

1 Wednesday, 30 October 2024

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning, and welcome back to Chapter 10 of
4 this phase of our case study hearings in which we are
5 looking into the provision of residential care for
6 children in secure and similar establishments.

7 Now, this morning we move to oral evidence from
8 people who were such residents, in particular Brimmond.
9 I think it is Brimmond, both the witnesses today, isn't
10 it, Mr Sheldon?

11 MR SHELDON: That's correct, my Lady. We have a first
12 witness who is ready. He is anonymous and wishes to be
13 known as 'James'.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 'James' (affirmed)

16 LADY SMITH: Good morning, 'James'.

17 A. Good morning.

18 LADY SMITH: Now, 'James', do sit down and make yourself
19 comfortable.

20 A. Thank you.

21 LADY SMITH: 'James', thank you for coming along this
22 morning to help us by giving evidence in person at this
23 hearing. I am really grateful to you for being able to
24 do that.

25 A. That's okay.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you, also, for having provided a very
2 detailed and helpful written statement. It is in that
3 red folder that's on the desk waiting for you there, so
4 it will be available to you as we go through your
5 evidence. We will also bring parts of it up on the
6 screen in front of you --

7 A. Okay.

8 LADY SMITH: -- where you will find a bigger font; that's
9 sometimes helpful.

10 A. Yes. That's slightly easier for me, yeah.

11 LADY SMITH: But, 'James', we are not this morning going to
12 go through every paragraph of your evidence --

13 A. No.

14 LADY SMITH: -- because we already have that.

15 A. Yeah.

16 LADY SMITH: But there are some particular aspects of it
17 that, if that's okay, we would like to explore with you
18 in a little more detail.

19 A. Yeah, that's fine, yeah.

20 LADY SMITH: If at any time you have any questions, please
21 speak up. If at any time it all just seems too much for
22 you -- and I know that can happen, that can take people
23 by surprise as we go back to early life --

24 A. Yeah.

25 LADY SMITH: -- that you left behind, decades ago. Just let

1 me know if there is anything I can do to help; a break,
2 for example, whether just sitting where you are or
3 leaving the room, that's not a problem. You just help
4 me to help you to give your evidence as well as you can.
5 That really is the key, all right?

6 A. Okay, thank you very much. Thank you.

7 LADY SMITH: If you are ready, 'James', I will hand over to
8 Mr Sheldon --

9 A. Yeah, yeah.

10 LADY SMITH: -- and he will take from there.

11 A. Yeah.

12 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

13 Questions by Mr Sheldon

14 MR SHELTON: Thank you, my Lady.

15 Well, good morning, 'James'.

16 A. Good morning.

17 Q. As Lady Smith has said, you have your statement in front
18 of you and, I think, on the screen as well.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. There are a couple of formalities that we need to go
21 through, just for our purposes --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- you don't really need to worry about it. But, just
24 for our record, the reference number for your statement
25 is WIT-1-000001217. And, 'James', if you could turn to

1 the last page of your statement, please, you will see,
2 right at the foot there, there is a signature and
3 a date; is that your signature?
4 A. It is, yes. Yeah.
5 Q. Paragraph 92 says:
6 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
7 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
8 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
9 true.'
10 And is that still the case?
11 A. Yes, it is. Yes.
12 Q. All right. Thank you.
13 A. Thank you.
14 Q. If you can turn back to the front of the statement, the
15 start of it --
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. -- just to take the preliminaries. I don't need your
18 date of birth, but I think you were born in 1961; is
19 that right?
20 A. 1961, yeah.
21 Q. You tell us in the first few paragraphs of your
22 statement that you were born in Oban and grew up as part
23 of a traveller family?
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. And you say that you were brought up in the travelling

1 community until the age of 6?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. At that point, your mum met someone and married them.

4 We can perhaps refer to him as [REDACTED].

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You say that shortly after you turned 6, you moved away

7 and that's when you went to Aberdeen; is that right?

8 A. Yes. It is, yes.

9 LADY SMITH: 'James', I see in your statement you describe

10 the man that your mum married as a 'countryman'.

11 A. Yeah.

12 LADY SMITH: Tell me about that.

13 A. What it means is he wasn't part of the travelling

14 community. So we have names for, er, people who are not

15 of travelling persuasion.

16 LADY SMITH: Okay.

17 A. And there's other names as well.

18 LADY SMITH: Right. So he was on the outside of the

19 community then?

20 A. Yes, yes, aye. So he wouldn't have been -- so we would

21 say he was a countryman, or a countrywoman. We wouldn't

22 use he was Scottish or English or that, we would just

23 say a countryman. There's other names as well we could

24 use which are slightly more disparaging, but we use

25 countryman; that's what we usually use.

1 LADY SMITH: I wondered if that was what it was. And it
2 meant your mother was doing something a bit unusual?
3 A. It was, yeah, very unusual.
4 MR SHELTON: Is that why she moved away from Oban and
5 changed location?
6 A. Yes, yeah, yeah. Back in the -- it's more -- travelling
7 people, now, are more -- marry more and meet more, er,
8 from the settled community nowadays. But, back then,
9 that would have been a big thing.
10 Q. Okay.
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. You moved to Aberdeen. You tell us your mum then had
13 three further children. I don't need the names, but you
14 had three half siblings and you tell us -- this is
15 paragraph 5 of your statement now -- that [REDACTED] never
16 really accepted you as his child. And I think that,
17 putting it short, caused a good deal of trouble for you;
18 is that right?
19 A. Yeah, yeah, it did. Yeah.
20 Q. Right. What kind of trouble did it cause?
21 A. He was extremely violent to me, er ...
22 Q. You tell us in your statement, 'James', that he
23 regularly lashed out at you.
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. This is paragraph 6. He physically beat you?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. You remember him 'beating the shit out of you', you say,
3 with a belt?

4 A. Yeah, yeah.

5 Q. And was given a big mark on your face?

6 A. Yeah, he lashed at me wi' a belt and I had a mark right
7 across my face.

8 I'd been involved in a pretty serious car accident
9 when I came to Aberdeen and I was already scarred on my
10 face. I still carry the scars on. You can't really see
11 them the same, but you can see them from my chin. He
12 split my face wide open, fractured my skull, and things
13 like that. And he used to use a belt or a brush and he,
14 er, hit me once so hard across the face.

15 Q. And was this quite a regular occurrence?

16 A. (Nods).

17 Q. You talk about your mum and you say that she was also
18 good with her hands?

19 A. Yeah, she was as bad, to be quite honest wi' you, if nae
20 worse. She used to just sit and watch him doing it.
21 And then she used to use a little wooden brush and she
22 was -- God, man.

23 Q. You tell us that she used a brush to chastise you?

24 A. Yeah, yeah.

25 Q. Do you mean she used to hit you with it?

1 A. Yeah, hit you on the top of the head with it, the back,
2 the legs. They used to lock me out the house. They
3 used to starve me.

4 Q. So, again, putting it short -- and please correct me if
5 I have got the wrong end of this --

6 A. Sorry?

7 Q. Please correct me if I have got the wrong end of this.
8 But, essentially, you were made to feel like an outcast
9 from the house?

10 A. Aye, yeah. Definitely, yeah.

11 Q. You talk, in paragraph 7, about various times that you
12 were left to your own devices and bad things happened to
13 you?

14 A. Yeah, yeah.

15 Q. You say, at paragraph 9, that you remember feeling
16 hungry and you mentioned earlier on that you were
17 starved?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Is that what happened?

20 A. Yeah. He would -- I mean, there was never -- there
21 didnae seem to be a lot of money in the house, if
22 I remember back now. Er, but, if there was food
23 available, then I was the last one to be fed and
24 sometimes I didn't get fed or I would be told that
25 I would get something to eat when everybody else had had

1 something to eat or something like that.

2 Q. Okay, so you were always last in line?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. At paragraph 10, now, you say that at some point you

5 moved to the Northfield area of Aberdeen?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And you have a memory of going to primary school, so you

8 did get some schooling. But even that was difficult for

9 you; is that right?

10 A. Yes, it was difficult in the aspect that I never had any

11 clothes to wear. It was just whatever I was given. Er,

12 and I think back on it now with shame and embarrassment.

13 And then, as you know, children can be extremely cruel,

14 so sometimes I wouldnae go to school because it was

15 easier.

16 Q. Well, I was just going to ask you about that. Did you

17 end up staying away from school --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- and not attending?

20 A. Yeah. Yeah, plus I never had any school bag, PE kit,

21 pencils, er, nothing like that. When you used to go to

22 school and they used to ask you for these things,

23 I never ever had them. And that was another sense of

24 shame and embarrassment for me as well, like, you know.

25 Q. Did anyone at the school ever ask you why you didn't

1 have these things?

2 A. No, never. Nae that I can remember, no. The teachers

3 back then, er, just -- you were a certain class of

4 child, I think, and that was it.

5 Q. And you didn't fit in with that?

6 A. No, obviously, I didn't have the proper clothes;

7 I didn't have -- and when I did try and do homework or

8 something like that, [REDACTED] and my mum would take great

9 pleasure in tearing things up. I couldnae -- you had to

10 cover your school books back in the '60s and '70s.

11 I never learned to cover school books and when you went

12 to school and you couldnae cover your school books, you

13 kept getting asked why this wasnae happening; why you

14 didn't have it. I couldn't explain. I couldn't say

15 anything.

16 LADY SMITH: Do you remember how large the classes were,

17 'James'?

18 A. At school?

19 LADY SMITH: Yes.

20 A. Er, they must between -- it's hard to think back. It

21 must be 20 plus, must be.

22 LADY SMITH: A big group of children?

23 A. Yeah.

24 LADY SMITH: Do you think you were the only one who came

25 from a travelling community?

1 A. Definitely, yeah. In that time, yeah, definitely.

2 LADY SMITH: Did that make a difference?

3 A. I don't know. I can't really answer that. If they seen

4 me as different back then ... I wouldn't be 100 per cent

5 sure they would actually know I was from a travelling

6 community, if I'm being perfectly honest.

7 LADY SMITH: Did it make it harder for you?

8 A. Yeah.

9 LADY SMITH: How?

10 A. Because you're always an outsider. There's

11 preconceptions of travelling people, of what we are and

12 what we do.

13 LADY SMITH: Yes.

14 A. And how we act and how we talk.

15 LADY SMITH: Mm-hm.

16 A. And how we interact wi' other people. People see us as

17 different. But I can assure you, there's traveller

18 lawyers and traveller doctors.

19 LADY SMITH: Yes. You may be different; it doesn't mean you

20 are worse.

21 A. No, far from it. And we have a different set of

22 standards. We have a different way of looking at things

23 from the normal, settled community. We still have --

24 er, and this is what I've learned from my wife's family:

25 that we look after our old people more. We take care of

1 them.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes.

3 A. We have different values, of doing things.

4 LADY SMITH: That's really helpful to my understanding.

5 Thank you, 'James'.

6 A. We're not all thieves and robbers, I'm afraid. Lots of

7 us have got good jobs nowadays.

8 MR SHELTON: Just following on from that, 'James'. You tell

9 us that the Social Work Department must have got

10 involved at some point; was that because you were

11 staying away from school? Do you remember why?

12 A. I remember, er, reading through my social work --

13 I accessed my social work records, which were difficult

14 to get hold of. I was looking for answers, er, of why

15 I felt the way I did about things. Some things were too

16 much for me. And, looking through the records, I was

17 looking for answers; what happened in the institution

18 I was in and not just the institution, through the

19 teachers. And reading through it, it was like I was

20 written off completely. Seemingly I had a speech

21 impediment when I was younger. It must have been as

22 a result of the accident I had. I can't remember having

23 that.

24 There was a child psychologist involved that I can't

25 remember seemed to think I maybe had some kind of brain

1 damage from the car accident, which is maybe possible,
2 I suppose. But I can't remember any teacher of any kind
3 ever having a kind word to say.

4 Q. Did anyone from the Social Work Department comment on
5 why you didn't seem to have the things that you needed
6 for school?

7 A. No, never.

8 Q. You say that the social work records talk about you
9 being dirty and unkempt; again, did nobody question why
10 that might be the case?

11 A. No. No.

12 Q. 'James', moving on, you say at paragraph 12 that the
13 last thing that happened before you went into care,
14 there was an incident with [REDACTED]. Can you tell us about
15 that, please?

16 A. Yeah. I was more or less put out the house at any time
17 that they felt like it. I was told to go out, get out,
18 and then it became a case for me where it was easier for
19 me to stay away than be in the house. So I used to just
20 go out at all times of the night and day, stay out.

21 There was times when I came back when I wasn't
22 allowed back into the house, at all. As you went to the
23 house, there was a bottom door, you went up a flight of
24 stairs and there was another door, and then the
25 stairwell. I sometimes had to stay there for hour upon

1 hour upon hour before I would be allowed back into the
2 house so I could get to go to sleep.

3 I came back. I had been out most of the day,
4 probably, and I hadn't had anything eaten for maybe
5 a day and a bit and I was trying to make something to
6 eat. It was a piece of bread. I was spreading it wi'
7 a butter knife, as such. It wouldn't have been a butter
8 -- an actual butter knife; it was just a blunt knife.
9 And [REDACTED] appeared in the kitchen -- it was a small
10 kitchen at the end of the hallway -- and asked what
11 I was doing and I said I were getting something to eat
12 and it was the usual thing, 'I'm nae here to feed you'
13 and then swearing and things. And then he then
14 physically attacked me.

15 And I just couldnae take any more, to be quite
16 honest with you and I'd said to him, 'If you come near
17 me again, I'm gonna stab you with this knife', and then
18 I run away. But he got me at the end of the hallway,
19 the doorway, and it was at the top of the stairs and he
20 was laying into me and I had the knife in my hand and
21 then the door shut, there was a door at the top of the
22 stairs that shut. And then I was just sitting there
23 crying and just didn't know what to do. And then the
24 next thing there was police there, grabbed a hold of me,
25 and that was it.

1 Q. And you say that they took you straight to
2 Brimmond Assessment Centre?
3 A. Yeah, yeah.
4 Q. Did you know what Brimmond Assessment Centre was?
5 A. Everybody had heard of it. They knew what it was.
6 I didn't know what it was. We knew it was a locked
7 home. We didn't call it the centre or that; we just
8 called it 'homes'. It was a locked home, that's all.
9 I knew what it was.
10 Q. All right.
11 A. That was it. I didnae know where it was, but everybody
12 knew somebody that had been, somebody had been in or
13 somebody ... and people were scared of it.
14 Q. Right.
15 A. We were scared to be put into Brimmond.
16 Q. Do you remember why people were scared of it? What were
17 they scared of?
18 A. They just said it was -- just kids speaking between one
19 another, 'You don't want to go to Brimmond. It's really
20 bad being in Brimmond. You're locked up all the time.
21 It's nae a nice place to be'. That was it. Didn't know
22 anything of it at all.
23 Excuse me, sorry.
24 Q. No, it's all right.
25 You tell us that according to your social work

1 records, you were initially there with your mother's
2 consent?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. And you didn't go to a Children's Panel until you had
5 been there for around a month?

6 A. Yes, must've been something like that.

7 Q. I am going to go on in a minute just to look at Brimmond
8 and your time there, your memories of that.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. But, before I do that, perhaps you can tell us a bit
11 about the children's panel, if you remember anything
12 about that; what do you remember about the panel?

13 A. Very, very little. It was just I was put in front of
14 a panel of -- if I remember correctly, I think it was in
15 Golden Square in Aberdeen. I was just put in front of
16 a panel and they obviously spoke about me. And there
17 was, I think, there was three people in the panel and
18 there would have been a social worker there. I'm not
19 sure if my mother would have been there or not, because
20 she wasnae very interested in me as a person or my
21 siblings, to be quite -- if I'm being perfectly honest.

22 I mean, there are occasions where I had split heads,
23 split my knee open, er, I had to go to hospital myself,
24 walk down, get stitches and come home.

25 Er, I once had a hand put in fire and it was

1 blistered and nobody took me to hospital. I had to do
2 it on my own.

3 I was bitten by a dog once and I had to go to the
4 hospital myself. So I can't recollect my mother being
5 there, but she may have been. [REDACTED] certainly wouldn't
6 have been there, that's for sure.

7 Q. All right.

8 Did the panel speak to you? Did they ask you
9 anything about what happened?

10 A. No, you were down as a bad kid, a problem child, as
11 such.

12 Q. Nobody asked you for your side of the story?

13 A. No, never. I've never given my side of the story at
14 all.

15 Everybody gets the impression that I was a really
16 terrible child, but the police were never at my door in
17 Northfield. I was too scared to have the police at my
18 door. The police never came. I wasnae one for the
19 police coming every single day to my door and to --
20 I just didnae do that.

21 Q. So you were taken to Brimmond. The records that we
22 have, 'James', suggest that would have been
23 about [REDACTED] 1974; would that sound about right to
24 you?

25 A. No, it must be before that.

1 Q. Was it before?

2 A. I'm trying to think about that, the records that they've
3 got. I remember two Christmases in Brimmond. The
4 reason I remember it is, er, we got to smoke cigarettes
5 at Christmastime.

6 Q. You say in your statement, I think, you thought you were
7 about 12?

8 A. No, I would have been older. I must have been 13.

9 Q. All right.

10 A. I must have been 13.

11 Q. That's fine.

12 A. I'm trying to figure out when it was totally, but my
13 memory -- because -- I don't know if it's abuse of
14 alcohol when I was younger or because I played football
15 for a long time, my memory isn't great at times.

16 Q. Don't worry about it. We don't need a precise date.
17 It's just to place it --

18 A. I remember two Christmases in Brimmond.

19 Q. -- to place it roughly in time.

20 A. I remember we got to smoke. That was a younger child --
21 kids like me and the older kids, everybody got to smoke.
22 I remember that.

23 Q. Okay.

24 This is now paragraph -- yes, 14. And you describe
25 Brimmond Assessment Centre sitting on a hill overlooking

1 the city?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. You give us a description there -- and I wonder if it

4 would help if you saw a photograph of Brimmond and you

5 can perhaps talk us through that --

6 A. Yeah, of course. Yeah.

7 Q. -- and show us where everything was?

8 A. No problem.

9 Q. The first one is INQ-000000211?

10 A. Yeah, that's Brimmond there.

11 Q. Is that Brimmond?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Maybe, in your own words, if you can talk us through the

14 layout of the place, where the entrances where, what was

15 where?

16 A. Right, as far as I'm aware, you see the building [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]? That was -- yeah, that one there,

18 yeah.

19 Q. The one with [REDACTED]?

20 A. Yeah. That would have been Mr ERM [REDACTED] and

21 Mrs ERL [REDACTED]'s house --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- flat, at the time.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. The main entrance there, what you're seeing there, that

1 was the main entrance. This was the football pitches
2 here. There was a football pitch here on the left-hand
3 side. I think you can expand the photograph. I think
4 the goals are still there, to be quite honest with you.
5 Q. Right.
6 A. As you went into Brimmond, there was a little office
7 here, on the left-hand side. That's where I was first
8 introduced to Brimmond, as such. There was another
9 office on the right-hand side.
10 Q. This is as you go in the main entrance?
11 A. The main entrance, yeah.
12 In front of you was a set of doors, take you down to
13 the laundry room on the right-hand side. That had
14 a door leading outside. Then down the flight of stairs
15 and you turn to your right, slightly to your left --
16 slightly to your left, sorry, and that was the dining
17 room. And the kitchen.
18 Q. Okay.
19 A. There was also -- the back stairs was there as well.
20 Q. And where did they go to?
21 A. They went up the stairs and they led to -- I was never
22 along the corridor at the right-hand side; that's a part
23 where we weren't allowed in. As you went through the
24 doors on the left-hand side, that's where the bedrooms
25 were. There was a line of bedrooms there. Then,

1 halfway along, there was a toilet block and a cell.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And at the far doors, at the far end, was the girls'

4 part.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. We never seen the girls. We could see them through the

7 windows, er, but we never interacted with the girls at

8 all.

9 Q. Okay, you were kept completely apart?

10 A. Completely separate, at all times.

11 Q. Okay. You talked about a row of bedrooms?

12 A. Yeah, it's on the left-hand side, there was a row of

13 bedrooms. Yes.

14 Q. Is that what we can see in the photograph on the

15 left-hand side?

16 A. That's all the bedrooms, yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's the

17 ones. That's all the bedrooms, yeah, yeah.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. My bedroom was one, two, three, four -- I think fifth

20 in, from the left-hand side.

21 MR SHELTON: Okay.

22 LADY SMITH: 'James', do you see there are skylights in the

23 roof above those windows?

24 A. That wasn't there when I was there.

25 LADY SMITH: Was there --

1 A. It was converted into an old people's home, as far as
2 I'm aware.

3 LADY SMITH: Oh, so that may well be another level of rooms
4 that are lit by skylights, above the bedrooms?

5 A. Yeah, that wasn't there when I was there; there was no
6 skylights.

7 LADY SMITH: Okay, thank you.

8 A. Well, not that I can remember, no.

9 MR SHELTON: Sure.

10 LADY SMITH: Where was the cell?

11 A. You can't see the cell from there. It was the other
12 side of the building. If you go to the quadrangle at
13 the back, I can show you where the cell was.

14 LADY SMITH: I don't think we have that.

15 MR SHELTON: I can show you another photograph, 'James'.
16 It's INQ-000000213.

17 A. Well, you can't see it there either. See the white
18 building there?

19 LADY SMITH: Yes.

20 A. On the right-hand side, that one there, yeah. Round
21 behind there, there was a quadrangle which was made of
22 tar and above it was the cell and the boiler block.
23 It's shaped like a U shape, like this.

24 MR SHELTON: Okay.

25 LADY SMITH: And when you arrived, 'James', I suppose the

1 building must still have been quite a new building, was
2 it?
3 A. I would imagine so, yeah. Probably, yeah.
4 LADY SMITH: Okay.
5 MR SHELTON: We think it opened in 1973.
6 A. Yeah.
7 MR SHELTON: So it must have been --
8 A. Fairly new.
9 MR SHELTON: -- fairly new at that point.
10 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
11 MR SHELTON: Thanks very much, 'James', that's very helpful
12 to get a picture of what the place was like. You tell
13 us, at paragraph 16, if we can go back to that, you
14 don't remember all the staff at Brimmond, but you talk
15 about Mr and Mrs ERL-ERM who were SNR .
16 A. Yeah.
17 Q. You say that Mrs ERL seemed to be the main one
18 running the place?
19 A. Yeah.
20 Q. Why do you say that?
21 A. She seemed to be the one that you seen more of. You did
22 see Mr ERM quite a bit, but Mrs ERL just
23 seemed to be the one that sorta run it, if that makes
24 sense? She was the one that, er, you seen quite a lot.
25 Other members of staff as well, but she seemed to be

1 there all the time. I think it's maybe because they
2 being on site, as opposed to coming to work --
3 Q. All right.
4 A. -- I think.
5 Q. You talk about Mr ERM and you describe him. You
6 say that his favourite thing was to pin you against
7 a wall, shout in your face --
8 A. Yeah.
9 Q. -- and tell you you were worthless; and that was
10 Mr ERM, you think?
11 A. Yeah, yeah.
12 Q. Can I just show you another photograph, please?
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. It is WIT.003.002.1175?
15 A. That's him, yeah.
16 Q. And that's Mr ERM?
17 A. That is Mrs ERL as well, yes.
18 Q. And is that the person, the tall guy with the beard --
19 A. Yeah, on the right-hand side, yeah.
20 Q. -- that put you against a wall?
21 A. Yes, I'll always remember it. He had this beard without
22 a moustache, always.
23 Q. All right. You tell us that they both seemed to be
24 a bit religious and there's nothing worse than
25 a religious hypocrite?

1 A. Yeah. I said a 'pious hypocrite', I think.

2 Q. First of all, why did you get the impression they were
3 quite religious?

4 A. It just seemed to be the way they talked and that. And
5 they used to go to church across the road. There was
6 a church across the road --

7 Q. Yes, there was a church just along --

8 A. Yeah, I think it is called Kettle's Hill Church. Er,
9 I think that's what it's called.

10 Q. Might it have been called Newhills?

11 A. Newhills, yeah. Yeah, it's just across the road.

12 Q. You tell us there was 20 to 25 boys in Brimmond and
13 maybe a dozen girls, and you very fairly say you can't
14 be sure how many girls there were exactly --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- because you were kept separate?

17 A. We were kept separate, yeah.

18 Q. And you thought the age range of the residents was from
19 8 or 9 to about 15?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So some really quite young children in there?

22 A. Yeah, I remember one -- I winnae say his name, because
23 I don't think it is proper of me. There was two
24 brothers and one was young and one was the same age as
25 me, roughly, yeah. But there was younger kids as well,

1 yeah.

2 Q. So, over the page at paragraph 18, you talk about

3 arriving at Brimmond. Perhaps I can just ask you: what

4 was your first impression of Brimmond when you got

5 there?

6 A. I was very scared, because obviously I -- you'd heard

7 about it. But I didnae know what I was going into. And

8 it was the smell. I still remember the smell to this

9 day. It was the smell of, like, disinfectant, hospital

10 smell. Er, I go certain places and the smell comes back

11 to me and it's like -- I know I'm back in -- I know I'm

12 not back in Brimmond, but I remember me the smell of it.

13 It's really, really strange.

14 Q. Not exactly a homely sort of smell?

15 A. No, no, no. Not at all, no. It was a more disinfectant

16 hospital -- I can only describe it as like

17 a disinfectant hospital smell. Institution smell maybe,

18 that's maybe a better word.

19 Q. Right. You say that you didn't have any possessions

20 with you when you arrived?

21 A. No.

22 Q. You had never been given a birthday or Christmas present

23 in your life Secondary Institutions - to be published later ?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Secondary Institutions - to be published later ;

1 is that right?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Can we take from that that you didn't get any birthday

4 or Christmas presents even at Brimmond?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Not at all?

7 A. No, I never got a Christmas present at Brimmond, no.

8 Q. Did anyone?

9 A. You got cigarettes at Christ -- everybody got -- there

10 was a certain age at Brimmond -- now, whether it's 14 or

11 15, I can't remember -- and you got -- they got four

12 cigarettes a day, the older boys. Er, then, if you were

13 friends wi' one of the older boys, you would say to him,

14 'Twos up on your cigarette', and he would leave a little

15 bit in the toilet.

16 But the staff knew this. It wasnae as if the staff

17 didnae know it, because everybody was a rush to the

18 toilet after the guys came out smoking and everybody

19 would -- you would get a little bit of smoke.

20 Q. Okay. You tell us that you were taken straight to the

21 office when you arrived?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you were greeted by being told you were a dirty

24 little boy; is that how it happened?

25 A. Yeah, I would have been unkempt and dirty, I would

1 imagine, yeah.

2 Q. Who was it that greeted you? Who was it that you met

3 first, do you remember?

4 A. I think it may have been Mrs ERL or Mr ERM , it

5 wasnae one of the other staff members that I can think

6 of. I think it would have been one of ERL-ERM ,

7 I would have thought.

8 Q. You tell us that you tried to tell them you were just

9 defending yourself, but they told you to shut up?

10 A. Yeah, that I deserved to be there. You were there for

11 a reason.

12 Q. It sounds as though, 'James', that they weren't

13 listening to you?

14 A. Nobody's -- nobody's ever listened to me as a child.

15 Ever.

16 Q. And is that the way it felt all the way through your

17 time at Brimmond?

18 A. Yeah. Nobody listened to you. You were told what to

19 do. There was no, er, interaction with the children.

20 You used to be told what to do. You were only told --

21 you were always told what to do. It was regimented.

22 You were told what to do. You had your cleaning in the

23 morning, your cleaning during the day. You went for

24 your lunch or you went for your tea somewhere, er, and

25 then you were told when to get washed, when to walk,

1 when to do everything. The only free time you sometimes
2 had is when you were putting down to the gym and you
3 sort of much -- could do what you pleased in the gym,
4 within reason.

5 Q. Well, we are coming on to this in your statement,
6 'James'. So perhaps you can just tell us about the
7 routine at Brimmond; how did the days go?

8 A. You started up, you got up in the morning, they'd come
9 through. You were locked in at night. The doors were
10 locked, they were shut. You got up in the morning, you
11 went through the toilet block, you got washed, you went
12 down the stairs, you had breakfast, if I can remember
13 correctly. I can't remember lots o' it. Then you got
14 your cleaning duties.

15 Q. Sorry, 'James' -- sorry to interrupt you, but just to
16 ask you about one particular matter. You tell us that
17 the doors were locked at night; is that the doors of
18 your rooms?

19 A. Yeah, yeah.

20 Q. The dormitory rooms?

21 A. Yeah, I can remember them being locked. I can't
22 remember them being open, because if it was, if they
23 were open, I could assure you that kids would've been in
24 each other's rooms.

25 Q. Yes. So if you needed to go to the toilet in the middle

1 of the night --

2 A. You had to knock on the door to go to the toilets. The
3 staff didnae like you going to the toilet at night
4 because it disturbed them. It was difficult.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. It wasnae the first time I had to scrub the toilets at
7 night wi' a toothbrush, because you were -- young guys,
8 kids, boys, you speak and you make noise and you jump
9 about and you're -- it's just boisterous children, I
10 would imagine, when I think back now, maybe, but -- and
11 then, depending which member of staff it was, they could
12 make you stand in the corner at night, outside the room,
13 your room door.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. You stood there, freezing cold or whatever it was. Or
16 sometimes they could be really -- get you and take you
17 into the toilet block and they used to give you
18 a toothbrush and they used to let you scrub the tiles.
19 It was tiles. It was all tiled. Scrub it 'til they
20 deemed fit for you to go back to your bed.

21 Q. On the occasions that they made you stand outside; how
22 long would you have to do that for?

23 A. Well, how long's a piece of string? It was just
24 whenever they decided to put you back in. It could
25 be -- it was never less than half an hour.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Never less than half an hour. Sometimes two hours you
3 stood facing the wall. You had to stand as close to the
4 wall as possible.

5 Q. Facing the wall?

6 A. Yeah, the whole times. Yeah, you couldnae look about
7 you. You had to face the wall at all times.

8 Q. Can you remember the names of the staff who made you do
9 that?

10 A. Yeah, Mr GJO was one. He was the world's worst.
11 Mr IEJ. There was Mr . Big giant
12 Mr GJR. He wouldnae come through that door, Mr GJR.
13 He was a massive guy. He used to intimidate you wi' his
14 size because he used to get right in your space, right
15 on top of you. And his favourite thing was crushing
16 your hand with his hands. He used to -- he didnae
17 really lash out at you, you know, punch you or that.
18 Where Mr IEJ and Mr GJO would. He
19 wouldnae. He would just crush your hand and then get
20 right on top of you, right in your face. This massive
21 guy, you know, he were like -- he was right on top of
22 you, right in your face at times, like. You know, he
23 was like so close to you. You know, push you up against
24 a wall and intimidate you wi' his size, like, you know.

25 Q. Yes. And you were, you think, 13 or so at this point?

1 A. Yeah. Aye, I would have been, yeah. Probably, yeah.
2 It were right up 'til I left. You know, it was
3 an ongoing thing.
4 The thing in Brimmond -- with Brimmond was -- it
5 was -- there were -- nae every single day you got
6 punched and kicked and things like that, but it was
7 a daily -- a weekly occurrence, a daily occurrence
8 sometimes, depending how the mood was of the staff,
9 like. You know, it was ...
10 Q. We will come on to that in a minute, 'James'. And it is
11 my fault because I interrupted you, you were telling us
12 about the daily routine.
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. I think you got essentially to breakfast time --
15 A. Yeah.
16 Q. -- and how the day went from there.
17 A. Then you got your cleaning duties.
18 Q. Was that a daily thing?
19 A. Every day. Every single day.
20 Q. And what about schooling? I mean, after breakfast were
21 there ever any children --
22 A. I never got any schooling whatsoever at the time I was
23 in Brimmond. None whatsoever. There was two kids who
24 went out to school --
25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- that I knew of. Two.

2 Q. I think you tell us later in your statement there was
3 a classroom?

4 A. There was a classroom, yeah. There was a classroom at
5 the left-hand side as you went along the corridor and
6 there was also -- next to it was like a woodwork room,
7 but I was never in the classroom, going to school.

8 Q. Did you actually get to see inside the classroom?

9 A. Well, I looked inside it and whatever, but I never
10 received any schooling at all.

11 Q. All right. What was the classroom like?

12 A. It was just a room with chairs --

13 Q. Right.

14 A. -- as far as I can remember.

15 Q. What sort of size of room?

16 A. Er, it wasn't the largest room ever. It was just -- it
17 wasn't as large as a normal classroom you would get in
18 a school now, like. It was just a room and that was the
19 classroom. But I was never in the classroom. I never
20 received any education at all at Brimmond, none at all.

21 Q. Did you see any other children getting classes in
22 Brimmond?

23 A. No. Not that I can remember, because you were cleaning
24 or you were in the, like, the common room for the
25 television. The television was bolted to the wall, it

1 was set up high, because on occasion before kids had
2 flung TVs through the window to abscond. But I didnae
3 get any sort of education whatsoever in Brimmond.
4 Q. Right.
5 A. None.
6 Q. There were a couple of children, you say, that went out
7 to school --
8 A. Yeah, there was. Two, yeah.
9 Q. -- do you know why they went out to school?
10 A. I don't know.
11 Q. What the reason for that was?
12 A. I don't know.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. I've no idea. We used to wonder why they got out to go
15 to school, 'cause most of us were locked up. As far as
16 I were aware, it was a locked down place.
17 Q. Sure.
18 A. But they went out to school.
19 Q. I mean, what about the doors and so on in Brimmond?
20 Outside doors and so on; were they locked during the
21 day?
22 A. Every door was locked.
23 Q. Right.
24 A. The only way you could get through a door was if a staff
25 member opened it wi' a little key. But, in the door,

1 there was a little button and if you pushed the button,
2 the door didnae lock.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. So, if you could get the staff's back turned for some
5 minute, you could push the button and then you could go
6 wandering about. That's how I absconded.

7 Q. I was just going to ask you that. So some of these
8 doors are within Brimmond? They are internal doors; is
9 that right?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. But some of them are doors to the outside world?

12 A. Yeah, yeah, but in the shower block at the end there was
13 a door with access to the -- to get out to the football
14 pitch --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- and outside Brimmond.

17 Q. Okay. Just going back for a moment to talk about the
18 day and how the day would go at Brimmond, you talk about
19 sharing a room with two other guys.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. There were three single beds in the room?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you say that you were never in the rooms during the
24 day; were you not allowed to go back to your room during
25 the day?

1 A. No. No, it was for night time only.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. You only slept in the room.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. You never, er, went upstairs during the day. Never.

6 Q. Do you know why that was? Why did they not let you go

7 to your room?

8 A. You were never allowed. Just -- you would never dreamt

9 of even asking. You stayed down the stair. I would

10 never have entered my head to go to the room during the

11 day.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It was for night time only.

14 Q. What else was in the room? Did you have beds?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Were there bedside cabinets?

17 A. A bedside cabinet, that was it. Nothing else.

18 Q. Okay. Where did you keep clothes?

19 A. They were clothes you were given. You were given a set

20 of clothes when you went into Brimmond, you didn't have

21 your own clothes. There was a room at the end for

22 clothes, it was for -- everybody in Brimmond's clothes

23 were kept there.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. You was given clothes when you went into Brimmond and

1 you wore them at all times.

2 Q. Okay. So the clothes that you came in with, they were

3 taken away; is that right?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. And you were given something to wear?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. All right. At paragraph 25, you talk about bedwetting

8 a bit and you say bedwetters 'got it tight' in the

9 mornings?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What do you mean by that?

12 A. Well, they were shouted at, they were told that, for

13 want of a better word, that they were pishy and that

14 they were dirty wee boys. 'Why would you wet the bed?'

15 and something like that, because it obviously created

16 problems for the members of staff; the beds had to be

17 stripped. Obviously, it took a while. But I never

18 suffered from bedwetting so it was never a problem for

19 me.

20 Q. All right. But you saw it happen?

21 A. Oh yeah, yeah.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. They used to humiliate them, take them in and carry out

24 the wet, you know, urine stained, er, sheets and that,

25 you know.

1 Q. Did the children have to do that or the staff?

2 A. Carry them. No, the staff wouldnae carry them; the
3 children carried them.

4 Q. All right. Carry them where, to the laundry room?

5 A. You know, the toilet block. And I'm pretty much sure
6 they must've carried them down to the, you know, the
7 laundry room. There was a laundry room down the stairs.
8 They would've went down the back stairs and take it to
9 the laundry room.

10 Q. Okay. You tell us a little bit about meal times, at
11 paragraphs 26 and 27. I think, taking matters short,
12 you say that the food was actually okay?

13 A. Aye, it was okay for what it was, like. But what you
14 found in Brimmond was whatever was made, you had to eat.
15 So if -- I mean, to this day I can't stand liver.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. Liver was on the menu. You ate it. I covered it wi'
18 brown sauce to get rid of the taste of liver. I used to
19 hate it.

20 Q. Liver is one of these things I think you either love or
21 hate.

22 A. Yeah, I'm nae keen on offal at all, to be fair, like,
23 but liver's one of them I don't like, no.

24 Q. Fair enough. You do say -- and this is paragraph 27 --
25 you remember having to be quiet while you ate?

1 A. Yeah, it wasnae noisy. You would sit at tables and then
2 you couldn't -- I mean, at a normal school -- I went to
3 normal school. When I went to Craigielea, I went to
4 Hazlehead Academy, and dining rooms are noisy places,
5 full of chatter, and nothing like that, but there was
6 a member of staff that stayed there at all times.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. And you had -- you just ate your food and -- obviously,
9 you could chat and things like that, but you couldnae be
10 like a normal school, boisterous, you know.

11 Q. Okay, so there was chatting, just that you weren't
12 allowed, I suppose, be normal children in that way?

13 A. No, aye, you could say too much. If you were being too
14 noisy or that you were told. You sorta knew -- once you
15 got to Brimmond and you were in it a while, you knew
16 what you were in.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So you knew when you could, er ...

19 Q. You got to know the rules?

20 A. You knew when you could bend the rules slightly --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- you know.

23 Q. You tell us that if you weren't quiet, it wasn't unusual
24 to get a smack in the mouth. Who would give you a smack
25 in the mouth?

1 A. Mr IEJ was famous for punching you in the stomach,
2 or hit you in the head. He used to get you in the back
3 of the head. But his favourite thing was he would punch
4 you in the lower back or in the stomach, you know.
5 Mr IEJ was famous for it. But he'd also lift
6 you -- believe it or not, I had blond, curly hair when
7 I was in Brimmond. Er, and he would lift you by the
8 side of the hair. You know, at the side there, lift you
9 up like that. It's really painful.
10 You know, Mr GJO, he liked to lash out at
11 you.
12 Q. Okay. And you tell us, also, that the staff used older
13 boys to keep younger boys in line?
14 A. Yeah.
15 Q. How did they do that?
16 A. They used to -- they would get you into the small room.
17 I was lucky in the respect that I shared a room with --
18 I winnae mention his name because, sadly, he's now dead
19 and he's nae here anymore.
20 (Pause)
21 So I never had any problems, 'cause the guy I shared
22 a room with --
23 Q. He gave you some --
24 A. -- to coin a phrase, could fight for fun.
25 Q. Okay, he could give you some protection, did he?

1 A. Yeah, but we were friends. I was also friends wi' his
2 sister. She was in at the same time as well.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. So naebuddy bothered me in that aspect, really.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. We did play murder ball at times.

7 Q. But, just to finish that last point, there were some
8 boys that were taken aside and given a good --

9 A. Well, yeah, I could mention names, who two of the really
10 bad ones were.

11 Q. Sure. We don't need names --

12 A. They could, yeah, keep control of you. They would punch
13 lumps out you, you know.

14 Q. Mm-hm.

15 A. But the staff allowed that. I never seen any members of
16 staff stopping that, you know. Nae that I can remember,
17 anyway. Maybe they did break up a fight or two. There
18 was fights, obviously, like, 'cause some people could
19 look after theirselves.

20 Q. Did staff ever stand aside and watch a fight going on?

21 A. Yeah, it was -- I mean, staff knew murder ball was
22 played. There's only one rule in murder ball and that's
23 there's nae rules. So you were in a gym and there was
24 just a ball flung in and it was just a free-for-all.

25 Q. Okay. What about individual fights between boys; did

1 staff watch that?

2 A. Yeah, that happened regular, aye. It would get broken
3 up and then, er, depending on how long it went on for or
4 when the staff would get round about, er -- and then
5 either one would be put in the cell, depending on what
6 it was -- were putting in the cell.

7 Q. Okay. You started telling us a bit about cleaning
8 duties, chores and that sort of thing.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And, paragraph 32, you tell us that that could be, well,
11 a bit of a nightmare by the sound of it. Can you tell
12 us about that, please?

13 A. Depending on the job you got, if you got the corridor,
14 you had to Hoover the whole corridor, and then you had
15 to Hoover the -- like, where the TV room was and the
16 little -- there was like a small room wi' a table in it,
17 where there was a chess set, draughts. There wasnae
18 very many books. I have always been a voracious reader
19 all my life, even back then. I used to like reading
20 books, nae comics and thing like that. I was more into
21 reading books. There was a few books, er, that were
22 passed around.

23 Q. What sort of thing did you read?

24 A. Er, I think the first one that I read was The Cross and
25 The Switchblade.

1 Q. Right. Anyway, sorry, I interrupted you again. You
2 were talking about cleaning.

3 A. That's all right.

4 Q. It's my fault.

5 A. You had to hoover like that and then you had to clean
6 the toilets. You had to clean out the gym, sweep it and
7 clean it. Er, they had the boot room where there was
8 football boots. You got football boots to play
9 football, but there was also walking boots. And there
10 was maybe 30 pair of walking boots, 40 pair of walking
11 boots. You had to clean them, and then you had to
12 dubbin then, and then you had to polish them. But you
13 had to make sure that there was no dirt on the soles of
14 the boots and, if there were, you had to start again.

15 Q. Right, the staff would make you start again?

16 A. Start again, yeah. Did the whole lot again. You didn't
17 even have to do one pair, you had to do the rest of them
18 again.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. The back stairs was a nightmare job. I used to hate the
21 back stairs, absolutely hated it.

22 Q. Why is that?

23 A. It was made -- it was vinyl, linoleum vinyl. But every
24 stair had a brass rod and that had to be Brassoed. You
25 had to wash the -- sweep the stairs, wash them, then you

1 had to Brasso every single rod, a brass rod. And woe
2 betide you if you got Brasso, you know, on the linoleum,
3 nightmare.

4 Q. You would be punished if you did that?

5 A. They just made you start again. It wasnae the first
6 time I'd been cleaning the stairs, got to the bottom and
7 then carried the bucket of water back up the stairs to
8 make sure there was nothing on the stairs. A member of
9 staff would just kick the bucket, it'd go all the way
10 down the stairs and you'd just start again.

11 Q. Do you remember who would do that sort of thing?

12 A. Mr IEJ was keen on it as well. Mr GJQ was keen
13 on that as well. Mr GJO and Mr IEJ was
14 keen on standing on your fingers. You know, when you
15 were Brassoing, they would stand on, you know, your
16 fingers. It was sore, like. They would stand on your
17 hand. I used to hate the back stairs. Hated it.

18 And it would take you so long as well. It would
19 take you all day, because, like I say, you had to Brasso
20 on. You'd make sure you -- you'd put the Brasso on, you
21 let the Brasso dry, and it goes like opaque in colour,
22 and then you polish it so it's shiny. You know, I hated
23 it.

24 Q. Mm-hm. Thinking about, I hope, a happier subject for
25 a little while. Paragraph 34, you do talk a bit there

1 about reading books were available.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And you tell us that you learned to play chess?

4 A. I did, yeah.

5 Q. How did you learn to play chess? Did somebody teach

6 you?

7 A. One of the guys who could play chess taught me how to

8 play chess.

9 Q. Right, and you became quite a keen player?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And you still do, do you?

12 A. I dinnae play chess so much now, no. I've nobody to

13 play with, to be fair, like, I mean. But, yeah,

14 obviously I can still play chess. Like, once you learn

15 chess, you learn chess, like, you know. I can still

16 play chess. I'm still a massive reader.

17 Q. You say -- this is paragraph 34 -- reading was your

18 escape?

19 A. Yeah. Yeah, it was, yeah. You read books, you're in

20 a different world, a different dimension. Books take

21 you away. Even to this day, I still read. I mean,

22 I could never be without a book at all. Ever, ever.

23 Q. Okay. There were some activities. You tell us you were

24 a football player.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. You used to like playing football.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And whenever they let you play, you would participate?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Did you ever play games at other places or was it always
6 just at Brimmond?

7 A. No, just at Brimmond. You never moved. I've never been
8 nae where else bar Brimmond. There was -- sometimes
9 they wouldnae let you play football, like, you know, and
10 it used to drive you nuts because you wanted out.

11 Q. Sure.

12 A. You were out. You were out of Brimmond. You weren't in
13 Brimmond, you were out, you could play football.

14 Plus, er, there were always ways of getting back at
15 members of staff and how to get things. What they would
16 do sometimes as well is, if somebody absconded, they
17 would let the rest of the kids try and catch 'em. So
18 what we would do, sometimes, because I was always pretty
19 decent at football, somebody was going to abscond and we
20 would know about it. You know, it's common knowledge
21 among -- nae among the staff, but among the guys that
22 this guy's gonna run.

23 So we was playing football, I would get the ball and
24 belt it as far as I could into the fields across, and
25 then the guy that was absconding would say, 'Right, I'll

1 get the ball', and then we knew he wasnae coming back,
2 like, you know? So they would then say to us, 'Right,
3 where is he? [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]? He's gone'. And
4 then you could get out to run about, pretending to look
5 for him.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. We'd never find him.

8 Q. Okay. But there were times -- it sounds as though there
9 were times when you just weren't allowed out to play at
10 all?

11 A. No, you never got out at all, no. No, you weren't
12 allowed out. You'd get out for hillwalking.
13 Hillwalking. They used to walk you round the whole, er,
14 area --

15 Q. Right.

16 A. -- up to Brimmond Hill. But that was structured. You
17 was out. You put on the walking boots and you got,
18 like, a Parka thing if it was cold, and then you went
19 walking. They used to walk you for miles and miles and
20 miles and miles. And if it was your turn to come back
21 for -- to clean the boots, then you had to clean the
22 boots, like.

23 Q. Sure. Jumping forward a little bit in your statement,
24 paragraph 41. This is page 10. You are talking about
25 family contact. You tell us that your mum and dad

1 didn't come to visit you in Brimmond at all?

2 A. No.

3 Q. And you did get some home leave?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. But it sounds as though that wasn't really very much

6 good to you?

7 A. Well, I mean, if you were getting out of Brimmond, it

8 was a good thing. So it doesn't matter what my home

9 environment was when I went back out of Brimmond, as

10 long as I was getting out of Brimmond. I could go back

11 home and more or less do what I wanted when I wanted.

12 There was very, very little restrictions on me.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. You know, 'cause they were just glad to nae see me in

15 the house, I would imagine, like, you know, and nae be

16 there. You know, so you used to get out on a Friday,

17 but you had to be back on a Sunday for 4 o'clock, if

18 I remember correctly. I think it was 4 o'clock.

19 Q. Was that every weekend, 'James', or --

20 A. Well, it depends, 'cause it could be taken from you.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. If you were deemed to be misbehaving, it was taken from

23 you. You didnae get out again.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Or if you did something when you were out, you know, at

1 the weekend, you didnae get back out again.

2 Q. Okay. You start to talk about discipline and punishment
3 at paragraph 43. You say in the first line of that
4 paragraph:

5 'If you stepped out of line at Brimmond, you were
6 punished.'

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Can you tell us about the punishments, please?

9 A. Which one?

10 Q. Well, where ... yes.

11 A. Yeah, aye, I mean, basically, it could be as little as
12 just bending your arm up your back, taking you from the
13 TV room to put you into the small room, so you couldnae
14 watch television.

15 Another favourite was that you were taken and stood
16 in the corner. Now, that could be for -- like I say, it
17 was never less than half an hour. Up to two hours. But
18 then Mr GJO's favourite thing was, you were
19 standing in the corridor and you had to face the wall
20 and, honestly, you were like this close to the wall
21 (indicates). You had to stand with your hands behind
22 your back. You couldnae stand with your hands by your
23 side. Your legs used to start shaking after a while,
24 you know, because you were standing there so long. But
25 he thought nothing of coming along and dunting you in

1 the back of the head, you know, so you hit the wall.

2 But his favourite thing was he would take his hand,
3 with his knuckle like that, and he'd hit you right on
4 top of the head. But, at the same time, he would took
5 his knee and give you a dead leg, you know, into your
6 knee. God, it was sore, man. Deary me, it was sore.

7 Q. You tell us that the main form of punishment was being
8 put in the cell?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. What can you tell us about the cell?

11 A. The cell was -- the toilet block was there and there was
12 a door on your left-hand side, that was the cell door.
13 It was a slab of concrete. I don't know. And that was
14 it. That was it.

15 Q. All right.

16 A. You didnae get in bed until night time. You wore
17 a pair -- as we called them back in the day, they were
18 called PE shorts. It would be gym shorts nowadays.
19 Yeah, a pair of shorts, but they were nylon. And you
20 got a t-shirt. You didnae get nothing in your feet.
21 You were bare-footed, and that's what you wore. You
22 didnae get your bed until nighttime.

23 Q. What was the floor made of?

24 A. It was just -- it would be like tiled, I suppose.

25 Q. Right. And the walls; were they painted?

1 A. Yes, just basic bare walls.

2 Q. Right. Can you remember the colour of the walls?

3 A. I think they may have been, like, a cream colour or

4 off-white.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. I think so. The window, you could look out the window

7 and it faced onto the quadrangle. So other guys, if

8 they were out maybe playing football or doing their

9 exercises there, they would gi' it to you big style

10 because you were in the cell, 'cause you'd bang on the

11 cell window, like.

12 Q. You tell us there was no toilet in the cell?

13 A. No.

14 Q. So how did you go to the toilet, if you needed to go?

15 A. You would get permission to go into the toilet block, to

16 go to the toilet.

17 Q. Okay. So you would have to bang on the door?

18 A. Bang on the door, knock on the door, like that. If you

19 didnae, you just -- you couldnae go the toilet. It was

20 just a cell.

21 Q. Okay. What was the bed like? Was there a bed?

22 A. No, it wasnae a bed; it was like a concrete block. And

23 they came in at nighttime with, like, a rolled down --

24 you know, it would be like a -- you know, like a piece

25 of foam and a blanket.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. There was no duvets back in that day; it was blankets
3 and that and a sheet. And that's what you got, wi'
4 a pillow, and you lay on that and they took it away in
5 the morning again. Just took it from you in the
6 morning.

7 Q. What was the temperature like?

8 A. Well, in the summertime it was melting; in the
9 wintertime it was freezing.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. There was nae heating in the cell. There was nae
12 radiators or nothing like that.

13 Q. And during the day, if they were bringing the bed roll
14 in at night; does that mean that during the day you had
15 to sit on the concrete block --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Floor?

18 A. Yeah, that's what it was for, it was a punishment cell.
19 That's what it was for.

20 Excuse me, could I possibly go to the toilet,
21 please?

22 LADY SMITH: Yes, there is no problem with that. We will
23 have a break and let us know when you are ready to
24 resume.

25 (11.10 am)

1 (A short break)

2 (11.12 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Are you ready for us to carry on?

4 A. Yes, I am. Thank you.

5 LADY SMITH: Thanks, 'James'.

6 Mr Sheldon.

7 MR SHELDON: Thanks, my Lady.

8 'James', before we broke there for a moment, you

9 were telling us about the cell and --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- you described it as a punishment cell?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And is that how it felt?

14 A. Yeah, it was a punishment cell; that's what it was for.

15 You knew, depending what your level of misdemeanour was

16 or what they deemed was -- you had to go to the cell.

17 You had to go to the cell, you were put in. Everybody

18 hated the cell because there was nae -- there was

19 nothing, it was just a cell, and it was for however long

20 they thought that you should be in the punishment cell

21 for.

22 Q. And how long could that be?

23 A. It could be a day to a week, depending on what they

24 thought was -- who -- what crime you committed was worth

25 you being in the cell for as long as they wanted to put

1 you in for.

2 Q. Did you have anything to do when you were in the cell?

3 A. No, you'd just sit. That's what I'm saying, you'd just

4 sit. It was like solitary confinement. Basically,

5 that's what it was. There was never two people in the

6 cell at once, ever. It was always just one person at a

7 time.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. It was just solitary confinement, when I think about it

10 now, like. That's what it was.

11 Q. You didn't even have a book to read or a magazine?

12 A. No, you got nothing. Didn't get nae book. It was

13 a punishment cell, so every privilege that you had --

14 you had to earn privileges. Whatever privilege you had,

15 it was taken from you and that was one of the ways they

16 took it from you. It was the same as when you wore, as

17 we called them, Jesus sandals. You know, these sandals

18 you got to wear. If they were -- after a while they

19 would become very loose and things like that, and you

20 had to keep trying to get them to fasten, because they

21 used to slip off your feet. If I think back now,

22 I think they were designed so that you couldnae run away

23 and they were embarrassing for kids to wear.

24 And you wore jerseys and they'd be like cotton,

25 denim. They werenae denim. They werenae jeans. They

1 were like trousers. That's what you wore. And you got
2 a belt, you got a shirt, and a skyscraper jersey they
3 were called, because they was jerseys with skyscrapers
4 on them, so we called them skyscraper jerseys. That's
5 what they were.

6 Q. And you tell us you did run away once?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And you had just had enough?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. You were caught?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And brought back?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. What happens when you are brought back?

15 A. Well, I was taken to -- it's called Lodge Walk in
16 Aberdeen; it was the main police station. And a few of
17 the older kids were there, obviously because -- why they
18 took them down, obviously, because we knew what was
19 going to happen. Because everybody knew that when you
20 absconded fae Brimmond and you run away that ...

21 (Pause)

22 The older kids were going to get it tough because
23 somebody had run away. And everybody's getting it
24 tough, so all the kids didnae want to get it tough.

25 Q. What do you mean by 'the older kids got it tough'?

1 A. Well, there would be a lockdown in Brimmond and you
2 couldnae do anything. You couldnae go nowhere. You
3 couldnae get to the gym. They wouldnae get cigarettes.
4 So they hated people absconding.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Because it affected everybody, I suppose. And then you
7 got a few punches in the back of the minibus thing.
8 I never knew there was a minibus in Brimmond, to be
9 fair. But they must have got one to took us back and
10 then we were obviously shouted at and screamed at.

11 Q. This was by staff or boys?

12 A. By staff, yeah. And then taken with your hand up my
13 back. I think I was the first one caught, maybe, or the
14 last one caught, of the three of us that escaped. And
15 then I was -- it was my turn for the cell.

16 I'd been in for a day at a time, 'cause you'd
17 misbehaved in some way or other and you were put in as
18 a punishment. But that was the longest I was in.
19 I think it was four or five days, if I remember
20 correctly. I think so.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. It was a long time, anyway.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. It was a long time.

25 Q. It must have felt like a very long time?

1 A. Oh, it felt like a lifetime. You would do anything to
2 get out. You used to say, 'Sir, can I get out now, sir?
3 Please, sir. Sorry, sir'.

4 You know, but whenever they deemed it that you could
5 leave the cell, you were so glad. It was like -- even
6 to get back into just to see everybody else. You know,
7 your friends, the guys you were in with, you know.

8 Q. Sure.

9 A. You know, it was just good to get outward.

10 Q. Over the page, paragraph 49, you start to talk about
11 abuse at Brimmond. You have already told us a bit about
12 that and about the way that, for example, Mr GJR would
13 intimidate you with his size and Mr GJO's
14 behaviour. But you say something very striking at
15 paragraph 49, which is:

16 'Physical abuse was normalised at Brimmond.'

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Can you tell us what you mean by that?

19 A. It was nothing. It's hard. It was part of your day.

20 The first couple of times -- because I suffered
21 physical abuse in the past and that, a punch and a slap
22 really didnae mean that much to me, you know. Physical
23 pain goes away quite quickly. You know, you get a slap
24 and a punch and it's sore, yeah, but it's fine. That's
25 the way it was. I didnae know any better. I didnae

1 know any different. And when I received it at Brimmond,
2 I didnae think anything of it, I just thought that was
3 it, that's the way things were. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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7 But it was just part of the day. If you werenae
8 getting it from one of the kids, like -- and I was lucky
9 in that aspect that I had some friends and I shared
10 a room wi' a guy who was probably the top guy in the
11 place, like, so I had nae problems with physical --
12 I mean, you still got it now and then, like, from the
13 older kids. There was two brothers in particular who
14 would really lash out at you, like, you know, but that's
15 when my friend wasnae kicking about or that, like, but
16 I could always go and tell him and say, look -- they
17 would get you quite a bit, like, you had to be wary of
18 that, too.

19 But staff didn't do anything about it. You know,
20 they were as guilty of it as well. Mr IEJ would
21 punch you in the stomach and you thought: no, it wasn't
22 like -- but it was normalised. It was --

23 Q. It was just accepted; is that what you are telling us?

24 A. Yeah, yeah. It's hard to -- for people who've never
25 suffered it, it's hard to explain. It's just normal.

1 I didnae know any better, you know. It was just part of
2 being there; that's what you got. You got hit, you got
3 punished, you got made to stand in corridors. You know,
4 you had to run round the triangle at the back wi' your
5 bare feet. You know, it was just -- that was it. It
6 was just -- that's what you done.

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. You know?

9 Q. You tell us that you were emotionally and
10 psychologically abused as well.

11 A. Yeah, I think back now --

12 Q. Do you feel able to tell us about that as well?

13 A. I mean, I've had nae formal education, anything like
14 that, and, honestly, I really don't know. But what I've
15 read and what I've tried to learn since then, that it's
16 not normal to call kids for every name under the sun and
17 say that, 'You're here because your parents hate you.
18 You're going to end up in jail. You'll be jail birds.
19 You're nae worth nothing. You're scum of the earth.
20 You're going to Nazareth House'.

21 That was one of the threats used 'cause everybody
22 knew about Nazareth House. Even back in my time, before
23 it became common knowledge how bad Nazareth House was,
24 we was threatened with Nazareth House regular. It was
25 a regular thing, 'Right, you're going to

1 Nazareth House'.

2 You were terrified of Nazareth House because you
3 knew the nuns were and the priests were really terrible.

4 But they were always saying you were scum, you were
5 good for nothing. You wouldn't amount to nothing. You
6 know, 'The reason you're here is because nobody wants
7 you. You should be here. You're going to end up in
8 prison'. It was just normal.

9 Q. Was this all the staff or were some staff worse than
10 others?

11 A. Some staff didnae really bother you that much. There
12 was a young guy, if I remember. I always remember
13 he had a three-wheel car and he looked a bit like
14 John Denver; you know, the singer?

15 LADY SMITH: Yes, Annie's Song.

16 A. Yeah. He looked a bit like him and he seemed to be
17 okay. He was a bit -- how can I put it? A bit heavy,
18 you know, a little bit tubby. The guy was -- he wasnae
19 really -- I didnae see him actually hit anybody, as
20 such. It was the older staff that seemed to be --

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5 Q. I will ask you a little bit about that in minute,
6 'James', but just moving on a little bit in your
7 statement about Brimmond, at paragraph 54, you say there
8 were rumours of sexual abuse at Brimmond --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- but it never happened to you and you didn't witness
11 it?

12 A. No, I didn't. I couldnae, er -- I couldnae swear on
13 a stack of Bibles or say: look, it went on. I heard --
14 there was rumours.

15 It was mostly be involving Mr GJQ for some
16 reason. There was a room next to, like, the stairwell,
17 where they used to -- the older kids would say, 'You
18 don't want be in that room. You don't want to be in
19 that room'. But I was never in the room.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I couldnae comment whether it went on or not. I don't
22 know. And I would imagine any child that was involved
23 in that, or any kid, wouldnae say anything anyway.

24 Q. Sure.

25 A. They wouldnae say they was in there and something

1 happened.

2 There were rumours that Mrs ERL and Mr GJQ
3 used to do it in there.

4 Q. But in terms of your experience; did any of the staff
5 ever make you feel uncomfortable in that sort of way?

6 A. Well, the only time I would say, they used to -- you
7 felt uncomfortable 'cause there was always someone in
8 the shower room wi' you, watching you shower. You know,
9 when you went for a shower? You were never in yourself.
10 There was always a member of staff in it.

11 I will always remember a time when Mrs ERL came
12 in, and we'd all stripped naked and she painted our
13 whole bodies, our genitals, between my hands - someone
14 came in with scabies and then she painted us and I felt
15 really uncomfortable that a member of -- well, I was 14,
16 maybe. 14.

17 Q. So when she was doing this, you were naked?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. But did she paint your whole body?

20 A. Yeah, the genitals, your fingers and your toes, in
21 between your toes, with silver, like, paint stuff.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. It must've been some sorta medicine. I don't know what
24 it was.

25 Q. Okay. Just those particular areas of your body?

1 A. Yeah, yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Paragraph 55, again, I just want to ask you about
3 a comment that you make there. You say that you knew
4 you had to stick to the regime as much as you could.
5 You were trying to make yourself invisible.
6 How was that?

7 A. The way I found it was I used to try and get into,
8 like -- there was a little room and I would read, and go
9 in a corner and read. And people used to bother you.
10 They would call you a swot and stuff like that, but
11 I didnae really care, to be fair, like, you know, and
12 that way and I learned -- it's hard to explain, but you
13 can sense the mood in a place and you know when a member
14 of staff, for whatever reason, something happened at
15 home. I don't know, somebody cut him up when they got
16 there, a driver. They took a bus. They were in a mood.
17 You could sense it. It's like a sixth sense you
18 develop. You just know when somebody is -- the first
19 time you hear, you know --

20 Q. You have to be very watchful.

21 A. -- don't catch their eye.

22 Q. Mm-hm.

23 A. You know. Dinna try and do anything to -- because it
24 could be -- you might nae be walking fast enough
25 somewhere and that's enough to kick it off, like, you

1 know. Or you could be a bit cheeky, saying something
2 back. 'Cause when I -- teenage boys and -- teenage boys
3 are teenage boys. We can be lairy, we can be cheeky;
4 you know, that's just the way we are.

5 So you would say something, a comment, like, you
6 know, and they would lash out at you, like. But, if you
7 learned, you sorta sensed the atmosphere and you'd just
8 try to keep out the way, didnae say anything, try and
9 nae get involved. But once it did kick off, it could
10 kick off properly.

11 Q. But you had to be constantly wary; is that what you are
12 telling us?

13 A. Oh, you're always on your guard. I wouldnae say you
14 were walking on eggshells 24 hours a day, but you were
15 always on your guard. You develop an understanding of
16 how a place works and how it's run.

17 Q. Sure.

18 A. So you knew when you could get away wi' a little, and
19 you knew times when you couldnae say nothing. You just
20 had to be a pussycat.

21 Q. Sure. And I think that's why you tell us, 'James', that
22 when the time came to leave Brimmond, you were actually
23 a bit scared of leaving Brimmond?

24 A. Yeah. I was, yeah.

25 Q. Because you knew what Brimmond was about by that stage?

1 A. I knew exactly what Brimmond was.

2 Q. And you didn't know what was coming, maybe?

3 A. No, not at all, no. I was very, very wary and very

4 scared. I knew where I was in Brimmond. I knew where I

5 was. I knew -- it was regimented for you, you know, so

6 I knew where I was. Yeah, I was, yeah.

7 Q. But the time did come when you left and you were sent to

8 a children's centre called Craigielea?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. I don't want to ask you too much about that, because we

11 are not really looking at that in our case study at the

12 moment.

13 A. No.

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15 My Lady --

16 A. Mr IEJ used to get us up from Brimmond and take
17 us -- we had to carry his golf clubs around Hazlehead
18 Golf Course, you know?

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20 LADY SMITH: 'James', I normally take a break of about
21 15 minutes or so at this time in the morning so
22 everybody can get a breather. Would it work okay for
23 you if we did that now?

24 A. Yes, that's fine. Yeah.

25 LADY SMITH: Very well, let's do that.

1 (11.30 am)

2 (A short break)

3 (11.45 am)

4 LADY SMITH: 'James', are you ready for us to carry on?

5 A. I am, yes, thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you so much.

7 A. Thank you.

8 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

9 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

10 'James', before we broke just then, we had talked
11 a bit about your time at Craigielea.

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16 Q. But you get to 16, just shortly before your 16th
17 birthday, and that placement comes to an end?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. You tell us, at paragraph 68, you had nowhere else to go
20 but home?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Was there any contact with social services at that
23 point? Did anyone give you any pointers about what you
24 might do?

25 A. No. No, I was just -- I went to a children's panel and

1 they obviously discharged me from Craigielea. That was
2 it.

3 Q. All right. Again, do you remember what the panel was
4 saying to you?

5 A. No, they were just saying that that was it. I didnae
6 need to be in care anymore at Craigielea.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. That was it.

9 Q. All right.

10 A. I was just -- I was left, just to get on with my life.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Obviously, I had -- clearly had some sorta issues and it
13 was always, at some point in my life, going to manifest
14 itself, which it did, obviously. I got involved in
15 alcohol, drugs, violence.

16 Q. Yes, you tell us that you had a lot of anger issues?

17 A. Yeah, lots and lots of anger issues.

18 Q. Perhaps unsurprisingly.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You tell us that you had, really, no choice but to go
21 home and --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- you did that.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. I think by that stage you were bigger and --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- able to, perhaps, look after yourself a bit more?

3 A. Well, [REDACTED] didnae really bother me then.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I got to the height I probably am now. And then,

6 obviously, I was full of rage, anger. I didnae --

7 I never lifted my hands to my mother or my stepfather,

8 whatever he was, ever.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I just wouldn't have dreamt of doing that. But out on

11 the streets of Aberdeen, it was different, like, you

12 know.

13 Q. Yes. But at all events, when you were at home, you were

14 told that you had to contribute and you did get a job?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. But, in the previous paragraph, you tell us that at that

17 stage you didn't know what to do.

18 A. No.

19 Q. And your life kind of spiralled out of control; is that

20 right?

21 A. Yeah, it did. Yeah.

22 Q. How did that unfold?

23 A. I started drinking heavily. I couldnae hold a job,

24 clearly. I would have a fight at the drop of a hat.

25 Er, I started meeting people who had been in care as

1 well. Started sniffing glue. Er, started just getting
2 meself -- I didnae get in a lot of trouble with the
3 police, to be fair. I don't know why the police were
4 never involved. I was involved a couple of times with
5 police and stuff like that. Er, there's been two
6 suicide attempts, one where ...

7 (Pause)

8 Q. It's okay. Take your time.

9 A. One was much more serious than another. I've got [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED], where one was an attempt.

11 Er, I was getting involved with the wrong people.
12 Er, I moved into a flat wi' a girl who'd been in care as
13 well, which was just carnage, absolute carnage.

14 Er, I just -- I was lost. I didn't know what I was
15 going to do. And then me and a couple of friends, we
16 broke into a bar and we took alcohol and we had a party
17 for about five days. Alcohol, drugs, just everything,
18 and then the police came and we got apprehended, was
19 taken to court.

20 Er, prior to this, obviously, I had the attempts on
21 my life. Er, and then I was given probation, which
22 probably saved my life. Well, maybe nae the probation
23 as such, but meeting my wife probably saved my life.

24 Q. Yes, you tell us from about paragraph 80, page 19, that
25 your life started after you met your wife?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Is that how you feel about it?

3 A. Yeah, it did. I met a family, who were a family, who
4 did things the proper way. Did things the right way.
5 Introduced me to my extended family, and I have probably
6 hundreds of cousins, uncles.

7 Q. Your wife's family is part of the traveller community as
8 well; is that right?

9 A. Yeah. I'd been taken out of that. I found out later
10 on from a dear friend of mine who has sadly passed away,
11 who had been a cousin of mine, or his wife was a cousin
12 of mine, er, traveller families, everybody knows
13 everybody. Well, I know everyone. We've all got
14 relatives that's married into another traveller family.
15 And I had a massive family who came up to Aberdeen to
16 take me away from Aberdeen when I was first born, to
17 take me back down to Oban, to live with them, my Uncle
18 [REDACTED]. Er, and that might have changed my life
19 completely. But it didn't. But I met [REDACTED] and it was --
20 how strange that another traveller man meets a traveller
21 girl in a hotel and met [REDACTED]'s family and I've never been
22 in trouble of any kind. I never even get a parking
23 ticket, to be fair.

24 Q. It has obviously been a good thing for you.

25 A. It was, and it changed my life completely. It saved my

1 life, totally.

2 Q. And you were then working in -- became a steel erector,

3 I think, for a while?

4 A. For a while, yeah, yeah, I built a bridge in Aberdeen.

5 Q. And worked in scrap metal?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And you tell us you have now been working with the

8 NHS --

9 A. I work for [REDACTED]. I'm a [REDACTED] driver, yeah.

10 Q. -- for some years.

11 'James', there's a section of your statement about

12 impact. I think there's a sense in which we can see the

13 impact that your time in care has had on you.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you have made that, I think, very clear and very

16 eloquently.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. If you could sum up the impact that that experience, or

19 those experiences, has had on you; how would you go

20 about doing that, do you think?

21 A. I think that to be made ...

22 (Pause)

23 Through a combination of my mother and me stepfather

24 and then Brimmond, to be made to feel worthless all your

25 life ...

1 (Pause)

2 Sorry.

3 MR SHELDON: No, it is --

4 LADY SMITH: There is absolutely no need to apologise,

5 'James'. You just take the time you need. As I said

6 earlier, if it is too much to explain, that's okay as

7 well. But if you can, I am listening.

8 A. To be made to feel worthless and be told that you are

9 nae worth anything and be treated with violence,

10 contempt. I've got very low self esteem. It doesn't

11 matter what I do. And it's only as I've got older that

12 I realise how -- I'm a people pleaser. I twist myself

13 into knots to -- I would hate for anybody, nowadays, to

14 think that I would do you a bad turn or that I wouldnae

15 be capable of doing something I was given to do. It

16 took me 30-odd years to look people in the face because

17 I was so used to looking at the ground.

18 MR SHELDON: You tell us, just right at the end of that

19 section, 'James', paragraph 88, you live with a terrible

20 fear of losing what you've got.

21 A. Yeah, yeah.

22 Q. I think it is clear that now you have got really a lot,

23 a lovely wife and family.

24 A. Yeah, I mean, I credit my wife and her family, and my

25 own family I have now. I have nieces and nephews that,

1 honestly, I love 'em to bits. My grandnieces who love
2 me to bits. My wife, my son, my daughter. I mean, my
3 nieces, when they were younger, I couldn't even leave
4 a room; They had to be with me.

5 But, if you bring a child up in violence and you put
6 them in a violent environment, that's all they know.
7 They don't know anything else. You lash out because
8 that's all you know, because that's what you see, that's
9 what you experience. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

10 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later they tried to help you,
12 nurture you, treat you as a human being, it would be so
13 much better for people and for children.

14 Q. Yes. And even at that time you could see that that was
15 possible?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. It was possible to --

18 A. Obviously, it was a different era. It's the '60s and
19 '70s, corporal punishment in schools was part of being
20 in schools and things like that.

21 LADY SMITH: 'James', just going back a few paragraphs to
22 paragraph 81, when you are explaining how your working
23 life progressed during adulthood. You say you went
24 offshore for a little while.

25 A. Yeah.

1 LADY SMITH: And then you say:
2 'Then I started doing things in a proper traveller
3 way.'
4 A. Yeah.
5 LADY SMITH: Would you like to tell me a bit more about what
6 you mean by that?
7 A. Well, traveller people have a way of working and, er, we
8 live -- nae so much on my wits, but we use our
9 intelligence. We use, er, the skills that we're given,
10 so the skill to buy and sell scrap metal, to negotiate
11 with people to buy and sell pickups and vans and cars,
12 and negotiate and make deals.
13 LADY SMITH: Yes.
14 A. Also do other work, like, er, tree work and gardening
15 work and that. And we negotiate and we're able to look
16 after ourselves. Even little traveller babies now --
17 LADY SMITH: Mm-hm, yes.
18 A. -- they're full of confidence. We do things in a proper
19 way and it's nae -- people get this impression that
20 we'll cheat you, 'Haha, I am a traveller, I will steal
21 from you'. It wasnae like that. We'll do a job for
22 a day's pay and we'll get paid for it. And we'll do the
23 job properly and we'll finish a job and we will move on
24 to the next one. And we can go --
25 LADY SMITH: Yes.

1 A. I mean, I spent my lifetime working on -- working with
2 the ships in Aberdeen Harbour, negotiating wi' every
3 nationality in the world. And had a good reputation.
4 People call me up all the time to sell me scrap metal.
5 And you pay before you take it away, so there's nae
6 cheating, there's nae stealing.

7 LADY SMITH: Yes.

8 A. A proper way of doing things. I never had that before I
9 was -- I didnae know anything about it. But due to
10 a combination of [REDACTED]'s father, and her uncles and that,
11 showing me how to do things, listening to them, looking
12 at them, observing them, see how they did things. And
13 you then learn to look people in the eye, you learn to
14 shake people's hand and do a deal. And a traveller man,
15 when he shakes your hand and he does a deal, that's it.
16 You'll never go back on the word, it's done.

17 LADY SMITH: That's really helpful.

18 A. If I was to buy something from you or talk to you, if
19 you said to me, 'I need this done', as soon as I shake
20 your hand, that's it. My word is my bond. I would
21 never go back on it. I just couldnae. I could never,
22 ever, ever -- if I said I was going to do something for
23 you, I would do it for you or there would be a reason
24 why. I took that into my working life. Now, when
25 I work, everybody -- we've got an assessment at work.

1 You get a yearly assessment and everybody would say
2 I take my job very, very seriously. I make sure that my
3 drug box is checked completely every day and my car's
4 checked every single day. All my equipment in my car is
5 checked, dated, everything's done, and I couldnae see
6 a time where I couldnae do things properly. And that's
7 a combination of being brought up the proper way. And
8 if children are treated and brought up the proper way,
9 that's what we'll do; that's what everybody will do.

10 LADY SMITH: So you got back to your roots, if you like --

11 A. Yeah, yeah.

12 LADY SMITH: -- having been taken away from them from that
13 big --

14 A. Yes, I was dragged away, obviously, and then put into
15 an environment where obviously [REDACTED] hated me.

16 LADY SMITH: Yes.

17 A. For whatever reason. I mean, I didnae ask -- naebuddy
18 asked to be born. I mean, the difference between me,
19 you and everybody here is an accident of birth. That's
20 what it is.

21 LADY SMITH: Indeed.

22 A. That's what it is.

23 LADY SMITH: That's a really helpful explanation. I am
24 sorry I took you away from the direction that Mr Sheldon
25 was taking you in. You may want to go back somewhere

1 else.

2 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

3 Really, I was starting to wind up, 'James', and

4 there is just, I think, one last thing that I would like

5 to ask you, if that's okay?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. There is a section called, 'Lessons to be learned', and

8 you tell us, there, a number of things:

9 'Care can be a wonderful thing if it is used in the

10 right way.'

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. 'It is so easy to abuse the system.'

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And you say in paragraph 90:

15 'Those coming out of care, need to be given proper

16 support. I didn't get it and I needed it. Care can be

17 okay and you can be well looked after, Secondary Institutions - to be publis

18 Secondary Instituti but if you're booted out and that's it,

19 that's the end of the support, things can go

20 downhill...'

21 Can I just ask you: at that stage in your life; what

22 would have helped you? What would you have liked?

23 A. I would have liked -- obviously, I needed some sort of

24 psychological support as well, because obviously there

25 are sort of issues of some kind going on. Now, whether

1 they were caused by my upbringing, probably, yeah, of
2 course they were. Being in care. Secondary Institutions - to be published

3 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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8 Secondary Institutions - to But if children know the parameters, most
9 children'll stick to it. Children need discipline in
10 their life, but they need the right kind of discipline.
11 They don't need violent discipline. They need to know
12 that there are consequences for your actions. And most
13 children -- there's always going to be some that will
14 never -- you can't change them, for whatever reason.

15 But most children that go into care, they're not in
16 care because they want to be in care; they're put in
17 care because it's obviously some sort of car crash in
18 their home life or something like that, and they are put
19 into care. Or they've misbehaved to an extent they get
20 put into care. But the care should be the proper amount
21 of care.

22 It should be -- ask why children are acting why
23 they're acting. There's a reason why children act up.
24 They don't do it just because you want to act up. You
25 do it, there's a reason. Is it an anger issue? Is it

1 a fear issue? Yeah, probably, aye. You're scared. Of
2 course you're scared.

3 Q. And after your experiences, you had been very scared --

4 A. Terrified. I'm -- or I was, 6 feet 2 and I was 16/17
5 stone. I was a big guy. But really --

6 Q. You just needed help to get through the things that you
7 were feeling at that stage.

8 A. Really, I'm 8 year old, you know. 9. I'm a scared wee
9 boy.

10 Q. We really understand that, 'James', and it's been so
11 helpful. Thank you for answering my questions.

12 A. You know? Children get proper care in a loving
13 environment or a supportive environment, and children
14 will flourish. Not everybody's going to be a lawyer,
15 a doctor, a psychiatrist, but they will be scaffies and
16 joiners and mechanics and (Inaudible). Give them
17 a chance, you know. Make it -- give people a chance.
18 Give children a chance in care. Dinna just lock 'em up,
19 abuse them, hurt them, shout at them, scream at them.
20 Try and help 'em and it will change things.

21 MR SHELTON: 'James', thank you, I have no further questions
22 for you.

23 A. Thank you.

24 LADY SMITH: 'James', let me add my thanks.

25 A. Thank you.

1 LADY SMITH: You have added so much to my learning. I am
2 really grateful to you for --
3 A. You are welcome.
4 LADY SMITH: -- bearing with us this morning --
5 A. It's okay.
6 LADY SMITH: -- and teaching us as much as you have done.
7 Thank you for that.
8 A. You are welcome.
9 LADY SMITH: It has been a long morning --
10 A. Yes.
11 LADY SMITH: -- and I am now able to let you go and I hope
12 you can relax a bit more during the rest of the day.
13 A. I'm sure I will.
14 LADY SMITH: Thank you so much.
15 A. Thank you very much. Thank you for having me. Thank
16 you.
17 (The witness withdrew)
18 LADY SMITH: I am guessing we are going to move on to some
19 read-in evidence now. But, just before we do that, let
20 me catch up on the names of people whose identities are
21 protected by my General Restriction Order that were
22 mentioned this morning: Mr and Mrs ERL-ERM, of course;
23 Mr [REDACTED]; Mr IEJ [REDACTED]; Mr GJO [REDACTED] and
24 Mr GJQ [REDACTED].
25 They are not to be identified as referred to in our

1 evidence outside of this room.

2 Take your time, Ms Forbes. Whenever you are ready.

3 MS FORBES: Good afternoon, my Lady. The statement to be

4 read-in now is from an applicant who has waived his

5 anonymity and his name is Peter Kelbie.

6 Peter Kelbie (read)

7 LADY SMITH: Yes.

8 MS FORBES: The reference for Peter's statement is

9 WIT.001.003.0871.

10 LADY SMITH: I heard evidence from Peter in relation to his

11 time in foster care --

12 MS FORBES: Yes.

13 LADY SMITH: -- and his particular concerns about his

14 sister, Alexina, before.

15 MS FORBES: Just for the transcript, my Lady, the date that

16 he gave his oral evidence was 8 July 2022. That was

17 Day 306.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS FORBES: And the reference for the transcript is

20 TRN-10-000000042.

21 My Lady, there is a large part of his statement,

22 then that is covered by his oral evidence, so I will

23 just summarise parts of it.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 MS FORBES: He was only in Brimmond for a short period, but

1 Peter tells us that he was born in 1963 and he talks
2 about his life before going into care between paragraphs
3 2 and 21. He gives, in those paragraphs, the history of
4 his parents, their on and off relationship and
5 relationships with others, and their children prior to
6 him being born.

7 He talks about the fact that he was from a -- that
8 his mother was born into a very large Scottish gypsy
9 Romany family and his mother was in care as a child as
10 well. And, also, his father was from the same
11 background and he tells us his parents were cousins.

12 He talks about the fact that the family moved around
13 and there was a time when the children in the family
14 were taken into care.

15 He comments, at paragraph 9, that there were many
16 gypsy children in care at that time. They were taken
17 into care when they were in Dundee. And he talks about
18 there being 28 cousins who were taken into care, dating
19 back to the 1930s.

20 Just going forward, then, he does talk about his
21 little sister who he found out about later in his life
22 and her being in care and her death.

23 At paragraph 20, he then starts talking about his
24 own childhood. He says that he was taken into care
25 after he was born, and he says that thereafter he ended

1 up in foster care, and that was from 1965.

2 He talks about foster care between paragraphs 22 and
3 44. He has given evidence about this and the physical
4 and sexual abuse that he suffered there. In particular,
5 he mentions a name who will appear again later in his
6 statement at Brimmond and it is a FFI [REDACTED], who
7 was a foster brother, who then worked at Brimmond later
8 on. He talks about there being sexual abuse from him as
9 well as others whilst he was in foster care.

10 He then says, from about paragraph 42, that it came
11 to the attention of authorities that there were issues
12 with his foster placement and his welfare. He tells us
13 then that he was 14 when he left foster care. That was
14 in 1977. He was sent to a children's home. He says he
15 knows now that that was due to his behavioural problems
16 as a result of his abuse. He was told that he was going
17 to Brimmond and his belongings were packed in boxes by
18 a duty social worker.

19 He talks about the fact that he had, prior to that
20 point, been introduced to a few boys that had been
21 brought from Brimmond back to where he was staying in
22 his foster placement, and he talks about sexual abuse
23 that he says he was aware of in relation to them.

24 He then tells us about Brimmond from paragraph 46 of
25 his statement. We know from the records that we have

1 obtained that he was there between 17 February 1978 and
2 24 February 1978, when he was aged 15 years. So he
3 seems to have only been there for a week, according to
4 the records we have recovered.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS FORBES: Peter tells us that:

7 'Brimmond's Children's Home [as he refers to it] was
8 made of concrete with chipstone. It had a driveway and
9 there was a church nearby. Brimmond is on a hill.
10 Bucksburn Police Station was on the right as you went
11 down the hill.

12 'It was a secure unit which had 58 single bedrooms
13 and it was mixed sex. My bedroom was on the ground
14 floor. It was the third room on the right-hand side.
15 There was a large dining room opposite which seated
16 about 30. There was a basic television room. My
17 bedroom was locked from the outside and I couldn't get
18 out. Even when the other boys were going to school,
19 I was locked in this room. Brimmond was a dreadful
20 place. It was a hell of a place.'

21 He then says that his older sisters were in care in
22 Brimmond, but not at the same time he was. He goes on,
23 at paragraph 48, to say Brimmond was [REDACTED]
24 ERM [REDACTED] and his wife and he says that she was
25 younger than his foster mother. He says ERL-ERM [REDACTED]

1 had a daughter, who he names, who was engaged to be
2 married to FFI . Then he tells us a little
3 bit about her and other people that he remembers.

4 At the end of that paragraph he says:

5 FFI and ERM and Mrs ERL didn't allow us
6 to speak ...'

7 I think's in relation to a girl who he recalls.

8 LADY SMITH: The FFI referred to was a member
9 of staff?

10 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady. Yes.

11 He does talk about having to have a bath at
12 Brimmond. He doesn't talk about showers. And he says
13 they were allowed to wear their own clothes, but he
14 doesn't remember what. He says he had no visits from
15 social workers --

16 LADY SMITH: I think he said you weren't allowed to wear
17 your own clothes.

18 MS FORBES: Oh, sorry, my Lady, my fault.

19 LADY SMITH: And he doesn't remember what he did wear.

20 MS FORBES: Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: That's not surprising; it was only a week.

22 MS FORBES: Yes. But he was there, from our records, for
23 such a short time. He says he had no visits from social
24 workers and he talks about some of the boys running away
25 down to Newhills and into Aberdeen.

1 He then talks about abuse at Brimmond from
2 paragraph 53, and he says:
3 ERM gave me constant beatings with
4 sticks. I was raped twice by FFI during the day,
5 when the others were at school, but this wasn't unusual
6 as it had happened before when I was with ... [and he
7 names the foster family]. I was locked in my room and
8 couldn't do anything. FFI and ERM had
9 a key to my room. I couldn't talk or express my
10 feelings. You did what you were told or you were
11 beaten. I suffered from migraines as a result of the
12 beatings. I don't recall being hit by Mrs ERL , but
13 I witnessed her being violent towards other children.
14 'You were stripped of your dignity in Brimmond.
15 They said we were troubled young boys and girls.
16 FFI hit me with snooker cues from the billiard room.
17 There was always pieces of wood lying around from broken
18 chairs. They were broken by ERM hitting us
19 with them. I saw a girl's blouse being pulled off by
20 ERM in the dining room. I saw him pick
21 people up by the hair and throw them across the room.
22 I was often bruised around the neck by ERM and
23 FFI . I was abused on a daily basis. I had
24 dislocated bones, but I wasn't sent to hospital. I had
25 no treatment.'

1 And then he talks about a girl who talked to him
2 about the abuse. Then he goes on to say about leaving
3 Brimmond:

4 'Before I left Brimmond I was attacked by FFI [REDACTED] in
5 my room and he squeezed my vocal cords. He warned me
6 that I was going to be sent to a boys' home and that
7 I mustn't say anything about what happened to me during
8 my time with his mum and dad or I would be killed.'

9 Then he says he was taken to the boys' home and he
10 says he thinks he was sent there because he was a risk
11 to FFI [REDACTED] and his parents if he divulged what
12 had happened to him whilst he was under their care.

13 He then tells us about going to a boys' home between
14 paragraphs 56 and 67. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

15 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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17
18 He says that he was then sent to hospital in the
19 Cults. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

20 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

21 And
22 he then says later, at paragraph 68, that when he was
23 about 15 or 16, he went to do training in occupational
24 health, gardening therapy and escort duties in Woodlands
25 which was up the road from that hostel. He says that
 was an institution for mentally handicapped children and

1 he worked there, and he was an assistant in garden
2 therapy and groundwork, and he also did occupational
3 therapy for day care patients.

4 He then goes on to talk about his life after being
5 in care, from paragraphs 69 to paragraph 72. He says he
6 left Pitfodels in June 1979 and went to a halfway house
7 in Aberdeen. It was a cottage owned by the social work
8 department. He says he took over a job as groundsman
9 for Woodlands. He also did -- he said he wasn't allowed
10 to bring girlfriends back there, so he left and did
11 six months nursing training in Cornhill Hospital and
12 then went back to Woodlands.

13 He says he left the cottage in 1982 and then he went
14 to London. At that time, he was reunited with both of
15 his sisters and that's when he learned about his family
16 background and his young sister who died.

17 He says he stayed in London for 33 years and started
18 acting in 1992 and then moved back to Scotland in 2015,
19 and says he has written a script of the story of his
20 mother's life.

21 At paragraph 72, Peter says:

22 'I have lived a good life since I left care. My
23 career motivates me. The performing arts is how I can
24 channel my emotion and be a voice for other victims of
25 child abuse.'

1 He then talks about impact at paragraphs 73 and 74.
2 That relates to, really, mainly his time in foster care.
3 Then 'Lessons to be learned', paragraphs 75 to 79,
4 and, again, that's really about his whole journey
5 through care.
6 Then going to paragraph 82, he talks about
7 an investigation by Aberdeen City Council in the early
8 1990s. He said that the social work directors knew that
9 his foster brother, FFI [REDACTED], was working in Brimmond and
10 as a result he was sacked and took up a [REDACTED] social
11 worker's post at a children's home. And he says that
12 ERM [REDACTED], who was [REDACTED] social worker in
13 Brimmond, was also sacked and he says he was transferred
14 to Oakbank Children's Home.
15 He says at paragraph 83:
16 'Recently, when I was in Newhills, I was told by the
17 people in the church beside Brimmond that they had heard
18 whispers about what went on there.
19 'We must, without question, dedicate all the
20 children who died in care and we must not forget them.'
21 Peter has made the usual declaration and he has
22 signed his witness statement and it is dated
23 28 November 2019.
24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
25 MS FORBES: My Lady, I think Mr Sheldon now has a read-in.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 MR SHELTON: Yes, my Lady, this is the statement of
3 a witness who is anonymous and known as 'Shane'.
4 'Shane' (read)

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MR SHELTON: The statement's reference is WIT.001.001.0502.
7 'Shane' was born in 1962. He provides some background
8 about his home life, which clearly was difficult, and
9 says that his records show -- this is paragraph 3 --
10 that his mother tried to kill him with an overdose of
11 [REDACTED] when he was about 3 and a half.
12 Reading short, he says, at paragraph 9, that his
13 mother had never wanted him.
14 He says:
15 'She found any excuse to get rid of me, whether it
16 was shipping me off to my father or grandmother. My
17 mother decided to run away to stay with her sister in
18 England and told the social worker that she would not
19 return until they removed me. She just didn't want me
20 in the house with her.'
21 There was a social worker involved by that time and
22 the social worker said, paragraph 11:
23 'I would need to be taken out of the house. I am
24 assuming I caused a few problems for them because they
25 came to get me at 6.00 pm. I was put in a car and taken

1 to Kaimhill Remand Home by the social worker. I wasn't
2 told what was happening and didn't know where I was
3 going. I didn't speak to my mum before I left and had
4 not had contact with her. This was [REDACTED] 1972, just after
5 my tenth birthday.

6 'I was in Kaimhill twice. I was in for one week on
7 the first occasion and about five weeks on the
8 second ...'

9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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20 Page 7, his next placement is at Craigielea

21 Children's Home in Aberdeen, Secondary Institutions - to be published later

22 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

23 'I was there for five months.'

24 Thereafter, at paragraph 41, his social worker took
25 him home for a period. Again, that doesn't seem to have

1 been a happy experience. He says, paragraph 42:

2 'My mother would use my money to go for a drink or
3 go to the bingo. She would come back home at 10.00 pm
4 after the bingo or after drinking and get me out of my
5 bed to go to the chipper. She would then sit and
6 deliberately eat something in front of me. When she was
7 finished, she would ask me if I wanted her leftovers.
8 I would say that I did and she would ball up the bag and
9 throw it on the fire and tell me I was too slow.'

10 He tells us that at that time he was going to
11 Kittybrewster School:

12 'I would get meal tickets for a school meal.
13 I would not get breakfast at home in the morning and
14 I wouldn't get fed when I went home in the evening. The
15 school meal was the only time I would get fed in the day
16 and the portions were not very big, so I would still be
17 hungry. At school they used to throw the unused food in
18 the bin. I would go out to the bins and take the food
19 out and eat that to fill myself up.'

20 Reading short, my Lady, he says at paragraph 46:

21 'After I had been home for about five or six weeks,
22 my mother ran away from the family home again. She
23 again told the social work department that she wasn't
24 coming back until I was taken away. Social workers came
25 to the house and told me that my mother was refusing to

1 return until I was out of the house. I ran and one of
2 the social workers chased me around the streets for
3 about ten minutes. I was indifferent but also confused
4 because I hadn't been home long and I didn't know what
5 was going to happen next.'

6 My Lady, he is then placed in Kaimhill Remand Home
7 a second time, he says. [REDACTED] 1973 for five weeks.

8 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
9 [REDACTED]

10 If we move to page 14, we see that there is
11 a further placement in a children's home in Aboyne. [REDACTED] Secondar

12 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]

15 Secondary Institutions - to be published later He then seems
16 to have been moved to Brimmond [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

17 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
18 [REDACTED]

19 So, if we move to page 17, 18, paragraph 87, he
20 tells us:

21 'Brimmond was a purpose-built remand home for kids
22 and had been open for a few months. It was in Bucksburn
23 in Aberdeen.'

24 I am sorry, my Lady, I should have said this is by
25 now 1974 and he is 12, just 12.

LADY SMITH: Just 12 at this stage?

1 MR SHELTON: Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you, yes.

3 MR SHELTON: Yes, that's right, my Lady.

4 LADY SMITH: Yes.

5 MR SHELTON: He says:

6 'It was a secure unit for children who were

7 appearing before children's panels, and being sent on to

8 approved schools. I had never appeared before

9 a children's panel.

10 'It had two long corridors and two offices. There

11 were staff quarters. There was a communal TV room to

12 the left of one corridor and a quiet room on the right.

13 Bedrooms, toilets and showers were upstairs. There was

14 also a storeroom and gymnasium. There were open grounds

15 outside.

16 'The first person I met there was GJO

17 GJO, who had been transferred there after

18 Kaimhill closed. He was SNR. It was

19 somebody I recognised, Secondary Institutions - to be published later

20 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

21 Pausing, my Lady, 'Shane' had been --

22 LADY SMITH: He had been transferred.

23 MR SHELTON: -- at Kaimhill and transferred there:

24 'He filled out the forms with me when I first got

25 there. He asked me what my religion was for the form.

1 I didn't know what the word was for not being religious.
2 Other people had said they were Protestant, so I tried
3 to say that, but said I was a prostitute by mistake. He
4 made me feel really small about that.

5 GJO [REDACTED] was supposed to be involved only
6 in the day to day [REDACTED] of the home and write reports
7 for children to go to hearings. A man called
8 ERM [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] of the
9 home. ERM [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] the whole time I was there
10 and GJO [REDACTED] worked [REDACTED]. The
11 matron was a lady called ERL [REDACTED], who was ERM [REDACTED]'s
12 wife. She was supposed to look after the girls. GJP [REDACTED]
13 GJP [REDACTED], who was GJO [REDACTED]'s wife, was the assistant
14 matron. GJQ [REDACTED] was also there as a residential
15 social worker until he got a home [REDACTED], as
16 it were, in 1975. When GJQ [REDACTED] left, KEF [REDACTED]
17 replaced him. I believe that ERL [REDACTED] was
18 having an affair with GJQ [REDACTED] until he left.
19 Then she began an affair with KEF [REDACTED]. This was
20 common knowledge.

21 'It was a mixed home with girls and boys. There
22 were 16 boys and six girls when the home was full. The
23 age range of children was from 9 years old to 16 years
24 old. There were three or four single beds in each
25 dormitory. Children would be there short term for a few

1 weeks until they appeared before the panel. There was
2 a high turnover of children there. Some children would
3 be back about three or four times in the year. I was
4 the only child that was there on a permanent basis.
5 After I had been there for about five or six months
6 I got my own room. None of the other children had their
7 own room. I was there between 1974 and 1978.'

8 His social worker left in June 1975:

9 'She told me she was going on maternity leave.'

10 He says:

11 'Nobody replaced her as my social worker after that.
12 No social worker came to speak to me. I never appeared
13 before a panel.

14 'The daily routine was that would you wake up and
15 get dressed in the morning, then go downstairs and have
16 your breakfast. I had chores, which involved cleaning
17 and washing for an hour or two every day. I had to
18 scrub the dining room floor every day and do whatever
19 else needed to be done. Nobody else had chores because
20 they were coming and going. There was not really any
21 other structure.

22 'There was a television, but nothing was on for
23 children until tea time. I had nothing to do. I was
24 bored. The home got a radio cassette recorder in
25 Christmas 1975. I used to have that. There was a spare

1 television in a downstairs room. On a Saturday night,
2 I would go in there and record that night's episode of
3 Starsky & Hutch. I would then listen to that recording
4 over and over again and build a picture of it up in my
5 head. That was my activity because there was nothing
6 else.

7 'I was quite isolated in there because of the
8 turnover of people in there. If I did get to know
9 somebody over a couple of days, they would be here today
10 and gone tomorrow. I didn't really have anybody to be
11 friends with or confide in.

12 'The boys would shower about once a week. If it was
13 summer and we had been out playing, we could have
14 a shower when we asked for one. There was a shower in
15 a communal shower area. There would be five or six boys
16 in the row of showers at a time. ERL would
17 often come down when all the boys were undressed. If we
18 were coming out of the shower she would offer to rub
19 your back. She would then take your towel and rub your
20 back and between your legs. It was very uncomfortable,
21 especially for a teenage boy. She did this to me and to
22 other boys. She was only about five foot two inches
23 tall.

24 'Birthdays and Christmas were just like any other
25 normal day. There were no Christmas trees or

1 decorations at Christmas. There was a turkey dinner on
2 Christmas Day, but that was all.

3 'I received no education the entire time I was in
4 the home. There was no schooling because children were
5 in and out of the home all the time.

6 'There were some primary schooled level books in the
7 home. There was nothing suitable for my age.'

8 Under the heading of 'Leisure time' he says:

9 'I had a record player and records and I would spend
10 hours listening to my records in my room. I liked
11 Suzi Quatro and Lina Zavaroni. I had albums by
12 David Soul, Telly Savalas and Dennis Waterman.
13 I preferred classicals like Tchaikovsky. A member of
14 staff, FFI [REDACTED], used to let me borrow his record
15 player for an hour or two. He was a decent guy. He
16 wasn't there long.

17 'My mother never visited me in Brimmond. I was
18 sometimes told she would come, but she never did.

19 'A family came in on a Thursday night to run a Bible
20 class for an hour. It had to be attended. There wasn't
21 a choice. They would do a reading and you had to ask
22 questions about the reading at the end of the hour about
23 what you had heard. I didn't want to be there. It
24 wasn't my kind of thing. It was a Protestant class.'

25 In relation to medical treatment he says:

1 'Dr Chisholm would come to the home when I first got
2 there. I would be put in a small room with him and
3 I would try to walk away. GJO [REDACTED], who was
4 an ex-police officer and was about six foot,
5 three inches tall, would trip me up, so that I fell flat
6 on my face. Then he would bring his leg down on my back
7 with his knee digging into my neck. He would bend my
8 arm behind my back and lift me up, then put me back in
9 the room to finish my session. This happened on a few
10 occasions just outside the room and in view of
11 Dr Chisholm. If I said to GJO [REDACTED] before the
12 session that I did not want to go, he would be forceful
13 also. He would pin me to the floor. If I was on my
14 back, he would have his leg on my chest, restricting my
15 breathing. It was painful as he would come right down
16 on my back. I now have problems with my neck, because
17 of the constant abuse over the years.

18 'When I was forced by GJO [REDACTED] to finish
19 my sessions, I would just sit in the room for the
20 remainder of the hour. GJO [REDACTED] would wait in
21 an office down the corridor. I wouldn't answer any of
22 the questions in the sessions. I had to see him every
23 week for about three years, until 1977, unless he was on
24 holiday. Sometimes I would visit the hospital.
25 I always fought it. Sometimes I would swing a chair and

1 really fight it when in the office. I always had the
2 fear about what he wanted to do to me.'

3 He then goes on to say:

4 'In 1975, a man came to the home with comics and
5 books and asked if any of the children didn't have
6 regular family visits. I was pointed out to him. I had
7 been in the home less than a year. He gave me comics
8 and books and asked if I would like to go on a camping
9 trip. I thought somebody wanted to be nice and take me
10 out so I said yes. He said if the staff allowed it,
11 then there was a camping event in Perth the following
12 weekend and he would make the arrangements. I didn't
13 know then that he had no connection to the school at
14 all.

15 'It was arranged that I would go with this man on
16 a camping trip. He collected me on Friday afternoon and
17 we reached Perth about tea time. There was a big
18 marquee type tent. There were families playing there.
19 He said at about 7.00 pm that he only had one sleeping
20 bag and we would have to share. I woke up in the night
21 because he had his hands inside my pyjamas. He said he
22 was sorry and that he had been sleeping and didn't know
23 what he was doing.

24 'The following morning at breakfast, he said he was
25 going to take me back to Aberdeen. He took me instead

1 to a static caravan that he had in Bucksburn. We were
2 there by Saturday dinner time. He said he would give me
3 some dinner before taking me back. He told me to take
4 a shower. When I came out of the shower, my clothes
5 weren't there. He said he had put them in the wash in
6 the communal washing area because they were dirty. He
7 told me to wrap a towel around me and watch TV in the
8 bedroom.

9 '[He] followed me into the room with a towel wrapped
10 around him. That is when the abuse started. He pushed
11 me back on the bed and took my towel off. He was
12 touching me and making me touch him. I tried to move my
13 hand away so he grabbed my hand to make sure I couldn't
14 move. After a couple of minutes, he performed oral sex
15 on me. I was struggling, but he was pinning me down.
16 He then pushed my head down and tried to force me to
17 give him oral sex. He then got me on my side and anally
18 penetrated me. When he finished, he told me I should
19 have another shower and he was going to make dinner. He
20 said "I hope you like sausages, because I am making
21 sausage sandwiches".

22 'I had something to eat and then he took me back to
23 bed and abused me in the same way later in the afternoon
24 and in the evening. He done the same thing again on
25 Sunday morning. He then brought me my clothes and I got

1 dressed. He made me something to eat. Just before we
2 were about to leave, he was standing in the kitchen with
3 his hand on a knife. He told me that he knew people in
4 the home and if I told anyone then the next time it
5 would be a lot worse. This man had access to me more or
6 less every weekend after that initial camping trip.

7 'A few weeks after the abuse began, KEF [REDACTED] took
8 the boys shooting in the wooded area at the back of the
9 home. KEF [REDACTED] was new to the home and was trying to
10 befriend people by taking the boys shooting two or three
11 times a week. He had an air rifle and he would shoot
12 cans, or rabbits if he saw any. This one day he missed
13 everything he shot at. One of the boys kicked a can and
14 I jokingly said, "He's actually hit something". The
15 boys were laughing and joking as we returned to the
16 home.

17 'When we got back, I went to my room to change my
18 t-shirt. KEF [REDACTED]'s room was along the corridor from
19 mine. When I came out of my room he was standing
20 outside it with a rifle in his hand. He told me I was
21 going to apologise for what I had said and for making
22 him look stupid. My attitude was one of "as if I am
23 going to do that". He pointed the gun in my face and
24 was adamant I was going to apologise. I moved to walk
25 away and he struck me on the back with the back of the

1 gun. I went downstairs and he followed me down. He
2 took me into the quiet room and told me he was ex-SAS.
3 He said he could kill me and get away with it, and that
4 nobody would even bother.

5 [KEF]'s threat to kill me came a few weeks after
6 what Robert Hannah had said about knowing someone in the
7 home. I assumed that [KEF] was the guy Robert Hannah
8 had spoken about knowing in the home. I endured the
9 abuse and suffering without telling anybody after that.

10 [KEF] often tried to intimidate me and provoke
11 a reaction. I wouldn't take the bait. I tried to be
12 brave and not let him get to me by laughing in his face
13 but I was always a bit fearful. It was scary to think
14 that he might go and get a gun and pull the trigger like
15 he said he would.

16 '[His abuser] would take me away nearly every
17 weekend and also for a few days at a time during the
18 holidays. All he had to do was call the home and say he
19 wanted to take me. This carried on until I left the
20 home. During the visits, he always took me to the
21 static caravan. The only people around would be the
22 owners of the other caravans on the site. He had
23 an aviary at the side of the caravan. As soon as he
24 took me there, I had to spend most of the time in the
25 bedroom where the abuse happened. He would get dressed

1 after abusing me and go away to do his own thing, almost
2 as if I was out of sight and out of mind. I had to stay
3 in the bedroom with a small portable TV until he came
4 back. I was never allowed to leave the caravan or talk
5 to anybody else.

6 'I wanted to explain to Doug Chisholm what was
7 happening but I thought that he would then tell the
8 staff and it would get back to KEF [REDACTED]. I never
9 told anybody for the fear of what would happen because
10 I had somebody threaten me with their hand on a knife
11 and another threaten to kill me with a gun in my face.
12 I gave up the fight. I thought that if I told anybody
13 what [my abuser] was doing, he would have someone back
14 him up or he and KEF [REDACTED] would kill me. I was
15 living in fear and there was nobody else there I could
16 tell. The social worker assigned to me had gone and
17 GJO [REDACTED] was physically abusing me more or
18 less all the time.

19 'I found out that [the abuser] had been a stranger
20 to the home. He had been convicted of child sex
21 offences and put on probation for three years. Two
22 weeks after his conviction, he walked into a newsagent,
23 bought some comics and magazines and came to the home,
24 which was when I was pointed out to him. He would have
25 had to have spoken to members of staff before getting to

1 me. The residential social workers would have passed
2 anything like that on to ERM [REDACTED], or
3 GJO [REDACTED], as only they could have made the
4 decision to let [the abuser] take me out. I saw [my
5 abuser] in the company of ERM [REDACTED] on the weekend
6 when I was taken to Perth. They were talking to each
7 other as I was coming down the stairs to towards them
8 ready to leave with the [abuser]. It was ERM [REDACTED]
9 who opened the door to let us out.

10 'I never found out whether there was a connection
11 between him and KEF [REDACTED]. I did find out that
12 KEF [REDACTED] had lied about being in the SAS.

13 'There were times when I would not want to do my
14 cleaning chores and walk away. GJO [REDACTED] and
15 ERM [REDACTED] would intervene and use physical force.
16 There was a small room in the upstairs area of the
17 building, which they called the detention cell, and they
18 would lock me in there. There was no toilet facilities
19 in there. There was nothing to sit on lie on. There
20 were no books [...] it was an empty room with a concrete
21 floor. The door had a plastic window looking into
22 a corridor. There was another plastic window in the
23 room but you couldn't see out of it. The room had
24 a buzzer system so that you could buzz if you needed to
25 use the toilet, but they switched the buzzer off as soon

1 as they put anyone in it. I could be in there up to
2 14 hours without being able to go to the toilet.

3 'The detention cell was used more or less all the
4 time. Some children were put straight in there as soon
5 as they came in. I have to assume that the police or
6 social work suggested this. I think this was because
7 anybody who was already in there would be taken out for
8 the new arrival to go straight in. They would sometimes
9 be left there for two or three days at a time and taken
10 out when being taken to their hearing or panel.

11 'I think I was put in the detention cell at least
12 once a fortnight and up to three times a fortnight.
13 Sometimes I would kick off and cause problems after they
14 told me [my abuser] was taking me away for the weekend
15 because I couldn't tell them what was happening. They
16 would just stick me in the cell and take me out when [my
17 abuser] came to get me. If I kicked off five minutes
18 before he was coming to collect me, I would still be
19 made to go with him. I would then be put in the
20 detention cell when I returned as a punishment. At the
21 beginning I said that I didn't want to go with [the
22 abuser] but then I stopped it. It became apparent that
23 I had to go regardless of what I said or done, so there
24 was no point fighting a losing battle.

25 'The only time anybody came into the detention cell

1 when you were in there was at meal times. Staff would
2 bring meals up after all the children and staff had
3 eaten and they would ask you then if you needed to use
4 the toilet. You could only go at the times they came
5 up. If I needed the toilet in there, I would try to
6 hold it in as long as possible until somebody came, or
7 just have to wet myself. If I did wet myself on a few
8 occasions, they would ridicule me. They would ask me if
9 I thought I was a child or needed a nappy.

10 'On the occasions that I was made to sleep in the
11 detention cell, they would give me a little foam
12 mattress on the floor and a blanket. When it was
13 bedtime, they would come upstairs and give the mattress
14 and blanket and ask if I needed to use the toilet.
15 There was no heating, it was quite cold in there.
16 I wouldn't get out to get a shower. I would be in there
17 the whole time except for toilet breaks. If I'd wet
18 myself it was a problem because I would have to stay in
19 there wearing wet clothes until I was let out.

20 'Reasons for being put in the detention cell
21 included not cleaning something properly, or if there
22 was a visitor coming and they wanted me out of the way.
23 Sometimes I would feel that there was a reason for me to
24 be put in the cell --

25 LADY SMITH: 'There was no reason'.

1 MR SHELTON: Sorry?

2 LADY SMITH: 'Sometimes I would feel there was no reason'.

3 MR SHELTON: I beg your pardon.

4 'Sometimes I would feel there was no reason for me

5 to be put in the cell so I would resist. Force would

6 then be used. GJO used to hold me down

7 with his leg or foot on my chest which restricted my

8 breathing. If I struggled to get his foot off my chest,

9 he would apply more weight. He would have been aware of

10 the difficulties I had with breathing. He would wait

11 for me to give up the struggle before taking his foot

12 off. He would then get me on my stomach and wrench my

13 arm up behind my back and push my head down. I would

14 sometimes be dragged along the floor. If he had help

15 from ERM, he would grab me in a sleeper hold

16 with his arm right around me so I was restricted and

17 couldn't move. ERM would then grab my feet and

18 I would be carried to the detention cell and thrown in.

19 This happened over the whole time I was in there.

20 'I tried to run away a few times. The home was on

21 a hill and there was a police station at the bottom of

22 the hill so every time you ran away, you just thought

23 you had better go back.

24 'The injuries I had in the home at the hands of

25 GJO included carpet burns from the

1 carpets, cracked ribs, bruises, hairline fractures.
2 I had mumps, measles, coughs and regular illnesses
3 whilst in there.

4 'I never received any medical assistance. I didn't
5 see a GP the whole time I was in there. The records
6 I have since retrieved from the social work department
7 also mention that I had no GP contact while I was in the
8 home. Neither the matron nor assistant matron had any
9 nursing experience.

10 'I was put on a work placement scheme in 1978
11 because I was now 16 and they wanted to get me into
12 work. I was given a job stacking shelves in [REDACTED].
13 I was the butt of jokes there because of my lack of
14 education. People there spent the week winding me up.
15 On Friday night, the staff were telling me about a girl
16 who wanted to go on a date with me and meet me at the
17 pictures in town. I thought this would be okay, so
18 I called the home and they gave me permission and told
19 me to be back by a certain time. I went to the pictures
20 and waited for a long time. She never showed up. I got
21 annoyed and went into the pictures alone.

22 'On my way home from the pictures I took a walk
23 through a secluded area. There was a 16-year-old girl
24 there walking her dog. I started a conversation with
25 her. It was fine at first and then something was

1 triggered in my mind and I blacked out. The next thing
2 I knew I was running away. I found out the next day
3 that I had seriously physically assaulted her. I was
4 charged with the offence and pleaded guilty at Aberdeen
5 Sheriff Court in 1978. I was put on probation for
6 three years with the provision that I spent at least
7 a year of that in a psychiatric hospital.'

8 He then goes on, my Lady, to talk about his time
9 after care. He says that he was put in a psychiatric
10 hospital after leaving Brimmond as part of his sentence.
11 A few weeks after that, he found that his former
12 abuser's caravan had caught fire. It was in the paper
13 and his understanding was that he wouldn't last the
14 night:

15 'I gradually put that behind me and tried to get on
16 as best as possible with my life.'

17 He stayed in a psychiatric hospital for two years
18 before discharging himself:

19 'It was just like being in another place. There was
20 no social work or psychiatric involvement throughout
21 that time. I didn't know I was still on probation when
22 I left, as I didn't have a social worker or a probation
23 officer. I went back down to Portsmouth to try to trace
24 my father and settle there. That didn't work out, so
25 I returned to Aberdeen. I had nowhere to go and no

1 food, so I used to break into the hospital at night for
2 food. I was caught and given a two-year borstal order.

3 'When I was ready to leave the borstal, I became
4 involved with the social work department again. I was
5 about 20 years old. I didn't know anything about how to
6 get a house or money. I was homeless. I survived by
7 breaking into offices and finding cheque books. I would
8 then write myself some cheques to have money. I would
9 wait until I was caught and spend a couple of months in
10 prison. That was the way I would have a roof over my
11 head. I was then in and out of prison for a few years
12 until 1989, when I got my first house.'

13 And he says he has convictions.

14 After he got his first house in 1989, he did
15 temporary contract work through agencies:

16 'Having not had an education meant that I was the
17 butt of jokes every time I got a job. I decided I was
18 not going to spend my life like this. I would go home
19 and watch things that would give me knowledge so I could
20 learn things, like Mastermind and University Challenge.
21 I would look up words I didn't know. I could then use
22 them in conversation, so people wouldn't think I was
23 some dumb idiot that they could push about. That's how
24 I started to educate myself.'

25 He then talks about his personal life, my Lady,

1 after care. He says he was married, but was divorced in
2 1996. There was a difficulty with parental rights to
3 his son.

4 At paragraph 136, he says that he had heard about
5 abuse allegations coming out in England and Wales, and
6 he says:

7 'I used to wonder why they were bringing it all up
8 now, after so long. I didn't realise that it had also
9 happened to me and so I should understand. And then
10 I saw [my former abuser] in 1998 and everything came
11 flooding back.'

12 At paragraph 137:

13 "I thought to myself I had to go back and confront
14 him, say something or do something [...] By the time I
15 got home, I thought he would be long gone anyway, so
16 I told myself to try and forget about it ...'.

17 But couldn't do so.

18 There was an incident where he had an encounter with
19 the police.

20 At paragraph 139, he has a conversation with his
21 sister where he mentioned the allegations that he had
22 made against his former abuser. She, his sister, said
23 she knew something was going on, but hadn't said
24 anything because she didn't want anybody getting into
25 trouble. This sister was the only family member that he

1 had contact with.

2 Shortly after that, my Lady, reading to
3 paragraph 142, he speaks to a couple of officers from
4 the Child Protection Unit:

5 'They explained that they could take me to the
6 police station and I could give a statement about
7 everything that happened to me in care. They would then
8 investigate. They explained it might come down to my
9 word against his and if he denied it, there wouldn't be
10 anything they could do about it. When I went to the
11 station and realised that I had to give an in-depth
12 statement about exactly what happened and where and how
13 I felt, that was the first time that I had to recite
14 what happened. I tried to cover everything, but they
15 just wanted me to deal with [this particular person] at
16 that point [his sexual abuser]. That was in 1999. They
17 never came back to ask me about the other things. There
18 was no offer of support or counselling. They didn't
19 refer me to any support groups.

20 'The police contacted me three months after I gave
21 the statement. They told me that [my former abuser] had
22 admitted everything. He was charged. I was invited
23 into the Procurator Fiscal's office to go over
24 everything. I was told what the procedure would be.
25 Every time he had a court date, he would feign illness

1 and even a heart attack to get out of it. It dragged on
2 for almost a year and a half before he was sentenced.
3 He was convicted of the offences against me [...] at
4 Aberdeen [Sheriff] Court. He was given four months in
5 prison and put on the Sexual Offenders' Register for
6 five years.

7 'Nobody offered me any support or counselling, even
8 after the court case. I know that [this person] has
9 other convictions against other children. I don't know
10 if he is [still] alive...'

11 He also reported other matters to the police,
12 including matters, things that had happened to him at
13 Brimmond.

14 He then talks about records and had correspondence
15 with Aberdeen Council about various aspects of that.

16 He says, at paragraph 148, reading short, that he
17 has concerns that:

18 '... some of my records that should have been
19 available are not now available. Social work tell me
20 that they don't have any information.'

21 He says:

22 'I have received some information. I have medical
23 records which state that I was abused in care in 1972
24 and the subsequent diagnosis which was made in 1972. It
25 is just one line that states "sexual abuse while in

1 care".'

2 And he gives a date in 1972 for the entry.

3 In relation to impact, he says:

4 'All of the trouble I have been in with the police
5 is as a result of my time in care and the abuse
6 I suffered.

7 'I can't trust anyone. The abuse I suffered in care
8 has affected my relationships. I have never formed
9 relationships with people because of trust issues.
10 I can sometimes form a friendship with a woman, but
11 I feel uncomfortable with men. I feel uncomfortable in
12 long term relationships because I was always told I was
13 ugly in the home and that nobody would ever want me or
14 love me. I also had a lot of rejection from my mother.
15 I always wonder how long a relationship will last.
16 I was quite anti-authority due to what had happened to
17 me.

18 'I never received any schooling after I left the
19 Aboyne school... '

20 That he attended while at the children's home there.
21 That was between [REDACTED] 1973 until 1974, when he was
22 12 years old. And he says:

23 'That was the last schooling I had. This means that
24 I have only been able to work on a voluntary basis.
25 I worked with Aberdeen City Council for a period in

1 tenant participation.

2 'I had a psychological evaluation carried out during
3 [the prosecution of his former abuser]. He says: 'I saw
4 it only recently. It said that I could not handle any
5 pressure and I would explode under pressure. I thought
6 to myself that I have been working in a high pressure
7 job for 12 years. This has involved attending
8 conferences and speaking at them, as well as doing
9 presentations. I have never had a problem. It goes to
10 show the level of the person that I am. Throughout
11 those 12 years, I was being educated on housing issues
12 and how to address councillors and MPs and how to speak
13 in front of people and do presentations.

14 'On two occasions, I have gotten up and performed at
15 charity events dressed as David Soul and as
16 Michael Ball. That was scarier than doing
17 a presentation. I am proud of that. I am proud that
18 I have been able to move forward in a way I wasn't able
19 to before. It doesn't matter how many times I give
20 evidence, it doesn't get easier, but it is a step
21 towards other people not becoming victims of any kind of
22 abuse. As difficult as it is for me, if I can say that
23 I have helped somebody else not become a victim, I would
24 be proud of that.'

25 And he has made the usual declaration, my Lady, and

1 signed the statement.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

3 Well, it is almost 1 o'clock, so I will stop now for
4 the lunch break.

5 But, before I rise, another couple of names to be
6 aware of. The names of people whose identities are
7 protected by my General Restriction Order;
8 FFI [REDACTED] and KEF [REDACTED] to add to the list that
9 I gave earlier. Thank you. Until 2 o'clock.

10 (12.59 pm)

11 (The luncheon adjournment)

12 (2.00 pm)

13 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. Ms Forbes.

14 MS FORBES: Good afternoon, my Lady.

15 The next witness is an applicant who is anonymous
16 and is known as 'Karen'.

17 'Karen' (sworn)

18 (Evidence given via video link)

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you. 'Karen', good afternoon. Can you
20 see me and hear me?

21 A. Yeah, I can.

22 LADY SMITH: Good. I am Lady Smith and I chair the Scottish
23 Child Abuse Inquiry here, in Edinburgh. We are looking
24 forward to taking your evidence this afternoon.

25 Now, 'Karen', thank you very much for agreeing to

1 engage with us this afternoon over the link, so that we
2 can take evidence from you in person. I already, of
3 course, have your written statement and it has been
4 really helpful to be able to study that in advance, and
5 I am grateful to you for it. We won't be going through
6 every paragraph of it word for word, because as I say,
7 we have already got that. But there are some aspects
8 that we would like to focus on and look at with you in
9 a bit more detail, if that's okay?

10 A. Yeah.

11 LADY SMITH: If at any time you have any questions, please
12 don't hesitate to speak up. If you want a break, that's
13 absolutely fine, you just tell me. If there are any
14 problems with the link, let us know immediately and we
15 will stop and make sure that we don't miss any of your
16 evidence and sort things out at this end.

17 But, otherwise, if you are ready to go, I will hand
18 over to Ms Forbes and she will take it from there; is
19 that all right?

20 A. Okay, yeah.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 Questions by Ms Forbes

23 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

24 Good afternoon, 'Karen'.

25 A. Good afternoon.

1 Q. I understand that you have your statement in a folder in
2 front of you; is that right?

3 A. Yes, I do.

4 Q. Now, at the very last page of your statement, there is
5 a part where you have signed it and it is dated. If you
6 could just have a quick look at that, please, first of
7 all.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. There's a declaration before you have signed and it
10 says:

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

15 And then you have signed it and it is dated.

16 Is that still the position, 'Karen'?

17 A. Yeah, yeah.

18 Q. Now, we give your statement a reference number, just for
19 our records, but it is not something for you to worry
20 about. I am just going to read that out now, so we have
21 it in the transcript. It is WIT-1-000000936. If you
22 just go back to the beginning, 'Karen', of the
23 statement, if you want, or put it to one side. It is up
24 to you, whatever helps.

25 Okay, so I am just going to start, 'Karen', by

1 asking you some questions about your life, your early
2 life. I know you tell us that you were born in 1961; is
3 that right?

4 A. Yeah, yeah.

5 Q. You describe the circumstances as you know them to be as
6 to how you got into -- ended up going into care.
7 I think you were very young; is that correct?

8 A. Yes, I was.

9 Q. I think you tell us, 'Karen', in your statement that you
10 thought you were about 4 and a half, but I think we know
11 from records, and you know now, that when you first went
12 into care you were 3 and a half; is that right?

13 A. Yeah, yeah.

14 Q. We have a date for that and that is [REDACTED] 1965.
15 We won't get too worried about dates as we go along, but
16 just so we can see what age you were as things moved
17 along. We have that record.

18 So I think you found some information out later in
19 life about the circumstances as to how you came to be in
20 care. But it is fair to say, 'Karen', is it, that there
21 were problems in the family with alcohol, with your
22 parents? Is that right?

23 A. Yeah, yeah.

24 Q. There were a lot of children. At the time that you were
25 taken into care, there were eight children taken into

1 care at the one time on that day?

2 A. I didn't know there was eight children at the time taken
3 into care, but I knew most of us was.

4 Q. Yes. I think later on you have maybe seen some records
5 and you know now there was eight at that time. And
6 maybe more children came along later, but when you were
7 that age, there was eight?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. I think initially you remember being with your older
10 sister, although I don't think you are sure whether or
11 not any other of your brothers or sisters came with you
12 to the first home you were in; is that right?

13 A. There was, I think, a couple of the older ones, because
14 -- I think my brother [REDACTED] was there.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I'm unsure.

17 Q. But the sister you remember particularly was one that
18 was quite close in age to you, was only about a year
19 older; is that right?

20 A. Yeah. [REDACTED], yeah.

21 Q. You stayed with her in your care journey for quite
22 a while, up until you were about 14; is that right?

23 A. Yeah, yeah.

24 Q. And I think the first place we know you went was
25 a children's home in Glasgow, and you tell us about that

1 in your statement. You remember some parts about that,
2 but you were still very young when you were at that
3 home; is that right?

4 A. Yeah, yeah.

5 Q. But I think it came to you being about 4 and a half and
6 it was decided that you and your sister were -- I think
7 the way it was put to you -- going to go on a holiday.
8 I think we see from your records that they said it was
9 a holiday with foster parents that might turn permanent,
10 but that's maybe something you didn't know about at the
11 time?

12 A. No, just a holiday, we were told.

13 Q. The time that that happened, I think we know from the
14 records, was [REDACTED], in 1966, so you were 4 at that
15 time, but nearly 5?

16 A. Right.

17 Q. And, again, you went there with your older sister, so it
18 was just the two of you?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Yes. And this was to stay with foster parents and
21 I think you tell us about the fact that this was
22 initially on a farm; is that right?

23 A. Yeah, it was. Yeah.

24 Q. Now, 'Karen', you talk about your time in foster care,
25 and quite a lot of your statement deals with that. This

1 part of your statement was read-in during the foster
2 care case study that we had in the Inquiry, and that was
3 on 6 July 2022, which was Day 304, and I will just give
4 the reference for that transcript, so we can
5 cross-reference it. It is TRN-10-000000041. That's not
6 something for you to worry about, but it is just so you
7 know that all that part of your statement, word for
8 word, has already been read-in and is evidence and has
9 been taken into account during the foster care study.

10 Now, because of that, I am not going to go through
11 every single part of it with you today, 'Karen'. But to
12 understand your journey, we need to look at that,
13 because that formed quite a significant part of your
14 time in care; is that right?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Yes. And you tell us, 'Karen', about your foster father
17 and your foster mother. I think it's fair to say, in
18 summary, about the relationship you had with them, that
19 you had quite a strong bond with your foster father; is
20 that right?

21 A. Yeah, yeah.

22 Q. But things were different with your foster mother?

23 A. Mm-hm, yeah.

24 Q. And that was a difficult relationship and it was
25 abusive?

1 A. Yeah. It was, yeah.

2 Q. As I have mentioned, you told us that you initially
3 lived on the farm when you arrived there with your
4 sister, but there came a time, I think, because of your
5 foster father's health, I think --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- you were about 8 when you had to move because he
8 gave up his job at the farm and he retired?

9 A. No, he sold -- it wasn't a job, he sold his farm. It
10 was his farm.

11 Q. Okay, apologies about that, 'Karen'. Thanks for
12 clarifying that.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So there came a time when he could no longer keep the
15 farm up and he moved to an address and that was in
16 [REDACTED]; is that right?

17 A. That's right, yeah.

18 Q. You describe your time at the farm in the paragraphs,
19 from about 12 onwards. You say that this was a farm
20 that had cattle, vegetables, and it was a working farm.

21 A. Yeah. Working farm, yeah.

22 Q. And I think you tell us as well that you would help your
23 foster father out on the farm quite often?

24 A. Yeah, yeah.

25 Q. And that's something that you enjoyed doing?

1 A. Yeah, I did. It kept me away from the foster mother.

2 Q. And I think you tell us as well, 'Karen', that you

3 initially slept in the same room with your sister, but

4 then you were put into separate rooms at the farm?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And there was an issue that you tell us about with your

7 sister wetting the bed; is that right?

8 A. Yeah, yeah.

9 Q. And you tell us that you would take the blame for that?

10 A. Yeah, well, I was stronger than she was.

11 Q. Yes. So, even though she was a bit older, you felt that

12 she was -- that you were stronger than her and you could

13 take the punishment?

14 A. Yeah, well, she was smaller than me.

15 Q. Yes, okay.

16 A. So, yeah.

17 Q. I think initially, 'Karen', you say that you were told

18 by the social workers that the foster parents would be

19 your new mum and dad, and you were told to call them

20 that.

21 A. As soon as we got there, yeah.

22 Q. But your sister refused to call them that?

23 A. No, she wouldn't. 'Cause she knew mum and dad, our real

24 ones.

25 Q. But you did call them mum and dad; is that right?

1 A. Yeah, well, I don't remember. At that time, I didn't
2 remember my mum and dad.

3 Q. Now, we will go on to talk a little bit about the types
4 of things that happened when you were there. But
5 I think time with your foster parents on the farm was
6 different to what happened later, when sadly your foster
7 father passed away; is that right?

8 A. Yeah, it became worse.

9 Q. Yes. I think what you describe is that your foster
10 mother was violent towards you; is that fair to say?

11 A. Yes. Yeah.

12 Q. And she would regularly beat you?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And she would do it when your foster father wasn't
15 around?

16 A. That's right, yeah.

17 Q. I think we will maybe come to some examples of that,
18 that you tell us about in your statement, 'Karen'.
19 You talk about going to primary school, and I think
20 you say that during that time, you never had any issues.
21 But then it was a change -- I think this was after you
22 moved. You went to secondary school and you hated it;
23 is that right?

24 A. (Inaudible) secondary school and I hated it.

25 Q. Yes, I think it was [REDACTED]; is that right?

1 A. Yeah, [REDACTED], yeah, yeah, that's when I first went to
2 the secondary school.

3 I didn't have any, really, issues in secondary
4 school going there. The issue was the foster mother.
5 Erm, and when my foster father died, everybody in school
6 knew before I did. I was made to go back to school.
7 That's when the issues started at the school. For me.

8 Q. And I think you tell us, at paragraph 23, 'Karen', that
9 you had problems at that high school with being teased
10 because people knew that you were foster children?

11 A. Yeah, yeah.

12 Q. I suppose we are going a little bit back and forward
13 here, so apologies for this, 'Karen'.

14 But the time you were at the farm, I think you tell
15 us that apart from helping out with your foster father,
16 your foster mother taught you how to knit; that was one
17 of the things she did with you?

18 A. Yes, it's one of the best.

19 Q. But I think you tell us that if you ever dropped
20 a stitch, then she would hit you with the needle, is
21 that right?

22 A. The needle across your hand, yeah.

23 Q. And there were certain things she would do to perhaps
24 stop you from watching the television if you wanted to
25 watch the television?

1 A. Yeah, put clothes horse up and put all the washing
2 there, so you can't see the telly.

3 Q. I think, from what you described, the treatment that you
4 got from your foster mother compared to your sister was
5 different?

6 A. Yeah, because I took the blame. If I didn't take the
7 blame, it would have happened more to her as well,
8 I think, uh-huh.

9 Q. Yes. And you tell us, 'Karen', as an example, that you
10 would get pocket money from your foster father, but you
11 would never get to keep it because your foster mother
12 would take the money back for board and lodgings?

13 A. Yes, board and lodgings and food.

14 Q. But he didn't know that she was doing that?

15 A. No, no.

16 Q. And I think you say later on, when you moved to [REDACTED],
17 you would actually give your pocket money to your
18 sister?

19 A. Yes, we got 10 pence a week.

20 Q. You talk, 'Karen', about the fact that it became
21 apparent that there was a bit of a health issue at one
22 point with yourself and I think they said you were
23 borderline diabetic?

24 A. That was back to when I was about 4 and a half, 5 years
25 old, and I got pneumonia, and that's when they found

1 I was borderline diabetic.

2 Q. I think you say, really, it was your foster mother who
3 took the role of being the one who disciplined you in
4 the house and not your foster father?

5 A. Yeah, it was foster mother disciplined.

6 Q. And your foster father didn't interfere with what your
7 foster mother was doing, I think you tell us; is that
8 right, in general?

9 A. In them days, it was known that the woman took care of
10 the house and the children, and the man did the work.
11 And that's how my foster father was. So he had no --
12 nothing to do with disciplining.

13 Q. And you talk about the fact that you and your sister,
14 I think a couple of times, tried to run away, but you
15 didn't get very far; is that right?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And really the good memories you had in foster care were
18 the times spent with your foster dad; is that right?

19 A. Yeah, yeah.

20 Q. And he was somebody you say you were happy to call him
21 dad?

22 A. Oh yeah. He was -- in fact, to this day he's still my
23 dad.

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Always will be.

1 Q. I think you tell us later in your statement that you
2 have a photograph of him that you keep close in your
3 house?

4 A. It's by my bed. It is on my bedside. I say good night
5 to him every night.

6 Q. From what you describe, 'Karen', you tried to spend as
7 much time with him as you could --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- whilst you were in foster care?

10 Just coming to a part of your statement, 'Karen',
11 where you talk about some of the things that happened
12 when you were in foster care. We have mentioned the
13 bedwetting of your sister and the fact that you would
14 get the punishment for that instead of your sister
15 because you would take the blame?

16 A. Yeah, I would take the blame. I would swap clothes with
17 her and wear her -- because we wore the same clothes,
18 and I would swap, so I had the wet clothes on so they
19 thought it was me. Well, she thought it was me.

20 Q. And this is at paragraph 41 of your statement. I think
21 you say when you were belted it was a wide belt with
22 a buckle at the end that was used?

23 A. Yes, it was my father's, er, belt, he wore for work
24 (Inaudible).

25 Q. But this was your foster mother who was using that?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And your sister was told to watch when you would be
3 belted for that?

4 A. Yeah, it was to learn her the lesson: don't do wrong,
5 because this is what's going to happen to you. That
6 would be the reason for that, at the time.

7 Q. Yes. I think you say, though, that you think she knew
8 that it was your sister who wet the bed?

9 A. Oh, she did know. But that's the reason why I got
10 punished, because she knew I was lying and she didn't
11 appreciate me lying, so you got it worse than you
12 would've normally got, that's what I think.

13 Q. I think you say that, to start off with, when your
14 sister would see you being punished this way she would
15 cry, but as time went on that changed?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And she would laugh --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- when you were being beaten?

20 A. Well, she thought it was funny, because there was --
21 I was stealing to give to my sister because she would
22 ask, and then she thought it was funny because I'm
23 getting punished for it.

24 Q. And you say that after these beatings with the belt, you
25 would be left with marks?

1 A. Yeah, all over me back and my legs.

2 Q. And you were told, you tell us, by your foster mother
3 that the more you screamed, the worse you were going to
4 get it?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. So you would try to stop making a noise?

7 A. Yeah, I soon learned that. I was quick enough to learn.

8 Q. But it wasn't just for wetting the bed. I think you say
9 there were other times that she would belt you for
10 different reasons: if you stole food; if you told lies.
11 Those were the usual reasons, I think you explained.

12 A. Yeah, if I didn't do something right and you're lying
13 and you steal food to feed your sister and that --
14 because my sister was always hungry. Erm, I would steal
15 food to give to her and I even stole money, but -- she
16 wanted a watch. I stole money to get her a watch. Just
17 kids things, really.

18 Q. Yes. And one of the things you tell us about, 'Karen',
19 at paragraph 45, where you say that something your
20 foster mother did was, one day at lunchtime, she threw
21 your sandwich onto the ground outside and stamped on it
22 with her dirty Wellington boots?

23 A. No, you've kind of got it wrong. That was -- yeah, that
24 in [REDACTED], the farm. That wasn't [REDACTED]. So you're
25 going back to [REDACTED].

1 Q. Sorry. Sorry, 'Karen', I am still talking about the
2 farm. I know we talked about secondary school there,
3 but we went back in. But I am talking about your time
4 at the farm.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. This is at paragraph 45, you say one time when you were
7 outside on the farm, that she gave your sister the
8 sandwich, but your sandwich was thrown on the ground and
9 she stamped on it?

10 A. Yes. And she told me to eat it. And her welly boots,
11 being on a farm, you know exactly what's gone on there,
12 especially with cattle. I did eat that sandwich. Yes,
13 I did.

14 Q. So she told you to eat it and you had to do that?

15 A. Yeah. You didn't dare be sick because you knew you
16 would have to eat it again, so you ate it and you kept
17 it down.

18 Q. So when you say that if you were sick, you knew you
19 would be made to eat it; is that something that
20 happened?

21 A. Yeah, so you learned. You learned just to eat and get
22 on with it.

23 Q. And you also tell us, 'Karen', that there was an issue,
24 I think, one time when you broke your sister's doll and
25 you were battered for that by your foster mother; is

1 that right?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. I think you tell us you were a bit jealous because you'd

4 never had a doll?

5 A. No, I got a handbag and she got a doll. That was her

6 second doll and I had never got one. So, yeah,

7 I snapped it, the doll.

8 Q. But it wasn't just the belt, sometimes she would punch

9 you and if you fell to the ground, she would also kick

10 you?

11 A. Kick you, yeah.

12 Q. Again, on this issue of food, I think you tell us, at

13 paragraph 48, that if you were given food and you didn't

14 eat it, it would continue to be served to you for every

15 meal until you did?

16 A. Yeah. Every meal until you ate, even when it was hairy,

17 mouldy and green, you still ate that. So you learned to

18 eat what was put in front of you.

19 Q. And you go on to say that you learned to be sick in your

20 mouth and swallow it if you were ever feeling sick?

21 A. Yeah, yeah.

22 Q. And you tell us that you knew that if you were sick,

23 your foster mother would have beaten you?

24 A. Yes, you would have to eat it all up again. So you

25 learned to swallow it.

1 Q. But, in contrast, you tell us, 'Karen', that your foster
2 dad never hit you; is that right?

3 A. No, no, he never laid a finger on us.

4 Q. And then one occasion when he was sent by your foster
5 mother to --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- punish you physically, he told you to scream; is
8 that right?

9 A. He told me to -- he took his belt off and we went up the
10 stairs to the bedroom and he told me to scream and he
11 leathered the bed. So I pretended to scream after
12 I finished laughing, as a kid. So I did try to scream.

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. So, yeah, he never laid a finger on us. He was a good
15 man.

16 Q. In relation to sort of emotional abuse that you tell us
17 your foster mum used to play the song 'Nobody's Child'
18 and used to sing it to you and make you sing it, as
19 well?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And you say -- this is at paragraph 52 -- you say,
22 'Karen', she did this because she was pure evil?

23 A. Yeah. Erm, she always said that -- because, she said,
24 nobody loved us and nobody wanted us. Erm, we didn't
25 have a mum and dad because they didn't love us and

1 that's 'Nobody's Child'. That's who we were. We
2 weren't loved or wanted.

3 Q. But you say, 'Karen', that you knew that your foster dad
4 loved you?

5 A. Oh, yes.

6 Q. And he was the one who showed you love and affection?

7 A. Yeah, he was a good man.

8 Q. As we mentioned earlier, 'Karen', there came a time when
9 you got home from school and you were told that your
10 foster dad had died, but I think this is after you had
11 moved to [REDACTED] now; is that right?

12 A. To [REDACTED], yes. Yeah.

13 Q. And he hadn't been well; is that right?

14 A. No, he'd had a few heart attacks, but that was kept from
15 us. But we did know he wasn't too well. And it was
16 still a shock, because we woke up in the morning and
17 were told to come quietly down the stairs, because dad
18 was ill. And I carried my sister on my back because she
19 was quite a noisy person coming down the stairs and
20 I carried her on my back downstairs quickly, because
21 I didn't want my dad to be -- to hear the noise when he
22 wasn't well.

23 Q. But this was at lunchtime, I think, from school, when
24 you found out?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And I think you tell us about that; the way the
2 information was given to you by your foster mother was
3 quite cruel and cold?

4 A. Yeah, she give us a bowl of tomato soup -- I'm sure it
5 was tomato. I still remember the pouch that it was in.
6 And I said, 'How's dad?' and she said, 'Oh, he's dead',
7 and I just stopped. And, obviously, I ran away and
8 cried, and [REDACTED], my next door neighbour, she told mum
9 that she shouldn't have done that, shouldn't have said
10 it that way. I had to go back to school. And everybody
11 at school knew that he had died.

12 Q. So you had to go back and spend the rest of the day at
13 school?

14 A. Yeah, yeah.

15 Q. I think you tell us that you were very upset and you
16 broke down in class?

17 A. Yeah, yeah.

18 Q. And also you didn't get to go to his funeral, I think
19 you tell us?

20 A. No, didn't get to go.

21 Q. But he was in the house, I think you say, before?

22 A. Yeah, yeah.

23 Q. Before the funeral, I think you tell us?

24 A. Yes, he was laid out in the house.

25 Q. But I think things changed after that for you in

1 relation to your foster mother. I think, from what you
2 described, things got a lot worse?

3 A. Correct, it did, yeah.

4 Q. And you say the food good worse?

5 A. Yes, just everything was a nightmare.

6 Q. Yes. And I think you say that you -- her treatment of
7 you meant that you were the one who had to do everything
8 around the house?

9 A. Yes, I was -- I knew how to start a fire. My foster
10 father learnt me a lot of things growing up. I knew how
11 to do a lot of things, so she made me do them. She
12 stopped doing 'em. Like, 6 o'clock in the morning, it
13 was getting up, getting the fire going, getting the
14 porridge on and waking my sister up. Just things like
15 that. Making her a cup of tea no later than 6 o'clock
16 in the morning or else you were in trouble. So ...

17 Q. And I think this is when her -- the words that she used
18 towards you changed and she started referring to you in
19 a particular way; is that right?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And what would she call you then?

22 A. It was a swear word.

23 Q. That's okay, yes.

24 A. Bastard. That was my name.

25 Q. So your name became Bastard, really, when she spoke to

1 you?

2 A. Yes, that was my name. I wasn't known by my own name.

3 She always called me that. It was: do this, do that, do

4 the next thing. That's the name she used.

5 Q. And you say it's after your foster father died that she

6 started to beat you with a stick; is that right?

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. So it wasn't the belt anymore or her fists or feet, it

9 was --

10 A. The belt. The stick was another add on. The belt was

11 inside the house, the stick was outside the house.

12 Q. Okay. And this is, I think, this is at paragraph 61,

13 you go on to tell us about the stealing of the money

14 from her purse to get your sister a watch.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And that was an occasion that resulted in you being hit

17 with a stick?

18 A. Yes. I got beat up badly for that one.

19 Q. And you say that, also, your foster mother encouraged

20 your sister to hit you as well?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. She took great delight in that one.

24 Q. And you say the beatings with the belt were still going

25 on at this time --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. But now it was the buckle end of the belt that was being
3 used to hit you?

4 A. Yes. Yeah, that was the buckle end.

5 Q. And the way you have put it, 'Karen', at paragraph 62,
6 you say:

7 'by this time I stopped reacting when she was
8 beating me. It was extremely painful, but I didn't
9 scream or cry. I was numb by this point.'

10 A. Yeah. It was just another beating.

11 Q. And you say that she looked for any excuse to belt you,
12 really?

13 A. Yeah. It was something for her to do. It gave her
14 pleasure, I presume, the power that she had.

15 Q. Yes. I think there came a point in time then, 'Karen',
16 that you tell us about, that you just flipped one day?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. I think is how you put it?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. She was calling you a bastard?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you think this was a very short time after she had
23 beaten you with a stick and you grabbed her at the chest
24 and pushed her against the door?

25 A. By her pinny. Yeah, I grabbed her by her pinny and

1 slammed her against the living room door and told her to
2 stop calling me it because I wasn't. And I told her
3 what my name was and it certainly wasn't the B word.
4 Q. I think you tell us that after that, you went up to your
5 bedroom and she locked you in from the outside?
6 A. Yeah, yeah.
7 Q. And I think you then say you managed to get your sister
8 to unlock your door and you managed to get out through
9 a window and run away?
10 A. Yeah. It was a small room. It was called the glory
11 hole or glory box, or box room, or whatever you want it
12 call it. And it was like a Velux window that you could
13 go out. And I slid down and ran away, yeah.
14 Q. I think you say that you got to Fraserburgh and were
15 wandering about the streets --
16 A. Yeah.
17 Q. -- in the early hours of the morning, the police picked
18 you up and you were put into a detention room at the
19 police station?
20 A. Yeah, yeah.
21 Q. And your foster mother came to the police station and
22 you heard her voice?
23 A. Yeah.
24 Q. And I think you reacted when you heard her voice?
25 A. I wasn't going back. I wasn't. I couldn't go back

1 there, no way.

2 Q. And I think you tell us that when she then said that she

3 wasn't going to have you back?

4 A. Yeah, that was a relief.

5 Q. You say then you think the police deemed you to be

6 unruly; that's the phrase that you have used?

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. A social worker then came along and took you to a place

9 in -- I might say this wrong; is it Turriff?

10 A. Turriff, yeah. Or Turriff.

11 Q. So this was a sort of temporary placement, was it?

12 A. Yes, yeah.

13 Q. I think you go on to tell us about that. This is kind

14 of redacted out, 'Karen', in your statement, but this is

15 at paragraphs 77 and 78. I think you say that this was

16 during the [REDACTED] holidays?

17 A. I think it was, yeah, it was [REDACTED] holidays. [REDACTED] Secondary Instituti

18 [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

19 [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED]

24 Q. I think it's after the holidays then that you tell us,

25 this is at paragraph 79, you were taken to a home for

1 girls in Aberdeen?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Is that right?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Now, I think we know, 'Karen', from your records that

6 you were taken to St Clair's Home in Aberdeen?

7 A. Yeah, St Clair's Home for Girls; that's the full name of

8 it.

9 Q. This was on [REDACTED] 1976, from our records.

10 I appreciate that you --

11 A. I just know it was after the [REDACTED] holidays for me, so

12 that would be about right, yes.

13 Q. I think at that stage, then, you would have still just

14 been 14; is that right?

15 A. Yeah, yeah.

16 Q. Hadn't yet turned 15, but soon to turn 15?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. You then go on to tell us, 'Karen', about St Clair's

19 Home and I think the way things worked was you were

20 there twice and then you were in Brimmond in between

21 both times, I think; is that right?

22 A. Yes, yeah.

23 Q. Now, again, this is a part of your statement, 'Karen',

24 that's redacted, [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

25 [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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16 Q. I think that's something, the accounting and
17 bookkeeping, was something that perhaps your foster
18 father had introduced you to earlier on; is that right?

19 A. Yes, yeah, we used to do the books.

20 Q. Now, just going to paragraph 95, this is a part of your
21 statement whilst you are still at the girls' home.
22 I think you tell us that your foster mother came to
23 visit and wanted you to go on holiday, and initially you
24 didn't want to do that, but you changed your mind and
25 you did go?

1 A. Yes, yeah.

2 Q. And I think that was the sort of a little bit of

3 a reconciliation with her. I think you tell us --

4 A. Yeah, it was different. She wasn't the same person as

5 I remembered. Erm, I actually walked past her when I

6 came up the path, I didn't even recognise her. But she

7 was different.

8 Q. Okay. And, after that, you would sometimes visit from

9 the children's home and stay with her again?

10 A. Yeah, and I still called her mum.

11 Q. Okay.

12 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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4 Secondary Institutions - to be published later I was put into Brimmond. I didn't

5 know what Brimmond was at the time, to be honest with

6 you. I was very naive.

7 Q. We will come to Brimmond just shortly. But I think what

8 you tell us is you were in Brimmond for a short period

9 of time and you went back to the home for girls?

10 A. Yeah.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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22 Q. Okay. Now, 'Karen', I am just going to go on to talk
23 about your time at Brimmond. We know that there were
24 the two occasions. And I think, again from your records
25 that we have recovered, we know that you first went

1 there on [REDACTED] 1977, and then you went back to
2 St Clair's on [REDACTED] 1977. So that first time was for
3 a period of just over a month and you were aged 15 at
4 that time; is that right?
5 A. I've no idea how old I was. I would say 15, yes. I was
6 14 when I ... yeah.

7 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
8 [REDACTED]

9 Q. I think you then go on to tell us about that time.
10 I think you say that you can't really differentiate
11 between what happened the first time you were there and
12 the second time and you were of the view that it
13 wasn't -- you weren't there in total for more than
14 a year, but that first time was just, from the records
15 we know -- and I know it's difficult, it was a long time
16 ago --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. It was just over a month, that first time.

19 But, 'Karen', just then to ask you about Brimmond --
20 this is from paragraph 112 -- you tell us that from your
21 point of view it was a remand home, so you were locked
22 up there; is that right?

23 A. Yeah. That's right, yeah.

24 Q. You describe it as being like a prison and you couldn't
25 get out?

1 A. Nae but -- you could get out. You were locked in and,
2 erm, to get through the door, you had to use a key to
3 get into -- so, yeah, to me it was a prison.
4 Q. What you say, 'Karen', is it was a nasty place?
5 A. Yes, oh yeah, very. Very nasty.
6 Q. You go on to say the home was [REDACTED] a husband and wife?
7 A. Yeah.
8 Q. Is that Mr and Mrs [ERL-ERM], who you name there?
9 A. Yeah, Mr and Mrs, [ERL].
10 Q. And you give us a description of the two of them. This
11 is at paragraph 113. She was between 40 and 50 and was
12 a little grey-haired lady, and Mr [ERM] was about the
13 same age, but was a tall man.
14 A. They could have been younger, because I don't know ages
15 then. But Mr [ERM] was tall and Mrs [ERL], she
16 was a tiny -- she was four feet something. Five feet,
17 maybe, in height.
18 Q. They lived in -- sorry, 'Karen'.
19 A. They lived in the place, yes, in a house.
20 Q. So they lived in one of the houses [REDACTED]; is that
21 right?
22 A. Yeah, yeah.
23 Q. Then you mention another couple who worked there, the
24 [GJO-GJP]; is that right?
25 A. Yes, they lived in the house [REDACTED], as well.

1 Q. And GJO-GJP were the houseparents, you say?

2 A. Yes. There was lots of houseparents. But they happened

3 to live on-site.

4 Q. And you tell us that Mrs GJP also sometimes

5 slept in a bedroom beside the girls?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And Mr GJO sometimes slept in a room downstairs

8 with the boys?

9 A. Yeah, because they took shifts. Erm, like, they took

10 shifts to stay overnight, the girls and boys' side.

11 Yes, that's what they did.

12 Q. When you say 'that's what they did'; do you mean the

13 houseparents would take shifts doing that or just

14 GJO-GJP --

15 A. Yes. No, no, the houseparents. Because maybe one time

16 it would be Mrs GJP, next time Mrs Tough the

17 next time maybe EPX. I can't remember her last name.

18 And they just took different shifts.

19 LADY SMITH: Okay, and that's 'they' being the different

20 pairs of houseparents; not GJO-GJP and the

21 ERL-ERM, but GJO-GJP and other couples; is

22 that it?

23 A. I don't understand.

24 LADY SMITH: Sorry. Okay, we have ERL-ERM and they

25 were ?

1 A. Yeah, they were [REDACTED].

2 LADY SMITH: And they didn't do these shifts at the
3 bedrooms?

4 A. Yes, they did.

5 LADY SMITH: Did they? Oh, they did as well.

6 A. Yes, they did.

7 LADY SMITH: Okay.

8 A. Because they were part of it. So everybody did their
9 shifts.

10 LADY SMITH: Okay, right.

11 A. So [ERL [REDACTED]] and Mr [ERM [REDACTED]] did the shifts, but it
12 was the females upstairs and it was the boys downstairs.

13 LADY SMITH: Okay.

14 A. The men didn't go near the female side, and they didn't
15 sleepover on the female side; that was the ladies.

16 LADY SMITH: So of these couples, if you take [ERL-ERM [REDACTED]]
17 or [GJO-GJP [REDACTED]], the woman would sleep by the girls
18 and the man would sleep by the boys; is that what you
19 are telling me?

20 A. Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: That makes sense, thank you.

22 MS FORBES: You go on to tell us, 'Karen', about some other
23 members of staff. There was Mr and Mrs [zIFH-zGJX [REDACTED]] I think
24 you say; were they houseparents as well?

25 A. I am not sure if it was [zIFH-zGJX [REDACTED]], but they were

1 houseparents as well, yes.

2 Q. And then you mention an arts and crafts teacher?

3 A. That was Mrs Tough.

4 Q. And another female member of staff, and you say that

5 those two were really nice?

6 A. That was Mrs Tough and EPX, yes. They were the nice

7 two.

8 Q. You tell us, 'Karen', that there were about ten girls

9 and probably the same number of boys. And the ages were

10 about between 10 and 15, as far as you remember?

11 A. I would say so, yeah. Still hazy.

12 Q. As you have described, 'Karen', there were dormitories,

13 boys were in one and girls were in another one. And

14 girls were upstairs and the boys were downstairs?

15 A. Yes, girls upstairs.

16 Q. You also talk about the fact that there was a kitchen

17 and dining hall, and there were some rooms that would be

18 used as school classes?

19 A. Yes, I'm not sure of the school classes, because

20 I didn't go to school there that I remember. But there

21 was a kitchen and dining room, and they were like --

22 there was a -- I can't remember what it's called now.

23 But doors open and you can see into the dining room;

24 what's it called, if you open them up? The kitchen into

25 the living room, you can open it up; remember? And you

1 can pass food through. I can't remember what it's
2 called.

3 MS FORBES: Are you describing some sort of hatch or
4 something?

5 A. That's it. It was a hatch. You opened the doors and
6 from the kitchen you could get into the dining room and
7 that's where you got your food from. That dining room
8 was used for church meetings.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. We did church things every week. I think it was Sunday.
11 I can't remember now. I've lost it. I can't remember
12 the days.

13 Q. 'Karen', I think you then go on to tell us a bit about
14 the routine when you were at Brimmond. I won't go
15 through it all in detail, because we have it there. But
16 I think you say after you got up in the morning and
17 washed and dressed, you would have to stand in file and
18 then march down for breakfast?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. But boys and girls could sit together at meal time and
21 mix?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. But I think you describe that talking wasn't allowed?

24 A. No, you weren't allowed to talk, so we kind of
25 whispered. Talking wasn't encouraged. You were told

1 not to talk.

2 Q. You say that if you were caught talking there would be
3 repercussions. I think you describe what would happen?

4 A. Yeah, you would get banged on the head. There was lots
5 of -- all different things. I really do remember
6 getting like a knuckle over the head. I was sore. I do
7 remember that, right on the top of your head. And it
8 was -- I just don't know how to describe things, really.

9 Q. Well, the way you have said it, 'Karen', which is quite
10 descriptive, in your statement, is:

11 'They would rap you on the top of the head with
12 their knuckles.'

13 A. Yes. I just said that.

14 Q. But that was the male staff that did that?

15 A. Female staff would do it as well, but it was mostly the
16 male staff that did it. It was mostly males.

17 Q. You tell us that the food was okay, but if you didn't
18 like something you left it. So it wasn't like when you
19 were in foster care?

20 A. No, you didn't get offered anything else, but you
21 weren't forced to eat it.

22 Q. Some chores that girls would do would be to clear the
23 tables and clean the floors after meals and wash the
24 dishes?

25 A. Yeah, that was our jobs.

1 Q. But that was seen as the girls' jobs?

2 A. Oh yeah, the boys wouldn't do that. That was a girls'

3 job. I don't know what the boys did. Put the bins out?

4 Q. And you tell us later, 'Karen', that you didn't go to

5 school classes, although you think there were some?

6 A. I know there were school classes in there because some

7 of the kids would go to the classes in the school, so

8 I knew there was. But I couldn't tell you anything

9 about them.

10 Q. You would spend time, I think, during the day watching

11 television; is that right?

12 A. Yes, television or doing chores that needed to be done,

13 like tidying up the living room that we had there.

14 Probably -- I think that was about it, really. And

15 nothing really much to do in that place.

16 Q. And you mention, 'Karen', the fact that if you smoked,

17 you would be allowed four cigarettes a day?

18 A. Yeah, I could remember three or four cigarettes a day

19 you got. Yeah, you got morning, lunchtime, I think it

20 was supper time, and I think there was one at bedtime

21 but I'm not too sure, but there was -- we got

22 cigarettes. And if you didn't smoke, you got a sweetie.

23 Q. And did you smoke then, 'Karen'?

24 A. Yes, I did. Yes.

25 Q. I think you told us you already knew about being

1 borderline diabetic, so sweets; was that something you
2 had to stay away from at that time?

3 A. No, what it was, when we found out I was border
4 diabetic, my foster mother had cut out a lot of sugars.
5 I never got sugar in my tea and things like that. So
6 I wasn't used to eating anything like that anyway, so, I
7 mean, a sweetie would have been a treat. But I wasn't
8 used to eating sweet things.

9 MS FORBES: You talk, 'Karen', about the fact that you had
10 to go to church --

11 I think we might have lost the --

12 LADY SMITH: Yes, have we lost the link?

13 We could take the afternoon break just now and see
14 if this can be sorted out.

15 MS FORBES: Mm-hm.

16 LADY SMITH: Yes, let's do that. If somebody can explain
17 what's happening to the other end, please.

18 (2.55 pm)

19 (A short break)

20 (3.10 pm)

21 LADY SMITH: 'Karen', welcome back.

22 A. Yeah, thank you.

23 LADY SMITH: I think the connection has been restored. I'm
24 sorry about that and for the delay.

25 A. No problem.

1 LADY SMITH: It seems to be working again now, so we are
2 good to go, if that's all right with you; yes?
3 A. Yeah, yes.
4 LADY SMITH: Thanks.
5 Ms Forbes.
6 MS FORBES: My Lady, thank you.
7 'Karen', I think just before we lost the link, we
8 were talking about a part of your statement where you
9 say that you had to go to church on a Sunday?
10 A. Yeah.
11 Q. That was something you didn't have a choice about; is
12 that right?
13 A. No. Every child had to go.
14 Q. And you say those were the rules; do you know whose
15 rules they were?
16 A. Well, as far as I'm aware, I would say it was Mr and
17 Mrs ERL-ERM, because they the home.
18 Q. You go on then to tell us a little bit about the fact
19 that sometimes psychologists would come to see some of
20 the young people at Brimmond, but they didn't see you.
21 And you had some contact with social workers, but
22 Brimmond was only supposed to be a short-term placement,
23 until somewhere else was found; is that right?
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. You tell us a little bit about running away. I will

1 come back to that, because I think that relates to
2 something that you want to tell us that happened.

3 We come now, 'Karen', to a part of your statement
4 where you tell us about abuse whilst you were at
5 Brimmond. First of all, I think you tell us about
6 punishments that Mrs ERL would give; what were
7 they?

8 A. It wasn't just Mrs ERL, there was zIFH-zGJX. Or
9 zIFH-zGJX? I'm sure it was zIFH-zGJX And GJP. They
10 were the main ones that I remember doing the punishment
11 with.

12 Q. Okay. And what punishment was that, that you had to do?

13 A. That's using your toothbrush to clean the toilets, the
14 sink, the floor. And then when you were finished doing
15 all that, you had to brush your teeth with the
16 toothbrush, unwashed. If you were sick, you had to
17 start all over again and I mean back to the toilet, back
18 onto the floor, and you kept on going until they were
19 happy, basically. And then you went to your bed with
20 a soaken nightie, probably at 3 o'clock in the morning.

21 Q. 'Karen', you have named a few people being involved in
22 that, then. So that was Mrs ERL -- is it Mrs zGJX
23 or -- was she single?

24 A. She was married. So it would have been Mrs zGJX and
25 Mr zIFH.

1 Q. And who was the third person, 'Karen'?

2 A. That was Mrs GJP.

3 Q. Okay, apologies. So all three of those would use that

4 punishment?

5 A. Whoever was on duty that night would use that

6 punishment. So the other ones would have used the same

7 punishment as well. So whoever was on duty that night,

8 sleeping over.

9 Q. And I think you say that there were various reasons why

10 you would be given that punishment, but it could be

11 something like just giving backchat?

12 A. Yeah. If they told you to do something and you went,

13 'Nah', as a bairn would do, 'Do it yourself',

14 a punishment would follow. So, basically, you had to do

15 as you were told and jump to it. You didn't sit there

16 and say, 'I'll do it in five minutes', you did it

17 straightaway or you got punished.

18 Q. Okay. I think you described, 'Karen', that you would be

19 woken up at night to go and do that in your

20 nightclothes?

21 A. Yeah, because it was -- I can't remember the words that

22 they used. But it was like when you did something wrong

23 and you never got punished for it, you thought you got

24 away wi' it. But you hadn't, because the punishment

25 then came in when they woke you up and you were taken.

1 And that was the punishment. That's when they did it.

2 Q. So the punishment wouldn't happen at the time, but it

3 would happen --

4 A. No, not all the time, no. Sometimes it would just --

5 you thought you had gotten away with whatever you had

6 done, and you could have told them to eff off or

7 whatever, and you thought you'd got away wi' it, but you

8 hadn't.

9 Q. And you say that often there were two or three girls

10 having to do this?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. At night?

13 A. Yes. Normally, you weren't on your own; there was two

14 or three of us. We would be doing it.

15 Q. And you mentioned the sort of timeframe, 'Karen'.

16 I think you said there about 3.00 in the morning it

17 could be --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- before you got to bed?

20 A. Yeah. And you went to your bed with your wet clothes on

21 or your wet nightie, because that's what you were

22 wearing at the time you were doing your punishment,

23 always when you'd been in bed, so yeah.

24 Q. But I think you tell us as well, 'Karen', about some

25 girls still cleaning the toilets when you got up in the

1 morning and you saw them crying?

2 A. Yes. I think well, because that's -- well, they were
3 still doing the punishment, they had been sick or they
4 had done something wrong and had to restart. And it was
5 up to the housemother if she was satisfied with the
6 work. If not, you did -- you kept going. And it was
7 a shame, because some of the kids, they never got their
8 bed.

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. And they had to go and do whatever they had to do during
11 the day as well. There was no sleeping.

12 Q. And you say that not only were you using your own
13 toothbrush to clean toilets and other places, but you
14 would then have to brush your teeth with it afterwards?

15 A. Yes, yeah.

16 Q. And that's what would make some people sick?

17 A. Yeah. I had already learned to be sick in my mouth and
18 swallow, so I never really -- sometimes I was, but nine
19 times out of ten I didn't really have to redo. But if
20 one girl did something wrong, all of you got punished.
21 So you hoped and prayed that the rest of them would
22 behave so you could finish. It just took one and then
23 you would all be punished again.

24 Q. When you say if 'one person did something wrong'; is
25 that while the punishment was being carried out?

1 A. Yes, you were re-punished again by having to start again
2 and do it all over again.

3 Q. I think you have mentioned, 'Karen', that doing
4 something wrong included being sick, that meant you had
5 to start again?

6 A. Yeah. That was wrong, yeah.

7 Q. This was something that you think everyone would have
8 had to do at some point when they were there during that
9 time period?

10 A. I would say so, yeah. I would say so. I would say ...

11 Q. And you say you saw it happening at least once
12 a fortnight?

13 A. At least once a fortnight. It could happen every week.
14 But it's difficult because I can remember some things
15 happening, but I can't say for definite how often it
16 happened, because then that would be me lying. And I'm
17 just not sure about that. But I know it could be, like,
18 maybe once a week, maybe twice a week, or once every
19 fortnight or even twice a fortnight. I can't say for
20 certain, but I know it happened.

21 There wasn't really a week where something didn't
22 happen in that place. There was always something
23 happening bad.

24 Q. And whilst this was going on, 'Karen', I think you tell
25 us a little bit later in your statement -- this is at

1 paragraph 134 -- that there was another housemother who
2 would sometimes, if you were on your hands and knees
3 scrubbing, she would kick you?

4 A. Yeah, she would kick you. But your pail as well, your
5 bucket, she would kick that over as well, hence you were
6 soaking wet for bed. Erm, she was a nasty piece of
7 work.

8 Q. She's someone you say you can't remember her name, but
9 you remember her doing that?

10 A. I can't remember her name, but I think I do know who it
11 was. But I could be wrong, so I didn't name her.
12 I think it was Mrs zGJX. I think.

13 Q. Sorry, 'Karen', the visual disappeared there, but you
14 are back now, so hopefully the link remains.

15 Just to go to another part of your statement,
16 'Karen', you talk about the incidents when you ran away.
17 And I think you described that one of the boys, who you
18 have named, caught you and took you back.

19 A. Yeah, yeah.

20 Q. And I think that when you got back you described
21 yourself as 'kicking off'. This is at paragraph 128 of
22 your statement?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What happened when you 'kicked off' when you got back?

25 A. Well, when we were brought back, I just shouted and

1 bawled and screamed, normal kid behaviour to me.

2 Mrs ERL was trying to get me up the stairs and

3 I was saying, 'No, I'm not going up there'.

4 Because I wanted -- I just didn't want to be in that

5 place. So I was wanting to run away again. I knew

6 I couldn't get out the door, because the doors were

7 locked at this particular time, but I just didn't want

8 to go up that stair. Erm, so I kicked off. And that --

9 to me, that is -- I probably shouted and screamed and

10 bawled, telling her I wasnae doing it. And every time

11 she was trying to get me up the stairs, I was coming

12 back down, so that's (Inaudible).

13 Q. 'Karen', how did she try and get you up the stairs?

14 A. Well, she pulled me by my arm and I think she pulled me

15 by my hair. I remember being on the stairs and I was

16 kicking out at her. I was actual kicking her. I was

17 making contact, I remember that. And she screamed for

18 Mr ERM and Mr ERM came and he got me and he

19 put me in the cell.

20 Q. And I think what you have said about that is that:

21 'Mrs ERL hauled me up the stairs by the hair.'

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you have mentioned banging your head off the stairs;

24 is that something you recall happening?

25 A. Yeah, yeah. That's when I was on the stairs. Because

1 she was -- she had me by the arm -- like, when I was
2 kicking off, she had me by the arm and I was getting
3 down the stairs, so she grabbed me by the hair and I was
4 on the step and 'cause she was still grabbing, I'm
5 banging my head off -- kind of like, because when she's
6 pulling me, you're obviously going to bang your head.
7 She was screaming for Mr ERM at the same time. So
8 it was a bit of a -- kind of like -- was a right
9 fisticuffs by then really.

10 Q. There was a bit of a struggle between you at that stage;
11 is that what you are describing?

12 A. Yeah, I was kicking back, big time.

13 Q. So was the banging the head on the stairs a consequence
14 of the struggle of her trying to get you up the stairs?

15 A. I would say so, maybe, yeah.

16 LADY SMITH: Did you know at that time where they were
17 taking you, 'Karen'?

18 A. That's the reason why I didn't want to go up the stairs.
19 Yes, I did know. That was -- they were taking me to the
20 cell and I didn't want to go in the cell. And -- carry
21 on.

22 MS FORBES: Sorry, 'Karen', I interrupted you there.
23 I think you tell us about this cell in the same
24 paragraph. This was a single bedroom, you have
25 described it.

1 A. It's not a bedroom. It's a room which has got a bed --
2 like a metal bed screwed down. There's nothing -- you
3 can't take anything off, you can't do anything. It's
4 a bed, it's a metal bed, screwed. Basically, like
5 a prison cell.

6 Q. So you recall there being a metal bed?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. A proper -- a single bed that was screwed down?

9 A. Well, to me, it's a single bed. It definitely was
10 screwed down because you couldn't move it.

11 Q. You say there was also a potty in there?

12 A. Yeah, that was beside the window.

13 Q. When you say 'potty'; what do you mean by --

14 A. It's a pail to have a pee in or a poo, or whatever.

15 Q. A bucket or a pail?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah, you would know it as a bucket. But, where I came
19 from, you called things that you went to the toilet in
20 potties. So, yeah, it's a bucket.

21 Q. And you talk about there also being a spyhole on the
22 wall?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Was that on the wall or the door?

25 A. On the wall.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Right, so, when you come in the -- it's an outside area.

3 You come in the cell, there are toilets there, the

4 door's there for the cell. Now, on the wall there,

5 there's a peephole that's right through the wall from

6 the hall of the place, so they can see in, and there was

7 a buzzer, which I quite liked to buzz.

8 Q. And I think you tell us that you pressed that buzzer

9 a lot because you wanted out to the point that they

10 switched it off?

11 A. Yes. Yeah, they turned it off. Yeah.

12 Q. You say, though, you remember having bruising after this

13 incident; is that right?

14 A. Oh yeah, I was covered in bruises, yes. Because we were

15 fighting on the steps, with mannie **ERM** coming along.

16 He was just hauling me, do you know what I mean, so

17 I was covered in bruises.

18 Q. I think what you describe, 'Karen', is to get you in the

19 cell, he lifted you off the ground like a rag doll and

20 threw you in?

21 A. Yeah, he threw me in. Yep, that was quite amusing

22 really, when you think about it. This great big hulking

23 man, lifting a young child and throwing 'em. Erm,

24 lovely.

25 Q. You have mentioned, 'Karen', this pail or bucket or

1 potty to be used to go to the toilet in; was there
2 a toilet near this room that you call a cell?

3 A. Yeah, but the door was locked. You couldn't get to it.
4 It was there, but you had to come out the cell door to
5 go to the toilet and then there was another door that
6 was also -- it was almost like a double locked cell.

7 So, if they took you to the toilet, you still
8 couldn't get out because that main cell door was locked.
9 So what I would say is that they were supposed to take
10 you -- come in and take you for toilet breaks, so you
11 can go to the toilet. But they didn't do that with me.

12 If you were really bursting, they would use the
13 pail. I do admit I did pee in it, but I wouldn't do
14 a poo in it. That's something that was a no-go area.

15 Q. The way you have described it, 'Karen', is there is
16 a flushing toilet --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- outside of the room that you call a cell?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. But to get to that you had to come out of the cell
21 itself, which would be locked?

22 A. Yes. The door had to be opened by the person who had
23 the keys, so they would take you to the flushing toilet.
24 But you still, like I say --

25 Q. Sorry, 'Karen', I interrupted you. Continue.

1 A. Oh, right.

2 I was saying you had got one door there for coming

3 in from the hallway and you've another door leading into

4 the cell. The toilet is in the first door, not the

5 second door, so you can't go. You're double locked in.

6 That's what I'm trying to say.

7 Q. So if you were coming from the hallway --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- to go in towards the cell; are you describing that

10 the first thing you would come to was an area where

11 there would be this toilet?

12 A. It would be right in front of your face if you opened

13 the door.

14 Q. Then, beyond that, there's also then the door to the

15 cell itself, which could be locked after that to go

16 through?

17 A. You'd open the first door, the toilet is right in front

18 of you, and then you turn to your left and there is the

19 other door --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- and that leads into the cell part where you can

22 sleep. Yeah, that's it.

23 Q. I think you are indicating with your hands, 'Karen', is

24 that the toilet then was on the right as you came

25 through the door; is that right?

1 A. No, it was straight in front of you. As I'm looking at
2 you, it was straight in front of you. It's there, and
3 then the cell door was there. So that's how it was.
4 Q. Okay.
5 A. It's like a junction area, isn't it.
6 Q. No, that's useful. Thank you for describing that. Just
7 so we understand it: whilst there was technically
8 a flushing toilet nearby --
9 A. Yeah.
10 Q. -- it wasn't something you could get access to if you
11 were locked in the cell. And I think you tell us that
12 on this occasion, you were in there for, you say, nearly
13 three days?
14 A. I would say around about three days. Two and a half to
15 three days, yeah.
16 Q. And during that time you say you weren't given any food
17 or water?
18 A. Nope, no food, no water. Absolutely nothing.
19 Q. And you mentioned, 'Karen', that you wouldn't do
20 a number two in the potty?
21 A. Oh definitely not, no.
22 Q. So that is something that you didn't do whilst you were
23 in there for those three days, or almost three days?
24 A. Yes.
25 Q. And you describe Mrs GJP coming and opening the

1 door?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And she apologised to you?

4 A. Her first words were, 'Oh, I'm really sorry, I'm sorry,

5 I'm sorry'. That was her words to me.

6 Q. Did you get the impression that you had been forgotten

7 about in there?

8 A. Oh, I think so. Yes, I was definitely forgotten about.

9 They couldn't do enough for me then. Erm, I was in

10 agony because I was needing the toilet. So I got to go

11 to the toilet, but I asked her to turn around because

12 I was wanting a poo. So she did turn around and I got

13 to the toilet and all that. But there were so much

14 apologies. They were throwing, like, bags to me. They

15 were giving me anything I wanted, really, I wanted.

16 They had forgot about me.

17 Q. I think you say that the next day you got to go on the

18 minibus with GJO-GJP --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- to see your foster mother?

21 A. Yeah, the minibus was where they took the kids out

22 sometimes, maybe took them to a park or something like

23 that. Mrs GJP, erm, took some of the girls and

24 me, and says to me as we were driving, 'Do you know

25 where you are?' and I was going, 'No'. I just didn't

1 understand where I was. Well, I probably wasn't paying
2 attention, either. Then I realised we was at my foster
3 mum's. And I got about half an hour to an hour there to
4 spend. I think it was half an hour, actually, to spend
5 some time with my foster mum, as a treat.

6 Q. And you thought that was them feeling guilty for having
7 put you in the cell?

8 A. Yes. They couldn't do enough for me. They were doing
9 so much to make it up to me for what they had done. And
10 that -- you can't make up -- you can't make up. As
11 a kid you took advantage of it.

12 Q. And you go on, 'Karen', to tell us a little bit about
13 some girls. I won't name them, but you tell us about
14 some girls you remember at Brimmond who you say had
15 a hard time?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. One girl in particular you mention, that you saw her
18 after something had happened with Mrs ERL. I think
19 you tell us, at paragraph 131, that you were told by the
20 girl that Mrs ERL had beaten her?

21 A. Yeah. Can I say her name, like?

22 Q. We normally try not to use the name, if we can.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. But we have it there, so we can see it. So we know who
25 you are talking about.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. I think you say that she told you that something had
3 happened with Mrs ERL and that she had been beaten;
4 is that right?

5 A. Yeah. She was bruised, as well. She had marks on her.
6 Erm, I'll have to refer to the notes for this.

7 Q. I think you say, 'Karen', you didn't see what had
8 happened.

9 A. Oh, no.

10 Q. She told you.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And you saw her crying and she had bruises?

13 A. Yeah, and I asked her. And yes, Mrs ERL had beaten
14 her up. The normal one was -- Mrs ERL was the
15 denominator for hitting and punishing the girls, and
16 Mr ERM was the denominator for punishing the boys.
17 There was, like, a head punisher for each side. Even so
18 everybody else punished you, you had a head one and that
19 was ...

20 I've got issues.

21 Q. Can you see us again now? I think you disappeared --

22 A. I can see you, yeah.

23 Q. -- but you are back again now.

24 A. It is just something came up on the screen there.

25 Q. Mr ERM punished the boys and Mrs ERL --

1 A. Yes, he was the head punisher for boys and Mrs ERL
2 was head punisher for the girls. So if Mrs ERL
3 said to Mrs GJP, 'You must do, blah, blah,
4 blah', Mrs GJP would do it, because Mrs ERL
5 had had that idea, yeah.

6 Q. I think you say you also heard quite a few girls and
7 some of the boys -- I think you heard that they were
8 beaten by Mrs ERL, too?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. But that's not something you are telling us happened to
11 you, apart from the incident you have told us about?

12 A. I suppose my punishment was in the toilets, cleaning.
13 That was my punishment. I did get pushed -- kind of
14 like pushed aside and things like that. But I don't
15 think I was in there long enough to get the punishments
16 that they were getting. I more or less got a taster, if
17 you would say. I can't describe it. But I know that
18 the punishment that they received was -- it was more
19 than what I had, shall we say.

20 Q. I think you say that if Mrs ERL hadn't been there,
21 Brimmond would have been okay.

22 A. I think so, yeah. I really do think if Mr and
23 Mrs ERL-ERM had not been that home, I think it
24 would have been totally different, that's how I feel.
25 Because they were denominators in how the punishments

1 were done. And I know Mrs GJP [REDACTED] wasn't happy at
2 times. So I do feel if they hadn't been [REDACTED], it
3 would have been different, I really do.

4 Q. So did you get the impression, 'Karen', that the
5 nighttime punishments with the toothbrushes were on the
6 instructions of Mrs ERL [REDACTED]?

7 A. I would say so, yeah.

8 Q. For the girls.

9 A. To me, that -- because she was the one that told the
10 staff what to do, so yeah.

11 Q. You do tell us a little bit about an incident with one
12 of the boys and Mr zIFH [REDACTED], at paragraph 132. I think you
13 say he grabbed the boy by the ear and took him out of
14 the TV room.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. But you say you don't know what happened outside, when
17 he went --

18 A. No. When he -- one of the boys had been cheeky or said
19 something. Mr zIFH [REDACTED] had hurled him out. And, erm, you
20 could hear the boy shouting, but you don't know what
21 happened after it, because, like I say, we -- I would
22 presume he was put into the cell on the boys' side.
23 Because the boys -- I don't know if the boys had a cell,
24 because the cell was up in the girls' bit. So I presume
25 there was one in the boys' bit, too.

1 Q. But, from your point of view, there was that one cell
2 which you knew about; is that right?

3 A. Yes, which was up on the girls' landing.

4 Q. And apart from the occasion that you have told us about,
5 and being in there for nearly three days; were you ever
6 in the cell again?

7 A. I can't remember. I think I was in once.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. One more time. But I was only there for a couple of
10 hours. And that's where I can't say if that was the
11 first time or the second time I was in. Can't remember,
12 sorry. But I remember being in the cell before,
13 because, erm -- I wasn't in for long that time. Yeah,
14 I was in twice. Oh, sorry. I was in twice.

15 Q. Okay. One of the things you say, 'Karen', at
16 paragraph 133, is you think by that age you had learned
17 to close your eyes to the abuse. The way you put it is:
18 'If I didn't see it, it isn't going to affect me.'

19 A. Yeah, that's right. It's hard to see children, young
20 children as well, and even your friends -- because you
21 made friends there -- it's hard to see them hurting and
22 knowing you can't do nothing to help them. So the best
23 thing for your benefit is that you didn't see it. If
24 you didn't see it, it can't hurt you. And you learn to
25 cut your feelings off very quickly. But I learned that

1 in foster care as well, so ...

2 Q. Yes. You mention the fact that this was a secure unit
3 in Brimmond and there was nowhere to go or hide, and you
4 just had to try not to see things; is that how you felt?

5 A. Yeah. Well, you could go from the TV room upstairs, or
6 as we called it a living room, to the bedroom to the
7 toilet. That doors were not locked. That was, er,
8 where we could go. So you could hide there, sorta
9 (Inaudible). If something was happening, say in the
10 living room, you would just walk off and go somewhere
11 else. You didn't want to see it. You didn't want to
12 see them hurting. It was horrible.

13 Q. Now, 'Karen', in relation to Mrs ERL [REDACTED], you have been
14 made aware that these allegations have been put to her
15 and I just want to put something that was mentioned to
16 you about that for your comment.

17 Her position was that this punishment involving the
18 toothbrush was something that children just talked about
19 to frighten new children that came into Brimmond, but it
20 was something that didn't actually happen, in fact.

21 So I just want -- and I know you have been told
22 about that already, but I just wanted to see if you
23 wanted to make any comment about that?

24 A. Yeah, she's a liar and she knows it. She's a big fat
25 liar. We told -- there is an element of truth in this,

1 you see. This is where Mrs ERL is very clever.
2 The element of truth is: if a new girl come in, we tried
3 to tell them, 'Try and behave because if you don't, this
4 will happen to you'. So we didn't want them to be
5 punished as we were punished. So there is a slight
6 element of truth in what she did say. I'll give her
7 that, she's clever. But it was true, we were made to do
8 that and she damn well knows it 'cause she was there.

9 Mm?

10 MS FORBES: Sorry you disappeared again there from the
11 screen but you are back.

12 LADY SMITH: We are back.

13 MS FORBES: 'Karen', you then tell us about the fact -- and
14 we have talked about this -- that you went back to the
15 girls' home.

16 A. Yes, St Clair's.

17 Q. And we know from your records that they have said there
18 that they were happy to have you back. So this was just
19 after a month, the first time, of you being in Brimmond.
20 We know from your records that this was 1977.
21 I think you were there for just about a few weeks before
22 you were back in Brimmond again on 1977. So this
23 was your second time. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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5 Q. Secondary Institution you ended up back at Brimmond again?

6 A. This was the second time that I was in the cell, because
7 that's where they put me. When I went back to Brimmond
8 that time, I was put in the cell -- because I remember
9 that day. That was the short spell in the cell.

10 Q. So that second time, you get back to Brimmond and you
11 were put in the cell for a short period; did you say a
12 couple of hours?

13 A. For a couple of hours. It wasn't long.

14 Q. Was that on your arrival back at Brimmond, before you
15 got to go to --

16 A. Yes, on arrival. I think it was to do with getting all
17 the paperwork, so they just bunged me in there until
18 they sorted that bit and then I was out.

19 Q. Okay. You do tell us a little bit about the second time
20 you were at Brimmond, and you do tell us that people
21 seemed to be aware of a relationship in Brimmond
22 a between Mrs ERL and a member of staff called
23 KEF; is that right?

24 A. Yeah, KEF. Yeah.

25 Q. And you tell us about an occasion where you were taken

1 to Balmedie Beach, you and other girls; is that right?

2 A. Yeah, yeah.

3 Q. And this is where you say that you caught them having

4 sex with one another?

5 A. Sex, yeah.

6 Q. And when you got back you were shouting out the window

7 to the boys below?

8 A. Yeah, because we could shout from our living room window

9 and the boys downstairs could hear. And, well, they

10 were egging me on, so I kept shouting and bawling.

11 Q. And was that something, as far as you were aware -- this

12 relationship between Mrs ERL and KEF; was that

13 something that people generally knew about when you were

14 at Brimmond?

15 A. I don't know if they knew about it. They probably did.

16 Mrs ERL was, erm, very friendly with the male

17 staff, shall we say. So -- but KEF was a new member of

18 staff, and, erm, you could see from the dining room how

19 she used to look at him. It was almost like puppy dog

20 eyes. You ken when a teenager fancies a laddie and

21 you've got a wee puppy dog look? There was something

22 that -- because of my age I wasn't quite sure what it

23 was.

24 Q. Okay. I think you say that after that occasion, you

25 were of the view that Mrs ERL bent over backwards

1 in relation to you, in how she behaved towards you?

2 A. Oh yeah, yeah.

3 Q. And you would get cigarettes?

4 A. That was --

5 Q. Sorry? And it was not long after this that you got

6 a live in job at an hotel in Banchory; is that right?

7 A. Yeah, she got me a job. She went out of her way to find

8 a live-in job for me, to get me away from her because of

9 what I knew.

10 Q. I think you say you were about 15 and a half?

11 A. I think so. I'm not too sure of my age. This is the

12 thing, I'm never too sure of my ages anymore, at that

13 time, anyway.

14 Q. Well, again, it doesn't matter too much, but the

15 records, 'Karen', that we have seen, say that you went

16 to this hotel on [REDACTED] 1977, so you would still have

17 been 15 at that stage?

18 A. 15, yeah.

19 Q. Not yet 16. And this was to start a job as a kitchen

20 assistant; is that right?

21 A. That's right, yeah.

22 Q. I think we know that there was an issue with that.

23 I think your sister came to stay at the hotel as well

24 and you ended up leaving that job; is that right?

25 A. She came to work at the same place as me and I got

1 blamed for something that she had done. And I couldn't
2 take it, so I left. I left the job.

3 Q. And you go on to tell us that there was a period then
4 when you ended up again in a children's home, but this
5 was a different children's home?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. You tell us about that from paragraph 139. You still
8 weren't quite 16, you say, at that point, Secondary Institutions - to

9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Q. Secondary Institutions - to be published later got

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into a bit of trouble with the police because you were

8

keeping look out in relation to a house being broken

9

into and you ended up on remand in Craiginches?

10

A. Yeah.

11

Q. I think you were 16 by this time. And you were only at

12

that home, I think, for a few months.

13

You tell us a little bit about being in Craiginches

14

from paragraph 148. Essentially, 'Karen', you say you

15

were there for about four weeks in total, or so, and you

16

describe that there was a small section in the prison

17

that was for women on remand, even though it was a male

18

prison?

19

A. Yeah.

20

Q. I think really what you tell us about that is when you

21

got there, you had to have a bath with something smelly,

22

I think, to stop you having scabies --

23

A. Yeah.

24

Q. -- and you were strip searched. We know about that.

25

But, ultimately -- even though borstal was suggested,

1 ultimately, it was decided that you would go to
2 a different children's home and that was in Aberdeen?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. You tell us about that from paragraph 151. Secondary Institutions - to

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19 Q. You stayed there for a while, 'Karen'. I think you tell
20 us that it was just less than a year. You left. You
21 would have been 17 by the time you left; is that right?

22 A. Something like that. No idea. You would have the
23 dates. I don't.

24 Q. Just going forward, then, 'Karen', you talk about your
25 life after leaving care, finally, from paragraph 156.

1 You say that you initially got a bed and breakfast. You
2 got engaged and then married in 1979, and you had three
3 children?

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. You tell us about that. I think, sadly, your first
6 daughter passed away in 2020?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You go on to tell us about the fact that you got to meet
9 your biological mother in 1981. I think you say that
10 you got to understand her a little bit. I think the way
11 you described it is you put everything from the past
12 behind you?

13 A. I understood what happened with my foster mother,
14 because I've been through the same with my first
15 marriage. So I had an understanding of what she had
16 been through and how she reacted the way she had reacted
17 and how the children were taken away. Yes, I had a good
18 understanding of her.

19 Q. Again, there are parts of what you tell us in your
20 statement that we are looking at now that have already
21 been read-in word for word, so that's why I am not going
22 through every sentence with you, 'Karen'. But it is not
23 that it is not important. It is.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. But I think in summary you tell us that you have been

1 married a number of times. You have had some
2 difficulties with physical abuse in those relationships,
3 but, ultimately, you tell us that your last marriage was
4 in 2010; is that right?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And that's something that continues now?

7 A. Yes, it's a proper marriage, shall we say. The other
8 ones were just pretend. This is a proper one.

9 Q. In relation to impact, 'Karen', you go on to tell us
10 about that from paragraph 162. Again, all of this was
11 read-in during the foster care case study. But, in
12 summary, you talk about the fact that you grew up,
13 really -- apart from your older sister being with you
14 until you were 14, you grew up really without your other
15 brothers and sisters, and you have met them little by
16 little over the years. You talk about how difficult it
17 has been to try and have relationships with those and be
18 close to them, because of growing up in care; is that
19 fair?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. The way you put it, 'Karen', is you say, at
22 paragraph 163, the end of that paragraph:
23 'Being taken into care stripped me of my family.'

24 A. Yeah. They took everything I had.

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Even though my mum and dad weren't the best person to be
2 with, probably, they were still my family and I never
3 got to know about my brothers and sisters until I went
4 into Seafield Children's Home. I didn't know I had all
5 them. I only knew about the one I was brought up with
6 and another two that was brought up somewhere else.
7 I didn't know about the rest of them and that's bad.

8 Q. And you say, 'Karen', that one of the things you decided
9 to do, Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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14 A. It's a nice place, yes. It's a small village and it's
15 lovely. A lovely wee village.

16 Q. One of the things do you say, though, about Brimmond and
17 that occasion that you were in the cell for three days,
18 you tell us, at paragraph 167, that that's caused you to
19 have issues with having a door closed, even in your own
20 house?

21 A. Yeah, I need an escape route. Like, while I'm sitting
22 here, the door's there, I can escape. Even though it's
23 closed just now, I still know I can do it and I've got
24 two people in here that I can trust, that will help me.
25 But I do not sit in my house with any doors shut, apart

1 from the main front door. That's the only door that's
2 shut. Everything's open.

3 Q. You tell us, 'Karen' -- this is at paragraph 172 -- that
4 you have tried to put everything that's happened to you
5 behind you and you try not to dwell on the past, and
6 look to the future instead?

7 A. This has opened a whole can of worms again. Erm,
8 normally, I will put things in a box and hammer it shut
9 and it's put away. And I don't think back on to it
10 because I don't want to go there. I've been there and
11 I don't have to -- I shouldn't have to go back and I am.
12 Here I am now, back.

13 Q. I think one of the things you point out is that you
14 never turned to drink or drugs to try and blank out what
15 happened to you in care; is that right? You talk
16 about --

17 A. Oh, I never turned to -- obviously, I have. Obviously,
18 I do -- well, I did drink. And I did experiment with
19 drugs, but not to the extent that I used them. So there
20 was a dabble. Erm, but I haven't been drinking since
21 2018. That's the last time I ever touched alcohol,
22 because when I was drinking alcohol, I got a rage.
23 A rage built up and, erm, I was treating my husband bad,
24 shall we say.

25 Q. And I think you took the decision not to hit your

1 children when they were growing up because that had
2 happened to you and it had affected you. And I think
3 you --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- tell us that there is never a need to hit a child,
6 in your view?

7 A. No, there isn't. I do believe in a slight tap on the
8 hand, say (several inaudible words) if there is
9 something hot, so they know not to put their fingers
10 near it.

11 But I learned my voice -- if you use a tone of voice
12 to your children, they will sit back and take note.
13 They don't need a wooden spoon, they don't need a belt,
14 a stick. They don't need any of that. And they
15 certainly don't need your hands. But a little tap
16 I will agree with, because that's them just learning.
17 But, as they learned, they go, oh no, they can't touch
18 like say a hot pan, or something like that, if you use
19 a certain tone of voice children will learn better. My
20 foster father learnt me that one, because he did it.

21 Q. I think you tell us again about him, 'Karen', at
22 paragraph 173. You say that you consider your foster
23 father to be your dad?

24 A. Yes, he is.

25 Q. And you are happy to call him Dad?

1 A. Oh, he's my dad.

2 Q. And the reconciliation with your birth mum, I think you
3 say you still think of her as your mum?

4 A. She's my real mum, yes. So it's really strange speaking
5 about my mum and dad because I'm speaking about my real
6 mother as my mum, and I'm speaking about my foster
7 father as my dad. So it's a bit weird, but I know what
8 I'm thinking.

9 Q. One of the things you mention, 'Karen', is that you have
10 never felt the need to try to get any counselling or
11 support, but you do mention that you wrote your life
12 story down once?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But then you decided to burn it?

15 A. Yeah, I burnt it. And that was meant to be it finished
16 with.

17 Q. Yes. And I think, as you have said, coming to the
18 Inquiry has opened things up again for you.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. I think one of the things you talk about, 'Karen', at
21 paragraph 191, is that you were never believed as
22 a child?

23 A. No.

24 Q. You were always made out to be a liar. And you make the
25 point, I think, that children shouldn't be treated as

1 liars and they have a voice and they should be listened
2 to?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. I wonder -- you say at paragraph 194, 'Karen', that
5 speaking to the Inquiry has been good for you, as it's
6 the first time you have spoken fully about what happened
7 and that you have been listened to and believed; is that
8 how you feel?

9 A. Yeah. That is -- it's like -- I can't describe it.
10 It's like, erm -- just say that you get as a kid a toy
11 that you've always wanted and never had before and
12 you're given it. It's an explosion of relief that
13 somebody has actually listened, believed in you, and
14 never doubted or questioned you. That means more than
15 anything, is to finally be believed, after all
16 these years. I'm 63 years old. Do you know what
17 I mean? I can now, like, finally, say I was believed
18 and it means a lot. It's hard. People don't understand
19 how a child feels. It's like a tight ball all your life
20 and suddenly when somebody else finally believes it, it
21 goes, oh, and it's a relief. (indistinct) and just find
22 it.

23 Q. Do you feel it has been a relief, 'Karen'?

24 A. Yes, yeah.

25 MS FORBES: Well, 'Karen', that's all the questions I had

1 for you, so thank you for answering them. Is there
2 anything, though, you want to say that you haven't had
3 a chance to say today?

4 A. I just thank you for listening to me. Thank you for
5 doing what you are doing. But I just -- and it's still
6 happening into this day and age. This is still
7 happening. It's still ongoing. Children that's coming
8 up after me, it's happening and it's never going to
9 stop. And this is never, ever, going to stop. There's
10 always going to be somebody that's going to abuse
11 children and abuse adults as well, and their lives are
12 hell. They need to be believed. So if just somebody
13 listens to them and believes them.

14 There's lots and lots of things, how you can work
15 out the truth from a lie. You can believe them and let
16 them think that you believe them, look into it quietly
17 and then deal with it. Kids would be a lot safer.

18 MS FORBES: Thank you very much. 'Karen', thank you very
19 much for those words.

20 A. Yes.

21 MS FORBES: That's all I have, my Lady.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you. 'Karen', let me add my thanks.

23 I am really grateful to you for engaging with us this
24 afternoon and adding so clearly to what you have already
25 given us in writing. It's been really good to hear you.

1 I am sorry that the link let us down a few times, but we
2 got there in the end.

3 A. That's fine.

4 LADY SMITH: I am confident I didn't miss anything of what
5 you wanted to tell us.

6 A. Okay.

7 LADY SMITH: I hope the rest of the day is more restful for
8 you than it has been so far.

9 A. It will be fine. Thank you.

10 LADY SMITH: We can switch the link off now and you can
11 relax.

12 A. Right, bye.

13 LADY SMITH: Bye, bye.

14 Very nearly exactly 4 o'clock, Ms Forbes, so we are
15 not doing another read-in now.

16 We will stop there for today and we return to
17 evidence tomorrow morning. The first witness is an oral
18 witness tomorrow?

19 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady. Yes, at 10 o'clock.

20 LADY SMITH: In person here; is that right?

21 MS FORBES: It is in person, yes.

22 LADY SMITH: Yes. I've got that right? Very well. I will
23 rise now until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. En route,
24 two other names that were used by this witness. One was
25 EPX ; she is protected by my General Restriction Order,

1 she also referred to a couple as zIFH-zGJX . It might
2 actually be people called IFH-GJX , but whichever, either
3 zIFH-zGJX or IFH-GJX , they are not to be identified outside
4 this room as having been referred to in our evidence.
5 Thank you.

6 (4.00 pm)

7 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on Thursday, 31
8 October 2024)

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