was brought up in the system.
282. I have always said that if I'd been allowed to stay at home after that first year at Balgowan and been left with my brothers and my sister I would have been a completely different person. Looking back I know I would have been fine and everything goes back to that.
283. It's logical to think that if you're abused as a child you could end up being a lunatic or end up doing daft things but I'm not blaming the abuse for what I did. I just feel that everything goes back to that point in my childhood, when I could have gone home but ended up back in Balgowan being sexually abused more. I wasn't taught how to think correct. My emotions, my control, anything and I just ended up losing control all the time.
284. Something that did happen to me as a child was that I started to talk with a really bad stammer. I used to get into trouble for that but I never had it before I was in care and then it started just after I came out of Balgowan. Now and again I still have it. It used to stop when I was shouting at people and I was once told by a member of staff somewhere to sing when I was talking and it did go away. I actually used to sing when I was speaking to people and that's how I eventually got over my stammer.
285. There was a time when I wondered if I was a homosexual because I couldn't understand why all these men were attracted to me. I wondered if there was something about me, so it made me question my own sexuality and that's turned me inside out quite a few times. I know I'm not gay because I've never had any relationships and I don't find men attractive but why were they attracted to me. That used to do my nut in, why me? What was different about me that made them go for me and not anyone else?

286. I was lost at Bellfield, I'd been taken away from my home for the first time and just dropped into this place with strangers. I was just left with a social worker so I don't know if abusers would see that and prey on that.
287. I have deprived myself of a life with my kids. I've denied myself of that because of my lifestyle as I said. I have taken drink since I was a kid, I started on that to blank out the sexual abuse. In 1993 I also started taking heroin, although I never took drugs in the family home. That was because I'd been through a murder trial, my ma had died and my miss's found out I'd had an affair with her sister.
288. Drink just made me violent though, the best thing for me was the heroin, it made me at peace with myself, if that makes any sense. It took things away and stopped me thinking about it.
289. I would blame some of my aggression and violence on being in care and the abuse. I think that's where it was bred, but I don't know that it was because of the abuse, that I ended up doing what I did to be here now. I wasn't taught and I didn't have that love in me. I think about it now but its fifteen years too late. If I thought then like I think now I would never have been cruel.
290. I've had a lot of time for reflection in jail, and that's the only reason I'm doing all this. I wonder where did it all go wrong in my life and when did it all start. It always comes back to the abuse when I was a child, but I'm not blaming that for the crime, I know it was me that did the crime.
291. They did have some things right, particularly at DC. They put discipline in your life and I still do certain things that I learnt there. My clothes are still always folded up perfect. It was definitely too violent but that was what is was designed to be like. I'm glad the rule in Scotland was that you could only do it the once mind you. If it hadn't been so violent it would totally have worked and I would have gone back.

Treatment/support

292. Years ago in prison, I was looking for answers about all my madness and I found out about Grendon Prison. That's where they do psychoanalysis or psychometrics, all the therapeutic rehabilitation stuff. I had a pal who was in here that went there, smashed it and got himself out. I tick all the boxes for Grendon so I applied and I got a place there in 2015.
293. It's a good jail but I went there too early. You have to follow a process and I just wasn't ready for it back then. I didn't finish it and ended up back at Gartree. I'm now trying to get back there, I was knocked back three times but I tried again this year and was accepted so it looks like I may be going back there later this year.
294. I haven't been diagnosed with depression or anything like that but I have tried to kill myself. I'm covered in scars from that. That was all from when I was a kid, probably when I was about seventeen and it was all because of the abuse. I've got slash marks on my chest and stomach but I don't think I was really trying to kill myself.
295. I was told by the staff in here that I would be looked after once I had spoken to the Inquiry, yet not one person came to see me after our first meeting. I'm not bothered but they did ask me and I was told three members of staff had been told to keep an eye on me.

Reporting of Abuse

296. I've never reported anything to the police. The first time I ever spoke about the sexual abuse was in here to Charmaine, my key worker. I haven't spoken about it to anyone else other than the Inquiry.

Records

297. I've never tried to get any of my records.

Lessons to be Learned/Hopes for the Inquiry

298. I don't think you'll ever be able to stop child abuse. If someone wants to do that sort of thing they'll find a way of doing it. There's always going to be kids and there's always going to be paedophiles. It's been proven they can never be treated.
299. You need to stop sending kids to places like that but I suppose that as long as the staff are vetted properly they can maybe work. Perhaps it should just be women that look after kids, I think that with their natural motherly instinct they would maybe treat them better.

Other information

300. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed... 

Dated... 31-3-22