

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

**Brian GALLACHER**

Support person present: No.

1. My name is Brian Scott Gallacher. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1981. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Irvine Central Hospital. My mum was [REDACTED] and my dad is [REDACTED]. They met on the buses. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
3. Our family home was first in [REDACTED], which is an area of Irvine. We lived at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] went to Annick Primary School, which was [REDACTED]. My mum was a nurse at Irvine Central and my dad was a toy sales representative. He flew up and down the country selling toys to companies. [REDACTED] were never short of a wee robot. I had loads of friends around the area and life was great. [REDACTED] maybe [REDACTED] if [REDACTED] misbehaved but not a lot.
4. We moved to Saltcoats when I was in primary four as there was a disturbance at primary school. The teachers wouldn't allow me to go to the toilet so I pee'd myself in the middle of the classroom. My dad went up to the school and had a word with the teachers. We moved house and school after that.

5. I then went to Argyle Primary School in Saltcoats. It is now called Caledonia Primary School. I was about eight or nine years old. [REDACTED]. I made new friends in Saltcoats and was well liked. We had Sky Channels on the TV at the time so everyone would come to my house to watch the wrestling. I loved it back then.
6. My mum died when I was in primary six or primary seven of an asthma attack. She was thirty-six years old. I woke up to go to the toilet in the morning and saw her lying on the bathroom floor. It was a massive shock. My dad lost it after that. He turned into a gambler. He tried to kill himself and ended up in hospital. He was [REDACTED] because he didn't know how to look after [REDACTED]. He had worked all his life and didn't know how to control [REDACTED]. This was exactly the same as all of the staff that worked in Kerelaw later on down the line. My dad was just a grieving guy that didn't know how to look after [REDACTED].
7. One morning [REDACTED], so [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] down to school that morning and reported it to the headmaster. I can't quite remember why [REDACTED], but [REDACTED] went to school all black and blue. I had only been at the Auchenharvie Academy in Stevenson for a month or so by this point. Next thing I know I am in Burnside Children's Home. [REDACTED] taken straight to Burnside from school after waiting in a classroom for a while [REDACTED]. There had been no social work involvement before this. I think they held [REDACTED] under an emergency protection order.

### **Burnside Children's Home, Irvine**

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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37. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

### Leaving Burnside Children's Home

38. I was in Burnside for about seven, eight months and then I was moved to Dalrymple Place Children's Home

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

### Dalrymple Place Children's Home, Irvine

39. Dalrymple was just half a mile down the road from Burnside. It was like a row of council houses joined together. They were all knocked into one. There were about fourteen, fifteen kids aged from twelve to sixteen years old and mixed sex.

. A man called IXX was SNR. Some of the staff were a bit more interactive with the kids on their good days and would have their guitars out singing. Other days they were just bad

40. My keyworker was Shirley and she was from Cumnock. She was actually alright, but she watched everything that went on in Dalrymple and did nothing, so I saw them all as bad as each other.

41. A lot of kids had gone to Dalrymple after leaving another home. there for similar reasons, and it was mainly problems in the family home again. I think it was like a respite type deal. I knew who were in there as well. I also knew

██████████ and ██████████ as they had been in Burnside too. I think ██████████ might have gone home actually.

## **Routine at Dalrymple Place Children's Home**

### *First day*

42. The police took me to Dalrymple and Gordon Kimmit and HRX ██████████ were there to meet us. Gordon Kimmit was a saint and now deceased sadly. He came from the same area as me and his family knew my family. I was just told to go and join the other kids as if nothing had happened. ██████████ Secondary Institutions - to be published later

██████████ Secondary I was shown my room which was a single room with a bed and chest of drawers and that. I was told what I could and couldn't do.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

43. It was just the same as Burnside in that you got up, got washed and went down and helped yourself to breakfast. Bedtime was about ten o'clock as it was older kids. That was when nightshift staff came on so they wanted you in your room, but you could keep your light on if you wanted.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

44. It was mostly cereals for breakfast. We had an alright wee cook in Dalrymple. I still talk to her granddaughter now. If you asked her to make you beans and toast or something she would go out her way to make you something that you wanted rather than having to eat tatties and stale meat all the time.
45. Lunchtime was stuff like pasta and macaroni cheese. I didn't like it, but it was alright for other kids.

### *Washing/Bathing*

46. There were one or two showers and a bath. You could washed when you wanted.

### *Clothing/Uniform*

47. My clothes came after me to Dalrymple from Burnside. We were able to wash our own clothes at Dalrymple and were shown what setting to use and that. It was then your responsibility. We just wore our own clothes.

### *Leisure time*

48. I was still off school and left to my own devices during the day at first. I just used to wander about the unit, watch television and play pool. There was nothing else to do. There were no books or anything like that. We were allowed to leave the home and just had to be back for a certain time.
49. Gordon Kimmit did bring us comics and stuff like that to make sure we had something to do.

### *Trips and holidays*

50. I got a few visits to my aunties in Kilmarnock when I was in Dalrymple. It was like day visits and stuff. I don't think we went on any holidays.

### *Schooling*

51. I was in Dalrymple for about six to eight months when they took me into the office and said they were going to have to try to get me back into some sort of schooling. They said I had a meeting at Greenwood Academy the next day to register. I was in second year and had already missed a few years of school.

52. I went to school and did a few classes but then was just dogging it every day. I used to meet up with [REDACTED] from Burnside and cut about the streets and shops. One day we were at the sports factory off Mill Road and [REDACTED] got attacked by a dog. It nearly took his toes off and he was gushing blood. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

53. I was happy to get out of Dalrymple and found myself down the town abusing substances to forget about everything. It was just anything I could find, deodorant, hairspray. I got addicted. I was at Greenwood for six to eight months, but I was hardly there. I just saw it as somewhere I didn't want to be as I had been out of school too long. I was always behind. Hardly anyone went to school in Dalrymple. Everyone had problems and were just trying to deal with everything that had happened to them in life. All I had had was staff shouting at me and telling me what to do. It was an authority thing. I never really gave the teachers a chance at Greenwood. I had had enough of being told what to do and just switched off.
54. Two nights a week we were forced to go up to a primary school and take part in activities. Some of us did not want to go, but we were dragged and locked in the school with no way to get out. HSX [REDACTED] who took us there [REDACTED]. He was one of the more aggressive members of staff. On a few occasions he was more than rough with me.
55. I eventually got put into Kerelaw day school because I wasn't going to Greenwood. I was warned that would happen if I didn't go. The staff at Dalrymple said I had to get some sort of education but there was no education at Kerelaw either. It was just another placed to get bullied in. I was still staying at Dalrymple at the time and thirteen years old. The day school at Kerelaw consisted of a woman called Sharon and Mrs GXY supervising us. My first day there I went to the smoke room to have a cigarette

and was kicked out and thrown down the stairs by a boy called [REDACTED] from Dalry. I lost two front teeth. Sandra and Mrs GXY sat and done nothing about it.

56. Another time at the day school I had a guy called [REDACTED] who was a wee granny basher from Ayr, try to gouge my eyes out with Sandra's leather gloves on. I was hit with pool balls, pool cues and kicked about. I was jumped by four, five guys daily at a time. This happened for four to five months every day. No one seemed to care. I thought what can I do but run away. I always ran away from fights. After getting beaten up so much through your life you just want to run away and curl up in a ball until it's all over. That is what I did as soon as I got sent there. I would find a way to run away as fast as I could. That seemed to be the worst mistake I ever made in the end.
57. It was mostly [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that were beating me up. They were all my age or older. I only knew them from the day school. I used to try and sit beside Sandra and Mrs GXY so they could see that I was being bullied but it didn't matter.

#### *Healthcare / Medication*

58. We were just taken to the same doctors as Burnside to change address. That was it. They didn't have a care in the world. We still saw the same dentist.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

59. We got sixty pounds for Christmas and were taken to the shops in Glasgow to get whatever we needed, trainers and stuff. They also took us for an Indian and decorated the home. We had a Christmas dinner. I stopped celebrating Christmas after I left home. My mum's birthday was [REDACTED] and she died in the [REDACTED] before her birthday, so I tend to shut myself away at that time of year.

60. Birthdays were kind of the same as Christmas and we got money to go shopping in Glasgow and taken for a curry. There wasn't cake or anything like that we just got a certain amount of money.

*Personal Possessions*

61. We got pocket money. It was more relaxed there. One day after I had been battered by LEJ [REDACTED] at Kerelaw day unit, I ran up to my dad's house to get help. He wasn't in so I smashed into his hut and took my bike. I smashed into my room too and took my computer and took it back to Dalrymple. The police ended up coming to the unit and tried to charge me with it all. They took all the stuff back. It was my stuff.

*Culture*

62. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
- [REDACTED]

63. Dalrymple was a bit more open as people were going to school there, so it was easier to get in and out. A lot of the kids at Dalrymple protected me mostly as they knew I shouldn't have been in there and were angry about it. There was some bullying but that's just the way it is.

*Family Contact*

- 64.
- [REDACTED]

65. The staff at Dalrymple would call my dad if I was acting up and ask him to come and get me to try to calm me down. He would maybe take me to play pool or something but I was still angry at him as well.

*Running Away*

66. As we were allowed to leave and go down to the park for a break I didn't run away as much. We had to get back for a sleep. We just tried to stay outside for as long as possible. Staff were ok with that.
67. I did run away and stay away sometimes. I would stay on the streets, factories, and underground car parks. I would eventually go back as I was hungry and needed a change of clothes.

*Visitors*

68. A social worker called Norma Bell would come and see me at Dalrymple and take me out for a McDonalds. I saw her regularly and we got on well. I respected her as she was down to earth and treated me with respect. She was my social worker until I left Kerelaw. I think she was my second social worker. I don't remember the first.

*Review of detention/Hearings/Inspections*

69. I went to a few panels at Dalrymple and was just told I was to remain in care under the child protection order. That just went on and on. I think my dad attended a few. I didn't speak to him. One time I just got up and walked to one end of the table and started laying into him. I went crazy and was blaming him for everything. All the abuse from the staff that I was having to deal with day in, day out was because of him.
70. The social worker spoke to me at the hearings but no one else did. They just made up the rules and regulations. There were no formal inspections at the home.

## Abuse at Dalrymple Place Children's Home

71. The staff at Dalrymple were [REDACTED] abusive [REDACTED] Secondary Institute. If they couldn't abuse you, they just got one of the older kids to do it for them. When I eventually went to Kerelaw day school I was getting battered there and then coming back in a taxi with the boys that were bullying me. Kerelaw was like a battle ground. I would be frightened or just wanted to lunge at someone to take out all my anger from what I had been getting throughout the day. The staff at Dalrymple would just abuse me too.
72. HRX [REDACTED] was a member of staff and he dragged me from the television room to outside the office and started kicking and punching me. He did this in front of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who were in children in the home. He would drag you up to your bed as well if you antagonised him and punch you and throw you in your bedroom. On a few occasions, if I didn't do what HRX [REDACTED] said or if I was cheeky, I was rag dolled by him to the floor, dragged along the carpet face down, to a what he thought was a safer location and then kicked, punched, kneed and slapped. I was treated like an animal.
73. Some of these guys were just not equipped to deal with young children or maybe they picked the wrong approach, but as kids we were hurt as a result. These are fully grown men that were at that time quite happy to use over handed tactics because they didn't know anything else. They could have sat down and spoke with us like adults but instead they chose violence.
74. Another time I smashed a window and HRX [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED] to batter me. He told me this later on and he didn't do it. HRX [REDACTED] was one of the main staff that battered you and HSX [REDACTED]. He would lock us in the gym at that primary school.
75. HRS [REDACTED] was a [REDACTED] rugby player who liked battering kids. He drove sports cars and was a bit of a ladies' man. He was over six foot tall and had hands like shovels. He loved nothing more than taking everyone to the Galloway Forest with his guitar, playing songs on request, but this guy was just as bad as the rest. On a lot of



occasions, he rag dolled me at Dalrymple using over handed tactics that left me living in fear and having to run for safety. He would throw you from one side of the hall to the other and he, like HRX never knew his own strength. A lot of the times he would try to get older people in the home to do this for him. When certain staff were on, he tried to keep on good terms with them.

76. HRY was another abuser. It wasn't every day Secondary Institutions - to be publis it was just if you blew up or were fighting the staff would make you pay for it with violence.
77. IXX was the SNR but no better than the rest. We saw him a lot, but he stayed in the office most of the time and knew what was going on. He terrorised the kids too.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Dalrymple Place Children's Home**

78. I was young and stupid and didn't know you couldn't be a grass in those days. I tried to tell the staff what was happening, and I got bullied more. It was a vicious circle. I told my social worker too, but she just said there was nothing she could do.

#### **Leaving Dalrymple Place Children's Home**

79. I was at Dalrymple for about a year and a half. After I had broken into my dad's house and took my stuff, I was told if I ran away one more time, I wouldn't be allowed back. A week or two later I did and was taken straight to Kerelaw. I was about fourteen years old at the time.

#### **Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenson**

80. Kerelaw was an awful place. It was like HMP Barlinnie for kids. I was put into Millerstone unit which was right down the bottom of the building. There was a cafeteria

and then at the other side of the building was Fleming unit and the day school. The day school was just a flat off Fleming unit then you had Baird and Wilson units. The secure unit was up the back. The secure unit had a big fence around it, but we couldn't come and go at any of the units.

81. There were about twenty to thirty kids in each unit. There were two units for lassies and two units for boys. The day school was mixed. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was the unit manager and [REDACTED] KBW was a unit manager too who would become one of my many tormentors. Jim Hunter was in charge of the whole place.

### **Routine at Kerelaw Secure Unit**

#### *First day*

82. I was taken to Kerelaw by my social worker Norma. I already hated the place and didn't want to go. Anne Carlin and [REDACTED] KAY were in the office when we got there. Anne Carlin ended up my key worker. They showed me my room and I ended up in the same room as the guy who had thrown me down the stairs and knocked out my two teeth, [REDACTED]. He immediately put blue tack all the way up the middle of the room, on the window and roof, and said if I came over to his side, he would batter me. He was just a bully and terrorised kids for fun. I used to get the taxi with him to Kerelaw school before we both ended up in there permanently.
83. Obviously, I had been going to the day school, so I knew my way around and all the staff knew me. I was told the rules, that I couldn't leave and that I was only allowed a family visit if I behaved.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

84. We got up, got showered and changed and then went down and got breakfast before school. Bedtime was ten o'clock. It was very strict, and lights were out. If you came

out your room, you got battered with a torch. You got timed when you went to the toilet and hit with the torch too. That was Thomas Howe. He was later charged and found guilty of molesting lassies. He was an ex-copper and drove about in an old police bike. He always told us that he had the police in his pocket and would get them to come and take us to the cells for the night to see how we liked that. He had a big old metal police torch and hit us with it regularly.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

85. The dining hall was shared by two different units, but it was separated. It was mostly fry up stuff for your breakfast and cereals. Dinner varied and was things like lasagne and pasta. Most of it was edible. I lived on sausages and still do.

#### *Washing/Bathing*

86. Showers were in the morning and at night at certain times. It was communal but cubicles. That privacy came at a price as you were then open to getting bullied as you were out of staff view. It happened to me all the time.

#### *Clothing/Uniform*

87. There was no uniform in Kerelaw and you just wore your own clothes. Every six months they would take you out to get you new trainers and that. We got to pick.

#### *Leisure time*

88. We watched television, played pool and table tennis. At weekends we just lay about the unit. Some boys who had behaved were able to get leave and go home.

#### *Trips and holidays*

89. We went to a caravan park down near Carlisle for three or four days. There was about five of us and all boys. We also went to a big mansion up the back of Dumfries one

time and that was boys and girls. We were staying there as we were travelling to Ireland in a few days to the Giant's Causeway. That was just a big bunch of giant stones. We went there for just one night. Me and my mate [REDACTED] took speed and ended up chasing sheep and trying to ride them.

90. They would sometimes take us ice skating in Edinburgh or to the Time Capsule. It was at the weekends in the minibus. There would be staff on the bus and kids would be up the back having sex. It was regular. I was involved in it myself. There were three couples at the time, me and [REDACTED], IXK [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. One would have sex on the way up and then we would swap seats and the other would have sex on the way back. The staff obviously knew what was going on but said nothing.
91. One time they took us on a trip to Blackpool in the minibus and on the way down FSY [REDACTED] FSY [REDACTED] and FSL [REDACTED] stopped in at Safeway supermarket. They came out the shop with twelve litres of cider and we drank it from Stevenson to Blackpool. When we got out the minibus at Blackpool, we were all sick as dogs. We were supposed to be going to a football match that day. That is how they bought you off, with fags and drink to keep you hush. In the same hand they would take your own stuff away from you and stop you seeing your family.

### *Schooling*

92. We were supposed to be taught history, French and music but we never got taught anything. The music teacher would just lock us in this quiet room, and we were left to our own devices. The history teacher just made us watch videos all day. There was absolutely no education at all. We were allowed to go and sit in any class we wanted. If you had a boyfriend or a girlfriend in another class you could just pick that class to go in. It was all mixed ages and sex.
93. The maths teacher, KBK [REDACTED] would rap your fingers with a deck of playing cards if you misbehaved. It would skin your knuckles. He would also hit us with a six foot ruler over the backside. He would ben us over his desk fully clothed.

94. We did do woodwork and made guitars with no strings and mirrors and stuff. The teachers came from outside but if there was a staff shortage in the units the teachers would cover for them. There was no one watching them or telling them that we should be educated. We were just left to our own devices to get bullied or watch films.
95. The gym teacher would lock us in the gym too and use us as target practice. His name was FSR. He would line us all up against a wall in the dark and hit us with volley balls and medicine balls. He also used golf balls and cricket balls and we would all have to hide. They were solid and there was nowhere we could run. He called it 'hunt the cunt'. If we did run and got caught we got battered. If you told any other staff about him, he got other boys to batter you. He made sure you got a kicking if you were out of line. He would make sure other boys dished it out, so he wasn't seen hitting us in public places. It was other boys our own ages so people just thought 'well boys' fight'.
96. I threatened to torch his car once because of his beatings and he got KBS to drag me back to the gym hall and batter me. He punched, kicked and hit me with a belt. It was the only line of defence I had as a wee boy with an adult bully was to target something that meant something to him even though I wasn't that way inclined. I had never done anything like that before.
97. After that incident with FSR, I blamed KBS and threatened to torch his car too and smash his house windows. I then got beaten up and down that unit so bad I needed three fillings. He was an ex boxer and knocked me out. Years later we went on a cycling trip down Newcastle way and camped. It was called Once Brewed. He never let me forget what I said, and I had to cycle with all the pots and pans on my back up steep hills. I was sixteen years old. FSR and KBS were both on that trip.

#### *Healthcare / Medication*

98. There was no nurse or doctor in the home. I had a cut on my head once after a door was slammed in my face when I was trying to run away. I still have the scar. They just

gave me butterfly stitches in house and didn't take me to the hospital. It was **KBN** **KBN** who did it. I think he should have been teaching maths. I can't remember who gave me the stitches I think it might have been Myra Martin. I remember it was Matt George that came and lifted me after when I was pouring with blood, and **HRW** **HRW** took me for a McDonalds to shut me up. McDonalds solved everything and was a way to pay people off.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

99. For Christmas they would take you to laser quest, clothes shopping and for an Indian. They decorated and we had Christmas dinner. For birthdays we just got allocated money and taken shopping for clothes.

### *Personal Possessions*

100. Pocket money was about a fiver a week. Everyone bought fags but if they misbehaved, they got taken off you.

### *Culture*

101. The boys and girls stayed in different units in Kerelaw but we went out with girls in there and ran away with them. Boys even had sex with lassies in there. The staff let us take girls up to our room. That was wrong. I have always felt bad for that years later. If one of the boys was acting up the staff at the unit would be straight on the phone to the lassies unit to get one of them to come up and try to calm him. Even if they didn't want to. It happened regularly. It didn't happen to me. I had a few girlfriends in there but if I was acting up, they would call my dad. Half the girls in there are now heavily damaged from being in there. I can understand that now. Some of them have thanked me for telling this story.
102. I used to stand at the office door as I was badly bullied, but the staff would just come out and punch you and tell you to get away. **FSL** **FSL** would do that. He fractured my sternum bone punching me through doors. He used it as a mark of respect as if

you took it, he respected you. I found out about my broken sternum later on after a car crash. The doctor said it wasn't caused by the crash and an old injury so I know it must have been him. He constantly punched me in the chest. He modelled himself on [REDACTED] and had big curly hair [REDACTED]. KBS [REDACTED] and HRW [REDACTED] were also bad for assaulting you if you were standing at the office.

#### *Visitors*

103. I still saw my social worker every couple of weeks. It was still Norma Bell, and she would just take me to McDonalds again. She was just there to make sure I had a good day and a good wee time away from my troubles. She didn't really care and was just doing a job.

#### *Family Contact*

104. The family visits went from day visits to overnight stays to weekend stays. It was basically building you up to get you back into the community. I wasn't really allowed home visits because I ran away all the time. My dad would come and take me to play snooker sometimes. He tried to have a relationship with me. I needed a father in my life so I gave him a shot. He would take me for drives in his car and let me do the gears and that. I was about fifteen sixteen. Our relationship eventually went bad again.

105.



#### *Running Away*

106. Some boys did manage to climb the fence in the secure unit and escape. My unit was not fenced so there were ways to escape. You had to make sure the staff didn't see you first, so you had a chance to run. I did it as often as I could. The longest I was away was two, three weeks. I think I was about seventeen at the time. One of the boys

I shared a room with in Kerelaw, [REDACTED], was out and offered me a bed. He was in a hostel, but I was also sleeping in cars and garages. [REDACTED] was a car thief. There were a few good boys that were good to me over the years. I ran away regularly. We got beaten so bad after we were caught it was no wonder we were running away.

107. I had run away that often one of my cousin's mum's friends tried to adopt me and was told no. She was a lovely wee church woman and felt bad about the treatment I was getting. She saw the state I was in with anxiety and that and tried to do her best. It was [REDACTED]'s mum from Bellfield and she lived around the corner from my aunties. She was sick of them having to call the police on me all the time.

*Review of detention/Hearings/External inspections*

108. There were a few panels when I was at Kerelaw. There was nothing I could say as they made all the decisions for me based on reports. I was treated like a criminal and never had a say. I think I was given eighteen months at one point, and it was soul destroying as I thought I would never get out of the place. There were never any inspections.

**Abuse at Kerelaw Secure Unit**

109. It was daily physical attacks for me in Kerelaw from the staff and other boys. I made the staff aware that I was sick of getting bullied and they just told the boys in the home, and I got battered for that. I was constantly getting abused. It was for no reason at all. I would be punched, kicked, hit with stuff, dragged through rooms, dragged down concrete stairs and carpets, hit with pool balls and pool cues, basically anything they could get their hands on. I was one of the worst cases of bullying in Kerelaw. The boys that assaulted me were [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The assaults happened all over the place. I couldn't escape from it. It was just anywhere they could get me and daily.



110. [REDACTED] helped me in my criminal case, and it was because of her evidence I was able to get a conviction for Matt George. She also told me to make sure I got the rest of them as she knew how much of a hard time I had in there. The staff assaulted me daily too. Matt George was the art teacher. If I stood at the office near the fish tank to get help from the bullying the staff would come out and either punch me in the chest or scrape my face down the fish tank brickwork. The staff that assaulted me regularly were FSL [REDACTED], KBS [REDACTED], HRW [REDACTED], KBW [REDACTED], LEJ [REDACTED], Matt George, FSR [REDACTED], KBN [REDACTED], IWN [REDACTED], KBK [REDACTED], KBG [REDACTED] and HSY [REDACTED]. I still see some of them walking about today.
111. KBW [REDACTED] took an awful dislike to me. He came from Mount Vernon in Glasgow and wore old shabby brown cord trousers and had some head of hair. He drove a clapped out Volvo. He was six foot plus and well-built. He would give me carpet burns [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] He punched and kicked me, banged my head off walls and treated me like a dog. He bullied the shit out of me until I tried to jump off a building because I could not take it anymore.
112. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] KBW [REDACTED] left it at my door open at that page and said see that's just like you no one wants you [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He terrorised the life out of me. I ended up trying to commit suicide after that. I was fifteen years old. Anne Carlin stopped me, and my dad had to come and get me. He took me to play snooker and I wrote it all down.
113. IXJ [REDACTED] was assaulted by all the staff at Kerelaw once in the television room. Me, [REDACTED], IXK [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all out playing football and we saw IXJ [REDACTED] on the roof. He was telling LEJ [REDACTED] a staff member to fuck off and the staff ended up dragging him off the roof and hit him a few times.
114. He then ran away with fourteen lassies and was heard saying he was going to break into LEJ [REDACTED]'s house. When he came back, he was dragged into the television room by about five members off staff and cornered. He was battered. We all heard him getting kicked up and down this room for about half an hour. I am sure it KBE [REDACTED]

KBE who was holding the door shut. KBS, FSL, LEJ and IAI was there too. IXJ then ran out past us in the game's room and went straight out the window. That was the last time we saw him until he came back with his mum six weeks laer.

### Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw Secure Unit

115. I told Norma, my social worker, about my abuse at Kerelaw. She said there was nothing she could do about it and would maybe tell the staff, but it was the staff that were doing it. The thing with the police back then is when we were all in Kerelaw we were just assumed to be bad. Anytime the police caught us they would just batter us and take us back. They didn't have a care in the world. There was no duty of care. We were out stealing cars and that so they just thought we deserved everything we got.
116. When I was about seventeen and leaving Kerelaw, I was down at the day school with IXK and seeing our girlfriends. We had left the day school by this point and were asked by a teacher, Jim Hunter, to leave and said no. I asked him why he let all the abuse happen when he was the headmaster, and I was kicked out and barred from the school.
117. I went down to the huts at Millerstone unit to see my girlfriend and chapped the door. A teacher opened the door and punched me and broke my nose then locked the door again. I kept banging on the door for him to come out and put my arm through a window because he wouldn't come out. My arm is still covered in scars. He was a relief teacher, and I can't remember his name. I've been trying to find a list of all the teachers names so I can try and pinpoint his name. I think his name was IWT or IWT He took over from HSY. He was about five foot eight and had brown hair. He must have been in his forties.

## Leaving Kerelaw Secure Unit

118. That incident with the teacher where my nose was broken happened on the day of my last panel. There was also a big riot around that time at Kerelaw. Me, IXK, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] all made plans to ask everyone who was going out on leave to ask other people to leave with us and we all went and bought drink at the shop. Practically the full of Kerelaw went down to Saltcoats park and sat in the football stadium and drank. A while later three police vans came and chased us up the road. They caught most of us and took us back to Kerelaw. As we were all drunk, we smashed the place up and caused a riot. We went outside and smashed the school windows. The staff dragged us all inside and battered us. IXK [REDACTED] was still outside and was battered by KBS [REDACTED] and FSL [REDACTED] in the carpark and then flung in a police van. He was charged with a breach of the peace and drunken disorderly. This day is now known as the Kerelaw riots.
119. I was taken to my panel with my nose broken and blood dripping all down my arm. I told the panel about it. I said KBW [REDACTED] had been bullying me and battering me and all the other staff just watched it. I said to the panel it would all come out and I would tell everything that went on. I think they got a bit of a shock then and tried to move me on as soon as they could. The panel was on my eighteenth birthday and by the end of that month I got a flat in Saltcoats.

## Foster Care, Arran

120. When I was at Kerelaw I went into foster care for two or three weeks. I ended up back in Kerelaw after. I was sixteen and had left school by this point. They were trying to move me on and integrate me back into the community. I had a few over night stays and then went to live with this lovely wee couple who owned a bed and breakfast in Brodick. I started working at Brodick Castle and had a college course set up in Dundee for grounds keeping but I just couldn't integrate into the family life again. They were good people and let me come and go and eat whenever I wanted but it was a strange

place and strange people, it wasn't home. I don't know how it all came about. I was just assigned to them.

121. They got one of the local boys to come up and take me out and introduce me to all the other boys in the area. I was out smoking weed and drinking but my heart wasn't in it. I don't know the couple's name. I didn't stay with them long and it's been that long. They were really good to me, but I just couldn't settle. I skipped a ferry back to Adrossan and walked back to Kerelaw. I got there at eleven o'clock at night and FSL was on shift. He asked what I was doing there and said I didn't stay there anymore but they had to take me. I think they spoke to the social worker, and I was there indefinitely again. Even though it was so abusive that was all I was used to. I could get my head down and not be homeless. I took the abuse for that.

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

122. I lasted a month and a half in my flat in Saltcoats and ended up in prison. I was still in that period of escape and out stealing motors. I was still fleeing violence every day. I was sent to an aftercare unit but even then, I was accused of breaking into the place and stealing stuff when I never. I was wronged from the get go. My flat was set on fire when I was in jail, and I lost it. I came out to nothing.
123. I stayed in a bed and breakfast when I was released but I always ended up back in prison. Sometimes I was only out six hours and back in again. I was institutionalised. That was all I knew. It didn't take me until 2001 to stop it. That was the last time I was in a Scottish prison.
124. I ran away down south to Blackpool and worked three jobs in hotels. I was partying and going to nightclubs. I then moved to Manchester and stayed in the Salvation Army. I ended up getting four years imprisonment there for selling drugs. My life has been up and down ever since. Any sense of violence towards me I take as a threat, and I don't even pack my bags I just leave houses full and go. It all stems back to the violence I experienced in care. I have started from basics so many times it is unreal. I

stayed with [REDACTED] sometimes. Things have been very hectic to be honest with you. I lived in Basingstoke for a year too but have been back in Scotland eight years now. I lived on the streets sometimes too.

125. I later got a job working with explosives and the police had to speak with me before that. I told them I was in a better place, and they were ok with that. It only lasted a few months because of bad time keeping and my mental health. I couldn't get out of bed in the morning. I have been in my current house for three years now.

### **Impact**

126. Moving around the different environments in care was really unsettling and difficult for me. I went from the family home to this big mansion, to council houses and then to secure care. I didn't feel like I could settle or was safe anywhere and I still feel like that now.
127. I have been mentally and physically abused by ninety percent of the staff, teachers, and pupils in my time in the care system. They were put there to protect me after the abuse I suffered [REDACTED]. I went from being a loving little boy to being a criminal and having a drug habit, all to escape my abusers and my past.
128. I wish I had had a better start at life. I see everyone out there doing well and I struggle to get by on universal credit month to month. I just feel like it wasn't my fault and I was thrown a bad deal. I have been on the sick for most of my days as I can't hold down a job or a relationship. The longest relationship I have had is a year and a half and that broke down because I wouldn't talk. I don't even bother anymore. I struggle with money and some days I don't even eat or wash. I spend all my money on weed and smoke weed every day because it is the only way I can cope and get a sleep. If I never had that weed I would have flipped and done some serious time by now. They seriously fucked my life up. I just stay in the house because I can't afford to do anything else. Some days it is like I am just lying there waiting to die. That's how bad it is.

129. I have had a lot of suicide attempts. That was all within a three week time period ten years ago. I saw one of my abusers down the town and that flipped me. FSY offered to give me bus ticket money to go back down south. I never realised it was when Kerelaw was being investigated and I now think that was just a bribe so I wouldn't name and shame him. It has not been the best. I just tried to bury it all and get on but seeing them all around where I live walking free is hard. I need justice.

130. I suffer with insomnia as I have nightmares and flashbacks and I don't want to go to sleep and have those memories. My GP gave me medication but it just made me feel groggy in the mornings and wasn't for me.

131. I was put in there to get an education and I had no education. There was a reason I didn't go to school. It was an authority thing. All I had was staff shouting at me and telling me what to do. I had had enough of being told what to do and being abused in the care system. I just switched off. Now I can't get a job because I don't have the qualifications or the mindset. I wasn't educated all the way through.

132.

133.

134. I saw my dad recently and told him about me contacting the police and the investigation into Kerelaw. He just said if I thought my story was good, his story would

blow mine away. He has written a book, but it is all about him. I told him my story is because of him and I have stopped talking to him. He did try to be a dad, but to me he is just another guy that I know. He is not my father.

### **Treatment/Support**

135. My GP knows my situation. I have told them about the abuse I suffered but I don't think they realised the scale of it until my lawyers got in touch with them. All I need to do is phone up and they give me a sick line. I have been on sick for about four years now. One of my mates [REDACTED] knows how much I have struggled with my mental health and tries to help me out with the odd painting and decorating jobs.
136. There is no one there to do my counselling. They have opened up a new mental health unit in Saltcoats but that is for families. There is no one there to help.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

137. I went to Saltcoats police two years ago to report my abuse in care. It was all about [REDACTED] IXJ's assault to begin with and then I mentioned stuff about Matt George and other staff abusing me. I gave them that much information they couldn't believe it and were overwhelmed. After that at least fifty of my friends came forward to speak about their abuse too. My pals now call me the voice of thousands.
138. Matt George was found guilty even though he tried to deny it. The trial just finished at the end of last year. He was done with thirty seven charges of assaults of twenty one children. Thomas Howe was sentenced a while back for abusing children, but they never knew my evidence then and my brother was battered by him too. Everything is corroborated. I went to Dundee court to watch Matt George and John Muldoon be sentenced. Matt George got sixteen years and John Muldoon got twelve years.

## **Records and Redress**

139. Me [REDACTED] have applied to the redress scheme, but they kept sending me letters out with the name [REDACTED]. I phoned them up and spoke with a guy called Patrick who said sorry and told me to send the letters back, which I did for them to then just send me the same letter back again with the wrong name again. I just walked away from it as I couldn't deal with it. I got my MP, Patricia Gibson involved, and she said it was a pure shit show. That was six months ago. After all I have been through, they can't even get my name right. I don't want to be seen as just another case number. I have a lawyer representing me now and I think they have got some records from Glasgow City Council. They were found in a Dumbarton office. I have still to receive a copy of them, but I am suing Dumbarton council for all they have got.
140. I am not doing this for the money. It would be nice to have three square meals a day and go out and enjoy myself but all I want to do is get all these bad bastards locked up. That is my mission in life. I'll get there in the end.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

141. All these care homes should have an independent body there all the time that isn't attached to any of the staff and can't be friendly with them. They need to be there to make sure that these kids get treated with the utmost respect that they deserve in life. If not, they will just end up like me and all the others.

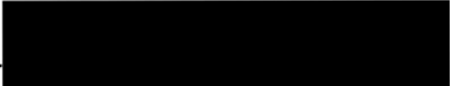
## **Hopes for the Inquiry**

142. I hope that every single person who comes forward to this Inquiry can have their stories heard. I hope they are believed and not just treated like another case number who is trying to get some money. We deserve that money and more.



**Other information**

143. 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. 16 / Feb / 2023 .....