

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GCM

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GCM. My date of birth is the 1980. My contact details are known to the inquiry.

Background

2. I was brought up by my mum and dad but they split up and I lived for a period with both of them separately at different addresses. My dad died two years ago. My mum is still alive but we didn't talk for a while but we have recently been in touch and trying to re-establish our relationship to each other. I have two sisters and one brother. I have one daughter who is six but I don't have custody of her as she is in kinship care with her parental grandparents.

Life before care

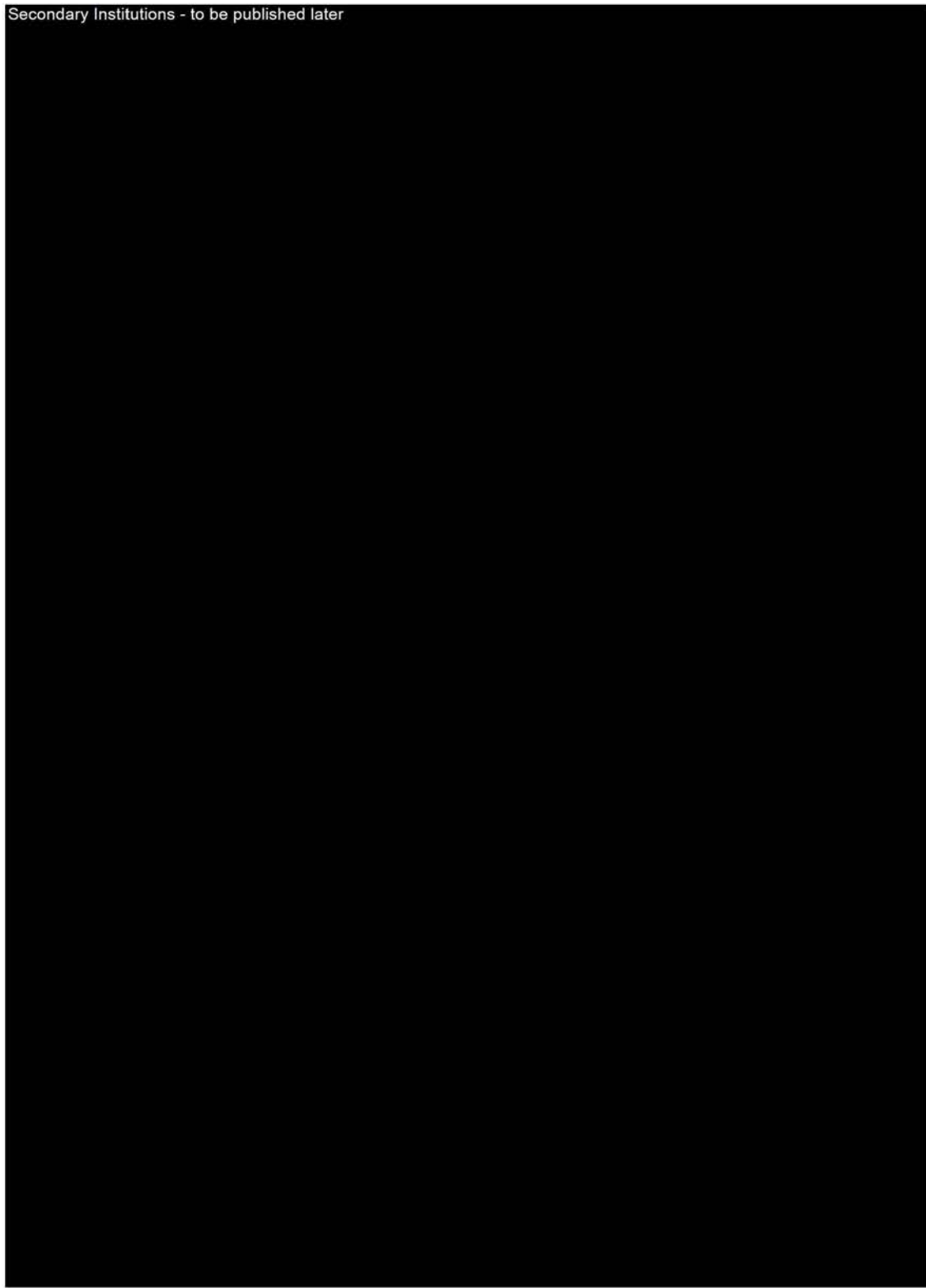
3. I was very unsettled as a child after my mum and dad split up when I was three or four. When they split up me and my sister went to live with my dad and his parents. This was one of the happiest times of my life. As my big sister got older because my dad is not my sister's dad she wanted to go and live with my mums parents so she left and I went with her. My maternal grandfather was in the navy and he was very strict and you were scared to do anything. I was quite a mischievous child and had a lot of highs and lows. My behaviour was very erratic. I was suspended in primary three because I sat in

a puddle because I didn't want to go to school because my grandpa had dressed me for school. I remember going home and got battered by my grandpa with a belt. I couldn't sit for a week. When I was ten years old I went back to live with my mum who had a new partner by this time.

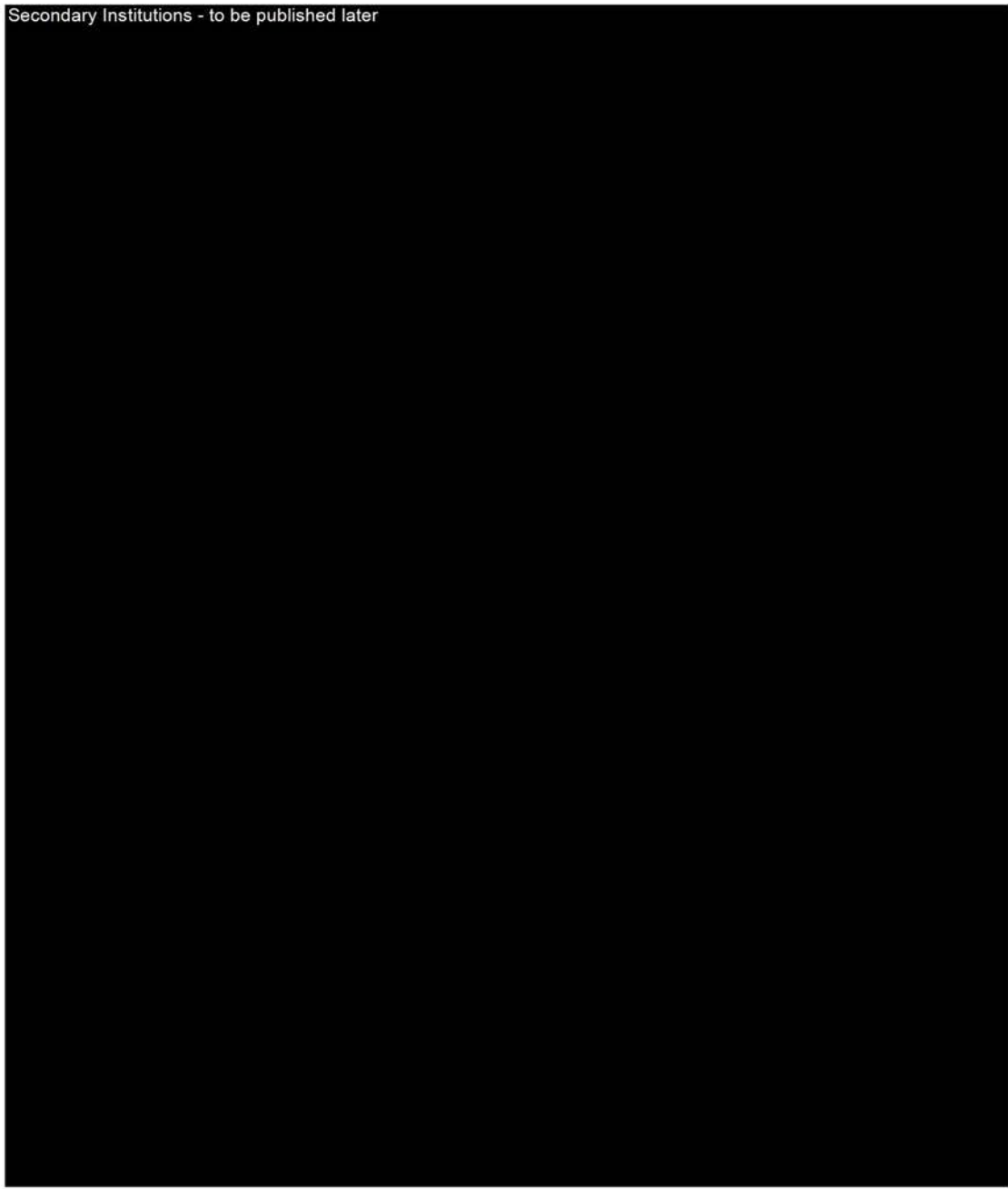
4. I was stealing things from the house, like a couple of pounds from my mum's purse so I had money for school. I think I was rebelling about being shifted and shunted from post to post, but I was later diagnosed when I was sixteen with ADHD but because I was sixteen it was untreatable because they won't give you Ritalin at sixteen. My mum and step dad drank and fought an awful lot. My mum was very violent and gave me the belt or you would get high heels stuck in your head or knives thrown at you. I saw them fighting a lot, nearly killing each other and the police came along. My mum's mum had a massive heart attack so my mum moved close to her to look after her. I was running away from home and got in to trouble with the police. Because of that I got a social worker who was nice.
5. On one occasion two pounds went missing from my mum's purse and I got the blame for it because of my history. It wasn't even me, it was my sister. My mum switched on the gas hob and put my hand in the flame and burnt it. I was told to admit it but I wouldn't because it wasn't me so I just took the usual 'doing' in the house. My mum and sister used to pick on me and tell me that I was ugly. They used to tell me I looked like a witch because of my nose and my chin. I was constantly ridiculed and put down by somebody who gave birth to me so I didn't want to be there or be part of that family. My step dad was quite a nice person and he saw that my mum treated me differently from my other sisters so I got a bit more love and affection from him.
6. It ended up that I got allocated a social worker and we decided that it was time for me to go in to care. It was me and the social worker who made that decision when I was thirteen years old, and it was decided at a children's panel in 1993 under a place of safety order that I would go to Clevedon. I was the only one that went in to care

Life in care – Cleveden, Glasgow

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



Secondary Institutions - to be published later



Cardross Assessment Centre

15. I was taken to Cardross Assessment Centre which is in Cardross, Dunbartonshire near Balloch and it was supposed to only be for three weeks. The assessment centre was for both boys and girls. There were three or four

different units and there were maybe ten children in each unit. The units were mixed sex but you had your own room.

16. I was at Cardross for months. There were other kids coming in from lots of other units and there were lots of children coming and going.

Meal Times

17. At meal times at Cardross we all sat in the dining halls and had our tea together. Food wasn't bad and we were well fed.

Running away

18. I ran away for a significant amount of time when I was at Cardross. I stayed with my pals, my mum gave me money and I was shoplifting. I was away for about six months. I ran away because I had problems with authority. Another thing was that there was one time a boy went missing from Cardross home and he was found under my bed. I later found out he was infatuated with me and had my name scratched into his stomach. That kind of freaked me out and that's why I didn't want to stay there.

Abuse - Cardross

19. Their restraint tactics were like twenty stone men standing on the necks of wee boys and lassies. The way they restrained you was they would sweep the feet away from you then somebody would stand or kneel on your neck then push your arms up your back. I was probably retrained about twice every week. They would then fling you in to your room. Some of them were rougher than others, and some were just doing it as part of their job and they had to do it but others obviously got pleasure out of it. They would do this to me even if I was just having an argument or a disagreement with somebody.

20. At one point I was so unhappy that I [REDACTED] to try and kill myself. I did it because I was supposed to get home leave but I was told at a meeting that my mum didn't want to take me so, because of the rejection, [REDACTED] I hurt my arm and had to get about a hundred stitches in my arm. It wasn't difficult to run away either.
21. In my time there I got lots of other cuts and bruises/ burst lips / black eyes but I never got to see a doctor or get any medical attention.
22. In Cardross there was open sexualised behaviour between children between the ages of twelve and probably sixteen. This was happening in open view of the staff but they didn't do anything about it.
23. About a month after I [REDACTED] I was in my bed when the emergency social workers came again and took me away to Kerelaw Secure Unit. I think I was moved because of my challenging behaviour. I went to Kerelaw in 1994 when I was fourteen years old.

Kerelaw Secure Unit

24. Kerelaw is in Stevenson in Ayrshire and there is a secure unit and an open unit. There are three different units within the secure unit, and each unit was locked, and is mixed with boys and girls. There was also a school and a football pitch. On the other side of the fence was the open unit and it was separate. It had four units, a school, gym and an independent living unit where older kids eighteen to nineteen year olds were leaving care and this was the step before they moved in to their own tenancy.
25. Up the stairs were the bedrooms and I had my own bedroom. The Open unit has two girls units called Wilson and Baird and the boys have two units called Motherstone and I can't remember the other one. I spent most of my time in the secure unit and only a short period in the open unit.

Routine - Kerelaw*Meal Times*

26. They had chefs or cooks so they cooked the breakfast, dinner and tea.

Schooling

27. There was a school in Kerelaw and I went to it, but the teachers told me I was too advanced for them and they didn't really have any work for me to do. The subjects they had was maths, English and Computing. They didn't have any sciences or geography. I found it quite difficult to learn at Kerelaw because there were about fifty kids with loads of problems in each class and there seemed to be something kicking off every day. It was only when I went to Corntonvale that I realised I was actually quite brainy and that's where I sat my exams, and I used their education department.

Leisure Time

28. You were allowed to smoke at Kerelaw and they gave you five or six cigarettes every day. Your parents were allowed to bring you in cigarettes. I was thirteen or fourteen years old but they gave everyone who smoked cigarettes. There was a tuck shop so you could buy sweeties. The people who were allowed to got to go out on trips.
29. Some of the staff would play football, and some of the women staff would bring in some beauty stuff for us to do. We had games, the TV, pool table and a table tennis table. People could phone in as well and speak to you. It ticked all the boxes and it looked good on the surface.

Washing and Bathing

30. There were two showers beside us and there were showers downstairs, so you had to take it in turns. In the secure unit because we couldn't open our doors we had to press the buzzer in the morning and tell them we were up and that we wanted to be put on the list for a shower and they would let you out when it was your turn. It was run just like a mini jail and everything was locked.

Christmas / Birthdays

31. We celebrated Christmas and we put decorations up. We had a Christmas lunch but we didn't really get any presents. Some kids didn't have very much and at Christmas and Birthdays my mum used to give me lots of presents, probably because she felt guilty that I was there, and I quite often gave my stuff away. I never got any presents from the home. People who were doing life sentences got decent presents.

Visits

Visits took place every day. People could just phone up and arrange to come in. I was visited by the social worker Maud every week. I am not aware of anyone else ever coming in to inspect Kerelaw.

Abuse - Kerelaw

32. I was a normal wee lassie and I was thrown in with murderers, sex offenders, and I shared living spaces with them. There was a boy called [REDACTED] in my unit who had killed a four year old child when he was eleven years old. [REDACTED] key worker once punched me on the face with his fist a couple of times and burst my nose because me and a few others had called [REDACTED] a beast.

33. In the classroom the art teacher called **KGO** was pervy. I can't remember his last name but he liked young lassies. He would do pottery and come behind you like in the film 'Ghost' and put his arms round you and you could feel his penis on your back. He did this to me. He would also let kids kiss and fondle each other in the middle of the lessons.
34. **HUV** who was the Maths teacher he would even let two fourteen year old children shag in his class. When they were doing it he would sit behind his desk at the other side of the room and play with himself when he was watching them. He didn't think anyone could see but you could see his hand moving and you couldn't mistake what he was doing.
35. I know the staff can't stop boys and girls from seeing each other as boyfriend and girlfriend but they let it happen just a bit too much especially when there were younger children about. They would let kids come in from other classes and meet in the classroom and sit in the corner and the girl and boy would be touching and kissing and sometimes there would even be penetrative sex. The teachers would be aware what was going on and it happened in the classroom almost on a daily basis.
36. Other staff had relationships with the kids. There was a girl **IZA** from Greenock who had a key worker called Tommy, can't remember anything else about him, and she said she would get a fag for giving him a blow job. He regularly went in to her room and the door was locked. They would be in her room alone.
37. The staff used to humiliate and ridicule you saying that you were in there because nobody else wanted you. **zFST** I can't remember his last name, took a dislike to me and I was forever rolling about the floor with him. If I raised my voice or was angry about something he would be the first to make my face black and blue, and give me carpet burns.

38. My mum came down to visit me and she told them that my face wasn't marked two days earlier when she had been there but they just said that they had to restrain me and said that I had been violent. I wasn't being violent, I was just having words and was expressing how I was feeling.
39. When I was getting restrained I would lash out and hit back and three men would take me upstairs to the 'Silent cell'. They would strip me naked and put me in there. They left you with nothing at all to protect your dignity, no covers; nothing, and they regularly came and checked on you by looking through the spy hole. I remember being so scared in that wee room, scared that they would come back and kick me about. One time I asked to go to the toilet and they let me out. I locked myself in the toilet because I didn't want to go back in that room. They just burst the door in two and pulled me out over the door and I was still naked and they put me back in the 'Silent cell'.
40. I was put in the silent cell several times, and was stripped naked each time. Quite often it was male staff.
41. I desperately wanted out of Kerelaw Secure Unit so I tried my best to behave myself so I could get to the Open Unit and later I did get moved.
42. One Christmas when I was in Kerelaw my dad bought me a pair of Timberland boots and you weren't allowed to wear hard soled shoes but I put them on anyway to try them on Christmas day. I was told by staff to "Get these fucking boots off". Because of the way I was asked I said I wasn't taking them off and they would have to remove them. The next thing was they pinned me to the floor and the boots were ripped off me. I was charged with assault even though I never touched him and I was kept overnight in Saltcoats Police Station on Christmas day and went back to Kerelaw the next day.

Kerelaw Open Unit

43. On one occasion when I was in the open unit, a girl [REDACTED] who was in the secure unit, had ran away and she had some of my clothes. She phoned my unit and said that she was on the run but she would get my clothes back to me and that was okay. The next thing was she must have phoned John Muldoon a member of staff because he came and started screaming in my face saying that a key child was frightened to come back because of a scum bag like me. He punched, kicked and slapped me to my face and pulled my hair. I didn't understand because the girl had phoned me.
44. I remember being in class in Kerelaw Open School when me and another boy [REDACTED] got in to an argument. Because we were arguing, Matt George came over three tables to get me, grabbed me by the throat, pulled me off my chair and slammed me to the floor. Matt was a scary man and shouted and bawled at me. Matt must have pressed a buzzer because two other members of staff came and restrained me. They punched me and elbowed me. I was fighting back and I was flailing my arms about and that's why the other two got involved and they put my arms up my back. One of them was John Muldoon. I had bruising to my head and had finger marks on my throat, but again I didn't see a doctor.

Routine - Kerelaw Open Unit

45. The open unit was much the same but was more relaxed. You were woken up and you could wander along and have a shower, get ready and have you breakfast.

Trips / Excursions

46. In Kerelaw open unit they would take you out on trips, maybe to the amusements, Ayr beach things like that.

Running Away

47. I ran away from the open unit a few times but that meant that when I got caught I was put back in the secure unit. I had just turned sixteen by then.
48. When I ran away I got in to bother because somebody put their hand up my fourteen year old friends skirt and it ended up that he battered me so I got a knife and stabbed him. I was remanded from the children's hearing under a care order and I was put back in to Kerelaw Secure Unit. It was then dealt with in the adult court at Glasgow Sheriff Court and I was remanded on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1996 to Kerelaw secure then on [REDACTED] 1997 I was sentenced to three years imprisonment and was sent to Corntonvale Prison.
49. When I was back in secure at Kerelaw on remand we were playing football against the locals which was all part of our bit for keeping the community spirit. [REDACTED] was sitting in the dugout with a bloke and they were doing a sex act. We could see them and the residential care staff could see them. There were children there as young as eleven up to twenty-one. Someone shouted something like "Hoy that's not a lollipop you're sucking". The staff that were there knew what was going on but they did nothing to stop it.

Corntonvale

50. When I went to Corntonvale I was sixteen years and a few months old. That's when I was introduced to drugs, heroin which was readily available, but at that time it wasn't for me. They didn't keep the convicted prisoners away from the young offenders at Corntonvale so we were all mixed and there were people who had been involved in drugs for years. I dabbled in drugs when I was there and I went from one bad relationship to another. I served eighteen months at this time. *

51. The staff at Corntonvale were fine, and just really did their job. One of the prison officers told me that if we had known then what we know now they would have treated me differently. They had it in their heads what the home had said about me that we were angry young children and had a problem with authority. They said they should have listened to us.
52. In Corntonvale they had what was called the 'digger', which is like the Silent Cell at Kerelaw, but you got covers. I got the 'digger' quite a lot because of my misbehaviour.

Reporting

53. I think the first person I ever told about what was going on was when I told the social worker when I was in Kerelaw that I was getting battered. I had different social workers. One was called Claire and one was a guy whose name I don't know, and Ada Maud Gourlay but she has retired now. It was only Claire and Maud who I told and I only told them about the violence. I never told them about the sexual stuff. They spoke to the residential care staff and they just said that they had to restrain me and that was the end of the matter. I told my mum as well and she questioned the staff and she was just told the same old story that I was kicking off and they had to restrain me. I told my sister and my step dad at some point when they visited me too.
54. The next person I told was when I was doing my eight years at Corntonvale. The prison officer was Paul Cullen and he helped me a lot and got me a Community Psychiatric Nurse. When I was going through my cognitive behaviour therapy I was told that I should report some of the things to the police but there was no one I could tell. There was no one at Kerelaw who I could have trusted to tell what was going on. I have never gone to the police about what happened to me.

55. I have told other groups who I have spoken to, about my experiences but I just gave them a summary and not as much detail as I have given you. When I told the Governor of Corntonvale I reduced her to tears, because of what I had to say. It wasn't just about my time in care it was also when she heard about my life outside and in to my adult life and because I had nowhere to go to I ended up back in a violent relationship.
56. I was never asked to give a statement about Matt George or asked to go to court to give evidence against him. I wish I had been asked because I would have gone to court.

Life after care

57. When I left Corntonvale I was given a furnished flat and that was it. I didn't get any support from the social work department or anybody. I think by then I had become institutionalised.
58. I met a boy when I left Corntonvale and everything appeared rosy. I looked for love and because of everything that happened to me in my life I wanted somebody to love me the way that nobody else had but I just seemed to find people who would hurt me. This turned out to be a violent relationship and at one point he stabbed me in the leg.
59. Between 1998 and 2000 I was recalled to do part of my three year sentence because I had reoffended, shoplifting.
60. In 2000, when I was nineteen, there was an incident at my mum's house and about ten men came to her door and they attacked my step dad. I stabbed one of them and for that I got an eight year sentence for attempted murder. I served five and a half years and was released in [REDACTED] 2005.

61. When I was twenty-five in 2005 I met a new partner six months before I got out. I got a non-parole licence to live at his mum's. I was there for ten years but this became a very, very toxic relationship and I got into drugs probably just to hide and block out what was happening. I tried to commit suicide and got taken to the hospital and they thought I had broken my neck.
62. I went back to Prison in 2008 because I got recalled after I got charged with a breach of the Peace and served another three and a half months of my eight year sentence.
63. Just before I went back in to Corntonvale the violence in my relationship was growing and I was subjected to a lot of violence. Through counselling I learned that it was all wrong and it wasn't my fault. I just felt it was better to get hurt and have somebody rather than not to have anyone at all.
64. When I was twenty-nine years of age I was a heroin addict and it was all because the abusive relationship I was in got so bad. He was spending all my money on drugs and I was out working so I thought if I can't beat him I will join him. It wasn't just that, Heroin numbs your feelings, and that's why I took it. I came off Heroin about two years ago and apart from a mild relapse last year I am fine now.
65. In ██████████ 2012 a fight broke out at my house party. Two of my friends started fighting and one got stabbed through the heart and died. Because it was my house and because I had previous convictions I was charged with murder. I was remanded in custody for nine months but was found not guilty at the trial. I was released on ██████████ 2013. There was nowhere else I could go so I ended up back with my partner and eventually in January 2014 I left him.
66. I have since been back in jail because of some warrants, the last time being from ██████████ of 2016.

Impact

67. I know that what I have told you doesn't really sound a lot but it shaped my future. The people who look after you in care they shape you as a human being because a lot of kids haven't had a family life so they look to them for guidance and be positive role models. There were some carers who were good but they allowed things to go on that they shouldn't have.
68. I know I lack in confidence and when I was in care I felt worthless. It possibly stems from me being put down by my mum and my sister when I was young and that's always stuck with me. I think about my time in care quite a lot but I never used to speak about it. It just makes me think how sad I was and how angry I became to the care staff. I probably think about my time in care about twice a week. Because of the bad relationships I have been in I felt worthless, so I acted worthless. I let the people I loved trample over me because that was normal for me to be like that. It was normal for me not to have anyone there actually for me or to help me, it was always me helping other people.
69. I took some recreational drugs when I was younger, like ecstasy, speed, alcohol and I did it probably just to forget what I had been through. When you take drugs you go in to a different frame of mind and you have a good time.
70. I have been in two full time relationships in all my life and I have taken a large amount of abuse in them because it all seemed normal to me. I don't have my wee girl through part of that domestic violence.
71. Growing up through all that has distorted my view of healthy relationships. I have problems with trust, problems with authority, and problems with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. All my violence is directed against men.
72. When I was moved from Kerelaw to Corntonvale they sent three prison officers for me and they were told I was a monster, a staff assaulter. They have since told me that because of what they had been told they thought they

were coming for a six foot tank and there was a four foot two you. They said that they should have treated me differently.

73. When I was remanded for murder in 2012 because of it I lost my wee lassie and my abusive partner had given up the house so I had nowhere to go.
74. I just feel I have been let down badly by a system that was supposed to care. You are supposed to nurture children who are in care because they have come from a broken family but in care they just get broken even more. I became a broken woman and I am still broken. I am not saying that just because of what happened to me I ended up in jail; I made lifestyle choices, because I wanted a sense of belonging so I joined the gang culture. I don't want to go back in to jail. I don't want to keep being angry.
75. Because of what happened to me I have become a horrible person. I let people walk all over me especially in relationships. I am trying my hardest to change that. I don't want to keep going back to jail.
76. I have never engaged with any services before and I won't work with the social work department because they were supposed to be looking after me. I have never really wanted to talk about it, because I have learned just to be angry about it all the time instead of talking about it, like I am doing today because back then nobody would listen. If you tried to speak people would just tell you to shut up.
77. I find it difficult to relate to people and even in my current relationship I try to push the boundaries to see how far I can go. I just wish I could have a normal relationship.
78. Because of what happened to me I push people away and don't let people get close. I am not a touchy, feely cuddly type of person and this affects my relationships. I think I have a good heart but I think it has hardened, and I wish it wasn't like that.

79. I am the type of person because of what I have been through if somebody is down on their luck or been through a similar life story to me I tend to help them, by putting a roof over their head, or I'll feed them and because of that I will let the wrong people into my home. I try to fix other people and I let someone into my house and it went the wrong way with me and because of it I lost my daughter.
80. Before I lost care of my daughter when she was three the social work were involved but there was no court order, no supervision order or any other type of order and they were just there to be there if I needed them. Initially it was for child protection, and there was a child protection meeting, but I did everything that I was asked to do and more.
81. It has made me a not very good mother because I haven't been there for my wee lassie, but I have never been charged with neglect or anything like that.
82. I know that I made the choice to offend and I have to take responsibility for that, but there is no doubt that what I had been through had an impact on this. Maybe if I had a better start in life then things wouldn't have turned out the way they have for me. Most of the time in care it has been men who have dealt with me, and although it hasn't made me a man hater, I now won't let them push me around. I don't quite feel its kill or be killed, it's more that he's going to hurt me so I'm going to hurt him first. Most of my offences are for violence and relate to my anger, and you will see that most are against men.
83. I now find it really difficult to get a job because of my criminal history.
84. I can't say how much of the way my life turned out was caused by what happened to me at home and how much was caused by my time in care. It is difficult to split them and say for sure but I am sure it is a mixture of both.

85. I described myself as a broken sole, but doing stuff like this and speaking to you has helped mend me. I feel like people are actually actively listening and I hope this will stop it from happening to other people.

Other Action Taken

86. I have tried my best for my daughter and I decided I wasn't going to be the person that my mother was. I have been to Positive Parenting classes and interacted with my daughter all I could. I didn't sit her in front of the television, and she was always with me. I didn't shout at her and got down to her level to speak to her. I found it difficult not to be strict even though it might be for the best.
87. I have sought counselling and support work. I do voluntary work with the Positive Prisons Positive Future which is a charity set up by two men who had been in prison and helps mentor people who are going through the prison system. Through it I go to university to talk to law students and I am now part of the Scottish Women's Social Welfare, I can't remember its full title but it is called SWIGLO and is all to do with women offending. I sit on panels and I am involved in discussions with the head of APEX, the head bosses of Shine, the chair person and CEO of Families Outside and YPeople charity who deal with children who are coming out of care. They have asked me to speak to their youth workers in February 2017 about my experiences and about how they are positive role models for the children they are dealing with. This is all being coordinated through Positive Prisons? Positive Future who I did my peer mentoring training, CV and disclosure training with. I have been asked to go to HMP Grampian to speak to the female offenders. I am the only one at these discussions who has the actual life experience of it all and doing stuff like this helps me heal. I just want to put something back and help others.
88. [REDACTED] who is with me today is my Shine mentor. Shine is a mentoring service and is part of SACRO and I got in touch with when I was in prison. Shine help

and support you in the transition back in to the community after prison. Shine, SACRO and Turning Point are all separate but all work in partnership. I go to a women's group on a Thursday where they do stuff like art therapy. I am now helping SACRO write a paper to push legislation through parliament.

89. The prison officer who dealt with me at Corntonvale helped me contact your inquiry.

Treatment

90. I suffer from panic attacks and I will be on medication for the rest of my life because of it. The doctor seems to think that my severe anxiety all relates to my younger life, and that I have signs of having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder so I am going through the motions of doing the assessment for it. I am borderline apparently, so I am doing this with a psychologist. They say it all relates to the trauma I have suffered as a child and as a young adult, not just because of my time in care and it is also because of things that have happened in my life, like the boy dying in my house.
91. I have been suicidal most of my life and have attempted it several times. I have tried hanging myself and have cut myself. I pull my hair out.
92. I was diagnosed when I was sixteen in Corntonvale by the jail doctor as having ADHD but because I was sixteen they cannot medicate it with Ritalin so she gave me Ligactol which is an anti- psychotic drug. I am also on Propananol which is to prevent panic attacks.
93. I was diagnosed as having depression when I was seventeen when I got out Corntonvale. I did Cognitive Behaviour Therapy between 2003 and 2005 under a National Health Service Psychologist. This has helped me hugely and has helped shape me. I stayed out of jail for four years and I think that was because of the CBT. Unfortunately things slipped a bit and things spiralled out

of control and I am currently waiting on my GP who has written to the psychologist for me to do a refresher course.

94. I have been on three anger management courses which were when I was in Corntonvale but that was years ago. It wasn't helpful the first two times but the third time I did it along with the CBT and it was better. I think I was more willing to change by the third time.
95. I have been to psychologists and psychiatrists but the voluntary work that I am doing is much better for me. I feel like I am helping other people and I am there for them.

Records

96. I haven't got any of my records and don't know how I would get them. I spoke to my kid's social worker before and they told me that because Kerelaw had been knocked down they might not have records any more.

Lessons to be learned

97. I think the main lesson to be learned is that there has to be a lot more vetting done on the people who are applying for the jobs. Training has to be better, It isn't all about getting degree's and qualifications. They have to be taught to be able to deal with difficult children who have had horrific lives and they are going to be difficult to deal with. If they can't deal with a child who has a broken sole then they shouldn't be in the job, so they must have better courses and make sure they are better equipped. New staff can't just be picked because they have a great PVG. They should also be able to turn to other people to get support if they can't deal with a difficult child, maybe that's where it has all went wrong that staff have no one to turn to for support. Some

kids don't have respect or don't know what love is. Care staff should learn about bonding with the children.

- 98. My friends and family are always surprised at me the way that I react to children who are badly behaved. I go down to their level and speak to them and ask them why they are behaving that way, or ask them why they did what they did. It is important to be positive and not react with aggression. Staff should be trained that way, and not straight away restrain the person like what happened to me.

- 99. There should also be a sensory room available for kids to go into when they feel that things are building up and in there they would get a chance to calm down.

Hopes for the inquiry

- 100. I hope that we can help change or shape the care system a little better so that children aren't going from one traumatic experience to another because getting put in to a care home is traumatic enough but it's about having the right staff, and making sure they are fully trained, although you can't teach empathy. I just want to hope people will listen to me and things change for the better.

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

Signed... 

Dated... 2.2.17