

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HKC

Support person present: No

1. My name is HKC. My date of birth is 1984. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I grew up on the south side of Glasgow. I lived with my parents and my brother, who is 14 months older than me. My dad was a self-employed handyman, he could fix anything.
3. I went to primary school here and there and then started in Darnley Primary School. I liked it there. I was there until I was five years old, in 1990.
4. In 1990 a family member was baby-sitting my brother and I. His name was. My parents were out playing darts. We were in our house at Nitshill, Glasgow. He woke me up and left my brother sleeping. He took me to another room and sexually abused me.
5. I told my parents straight away when they came home. ran straight out of the house. Mum and dad didn't want to believe it. They didn't want to discuss it, they just swept it under the carpet. The matter was not reported to the police.

6. My mum didn't accept the situation and the family started to break down. My mum wasn't happy that my dad's side of the family wanted it brushed under the carpet. She took me and left my dad. We went to the Hamish Allan centre in Glasgow which is a homeless shelter for women. Then we bounced around those sort of places for the next couple of years until we got a house in Springburn.
7. It was really hard for me, especially when my dad started to treat me like an outcast. I've got memories of my dad carrying on with my brother and my mum saying to my dad, "Remember you've got two sons." I didn't have much contact with my dad after my mum left him. It had been a happy family but I have photographs from that time and you can see the difference in me in photos taken before the abuse and after I was put in care. I have fairly happy memories of life before I was five years of age.
8. My mum and I moved into a house in Springburn, in Nitshill in Glasgow around 1990, when I was five years old. When it was just me living with my mum things were hectic and school was a bit intermittent. I contracted a virus and I was in hospital for about six weeks. When my mum and I moved into our new house we had no furniture. I slept on the floor with a duvet and a pillowcase filled with my school clothes.
9. I remember we were down in Darnley and a social worker asked me if I wanted to go on holiday for a couple of weeks. My mum had a bit of a breakdown, she had been abused herself as a child. This was respite care and that was the first time I met a social worker. That was when I went to Clark House in Largs.

#### **Clark House, Largs - 1992**

10. The social worker must have made an arrangement to meet my mum in Darnley, at my Gran's house. I walked in and all my family were there. Then there was the stranger that really stuck out. That was the social worker. There was no discussion about my gran or any of my other relatives taking me. I can remember that some of my aunts

and uncles stormed out. My gran said I was going on holiday for a couple of weeks. I was really excited to start with then I realised it was just me myself.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

11. I was seven years old when I first went to Clark House. I went there straight from my Gran's house. I must have had a bag with me when I went to my Gran's.

Secondary Institution

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone - 1993**

34. I got taken to Newfield Assessment Centre by my social worker. He just told me I was getting moved, he didn't tell me where we were going. I think I was there for about six weeks the first time I went there. I was there a couple of times for short periods. The first time I was there, I went back to my parents for about a month. Then I put back to Newfield by a Children's panel in Bell Street, Glasgow.
35. Newfield was more for kids with real problems, older kids. It was a two storey building and it was a locked unit, they had bars on the windows. Obviously there were fire escapes but other than that it was locked. On the ground floor was the living room with doors and corridors all round. The bedrooms were upstairs and they all had skylights. They had a bar across them so you couldn't open the window too much, but people broke those off and went climbing about all over the roof. It was a really problematic school.
36. The kids there were from six or seven years of age, right up to sixteen years of age. As an eight year old kid, I found it terrifying. There were between fifty and sixty kids at Newfield. It was a mixed unit, boys and girls.
37. I was just taken straight in and up to a bedroom and left to deal with it. It was [REDACTED] traumatising [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]

### **Routine at Newfield Assessment Centre**

38. The Unit Managers were in charge at Newfield. There were four or five units, divided by age. My unit was called Bute. It seemed to be a mixture of younger boys and older girls. There were some older boys too. It is hard to explain but it was like an integration unit. I didn't suffer any abuse at Newfield. I was younger, so the older kids looked after me.

### *First day*

39. When I arrived, a member of staff from my unit got called down and I got taken up into my unit. There was no effort made to settle me, or introduce me to people.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

40. I had my own room at Newfield. It had a bed, wardrobe, a chest of drawers, and a desk. The room was quite good for a young boy then. We were locked in at night. If you needed the toilet during the night, you chapped the door and a member of staff came and let you out. There wasn't always a member of staff available. Sometimes it could be hard to get out but the harder you banged the more they came.
41. There were three different shifts at Newfield. There was one from the morning until about 2.00 pm, then 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm, and then the night shift. I can't really remember any of the staff at Newfield.

### *School*

42. I can remember going to school again at Newfield. The education there seemed to be more to do with things you wanted to do. We had P.E. in the morning, then cooking, art, and things like that. The school was alright from what I remember, but I was only there for about six weeks the first time, before they found me a space.

### *Leisure time*

43. I remember there was an activities class on a Thursday afternoon. They had gym and things like that. We played football in the gym, but that's all I can remember from Newfield.

### *Visits*

44. Newfield was called an Assessment Centre but I don't remember speaking to any professionals for an assessment. I don't remember seeing my social worker. My family didn't come down to see me.

### **Leaving Newfield Assessment Centre**

45. Newfield is a place you go to get assessed for other schools. I was assessed for six weeks and I was assessed for residential care because my mum and dad didn't want me back home. They did have the choice to get me back because I had only been placed in Clark House for respite for them, although I didn't realise that until I was older. I think the truth was that they couldn't handle what had happened to me so I went to Balrossie. It was a case of out of sight, out of mind.
46. I just got told one day by a member of staff at Newfield that I was going to Balrossie. I think my social worker did take me for a day trip to Balrossie, to see it. I don't have any memory of packing up my stuff, all I would have had were my clothes. I think it was my social worker who took me to Balrossie.

### **Balrossie School, Kilmacolm - 1993 to 1995**

47. I went to Balrossie School [REDACTED] 1993 or [REDACTED] 1994. I was eight years old. Balrossie was a castle and I was scared. It was different, intimidating. It was a big yellow sandstone building. It used to be a hospital during World War 2. Although it was enclosed it wasn't secured. You could get out pretty easily if you wanted.
48. Balrossie was an all boys' school, for boys from seven years of age to sixteen years of age. I was one of the youngest. There weren't many boys of my age in my unit.

Balrossie was on two levels. There were two different units, one on each of the two floors. One unit was called Bute and the other was called Cumbria. I was in Bute. There was also a cottage across from the castle which was for boys of fourteen up to sixteen, boys who were getting ready to leave.

49. I was taken straight into <sup>SNR</sup> office, and he was intimidating as well. His name was <sup>LWH</sup>. He was a big man with a bald head. The way he spoke was quite brash. He came across as dead intimidating. His wife was a teacher at the school too.

### **Routine at Balrossie**

#### *First day*

50. They had horses in the field in front of Balrossie and horses are my favourite animal. They kept goats and sheep up the back. There was a big football park.
51. Going for that first visit to Balrossie gave me a false impression. It was a castle, it seemed magical. When I went there to stay, it was a completely different experience. The building was horrific from day one because I was withdrawn into myself because of what happened with my family. Being quiet and withdrawn, people took advantage of that in a big way.

#### *Morning and night time*

52. They had dormitories at Balrossie with three beds. I shared with boys called and . They were twelve or thirteen years old, they were older than me. There was one wardrobe and there were drawers under the beds. You kept your personal belongings in there, but I don't remember much in the way of personal belongings. We weren't allowed to personalise our bed area in the dormitories.

### *Washing/bathing*

53. When we got up in the morning we went for a shower. That's when boys would fight with one another. There was a lot of violence in Balrossie, to see who would be top boy of each unit.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

54. There was a great big dining room on the ground floor that everyone ate in. Everyone got lunch at the same time. The food was great at Balrossie, there was a great big buffet.

### *Clothing/uniform*

55. There was no uniform at Balrossie. If you needed new clothes, you got a clothing grant. From what I recollect, a member of staff would take you out shopping on your own and you could pick your own clothes.

### *School*

56. The school was on the grounds of Balrossie, just out the back door of the castle and up a wee road. It was the boys from my unit that were in my class, the boys who used to bully me all the time.
57. We had different subjects English, maths, science, home economics. I loved home economics, I loved cooking but we were never encouraged to do more of stuff we enjoyed.



### *Leisure time*

58. We played football but the bullying was on my mind constantly. It was always on my mind and I was stuck there. It was horrible.
59. After I stopped having home leave I looked forward to the weekends because they were so nice and quiet, unless KSP was on. A lot of the boys were away at weekends. Weekends were nice and relaxed, you could do anything you wanted. I used to go up to the back fields and look after the goats and sheep. I didn't get permission to ride the horses in the field at the front of Balrossie, but I did. I built up the courage just to jump on its back one day and it went from there. I also became pals with the farmer's daughter and we became close. She used to take me out riding and that's where I learned to ride. Horses became a big part of my life.

### *Trips/Holidays*

60. They used to take us fishing and ice skating. They took us on holiday to Cannes in France. We went to Arran. It wasn't everyone from Balrossie that went on holiday, just some of us. Those were some good memories.
61. They didn't have outside groups like Cubs and the Scouts but at Christmas, summer, and Easter, they would have discos. They got girls from the community centre and local schools in the area and got them to come to discos, and that's how we got introduced to females. We used to go to their schools for discos too, the discos were mad. It was the only time we had contact with kids from outside Balrossie. Some of the girls were from the Good Shepherd home and some were from the local community centres in Greenock, like Bairdshill Community Centre. I enjoyed those discos.
62. Willie Windgate, the science teacher sticks in my mind. He used to take us to his house at Lochwinnoch. That's how I first got into cars. He had a Panda and he used to teach us how to drive it in a field. He made us dinner in his house, with his wife. All the staff used to take us to their houses. It was good leaving Balrossie and being in a normal

house. I am quite sure that Willie Windgate was a decent guy trying to be nice to us, he wasn't grooming us.

63. I used to get home leave at weekends but it was shocking. There was a blue van and one of the staff would drop us all off and pick us back up again. My dad wasn't like a dad to me. It was as if he didn't want me there. My mum and dad were sort of on and off at the time, my mother still had her house in Springburn. When I got home leave I used to go to my dad's, sometimes I would go to my mum's it all depended on where [REDACTED] was.
64. My brother [REDACTED] would be jealous of me because I was telling him stories of going fishing, and going here and there. He would moan to my dad that he wasn't getting to do these things and my dad would pick on me for telling him.
65. My mum used to drink, not excessively but she used to go to my auntie's house and I would have to sit outside on the landing of the tenement and wait for her. It got to the point where I didn't want to go home for the weekend.
66. I got home leave until 1994. Then a member of staff told me I was going to be a big brother, he told me that my mum had given birth to my wee brother [REDACTED]. The home visits stopped because [REDACTED] was not well and he was in hospital all the time. It was my parent's decision to stop the home visits. By that time at Balrossie I had learned to block out feelings and emotions, so it was just normal.
67. After my home visits stopped, my parents did visit me but there were only a few visits. When they did come, they were allowed to take me out of Balrossie but there started to be more and more excuses about why they couldn't come. It just broke me even more.
68. It wasn't until 1997 that I became close to the rest of my family.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

69. There's not much I remember about Christmas at Balrossie. I remember Christmas dinner and the units getting decorated. Those were happier times. We got presents and Christmas money from the school. I got money for my birthday. I have never had a birthday party in my life.

### *Visits*

70. The social worker came up with my mum a few times. I think it was a different Social Worker than before. The Social Worker would visit on his own as well. He would take me out for a cup of tea or coffee. I just told him it was fine in Balrossie.
71. Jean Smith was my keyworker, she was a good member of staff. She used to take me out. I didn't tell her about the abuse I was suffering because you didn't want to be labelled a grass. She must have noticed though.

### *Healthcare*

72. There was one nurse at Balrossie. I can't remember the name of the nurse. I remember one time I had to see her and I had my top off. She saw the bruises caused by KSP's abuse but it was just put down to wear and tear, or I had fallen off something.
73. I needed medical treatment when I got beaten up by older boys. It was always just the nurse who dealt with it, there was no outside medical treatment. I did tell the nurse how I got the injuries but she didn't do anything. I don't know if she made a record of anything. She might have done because they did have these books to describe how we were doing physically. My book should still be there, or in the Mitchell Library, or wherever.

### *Running away*

74. The one and only time I tried to run away was with two other boys, I was quite young. We hid in a barn and I remember one of the boys got stung by a wasp. He went back to Balrossie, we weren't far. He must have told them where we were. We had built a den in the hay bales and I looked down and LWH SNR, was there saying, "Come out, I know you're there." We did get some punishment for running away but I can't remember what it was.

### *Discipline*

75. There were lots of rules at Balrossie. If you broke the rules you got punished, usually by being locked in your room and told to stay there. If you were fighting with somebody else or kicking off you could end up with four or five members of staff sitting on top of you. That happened quite regularly. It happened to me about two or three times a week. I don't know if they recorded it when they restrained a child. It wasn't normal restraints they used, they would twist your arms up your back, and they did the same in St Phillips. It was quite frightening as a child and the pain was unbelievable. You couldn't breathe when you had four or five of them sitting on your back. It was particular members of staff who did that, like KSP, but I can't remember the others' names. If you didn't get out of bed in the morning KSP would tip you out of bed and then use restraints on you.

### **Abuse at Balrossie**

76. I used to get terrorised in Balrossie. When I was in school, boys would be waiting on me. It would be older boys from the unit but I can't remember their names. I would tell the English teacher but she would just tell me to get out. I can't remember her name, she was really old, her name might have been Mrs Clark. When I went out, I would get beaten really badly. Boys would be stamping on my head. This was happening every day, or every other day. It was always when staff weren't there. The

psychological abuse I was going through was unbelievable. It traumatised the life out of me.

77. Some members of staff were fine, some were bastards. The one that always sticks in my head was KSP. He abused me physically, mentally, and psychologically. If I did anything wrong at all, he used to drag me up to the tower of the castle and lock me in. I was eight years old and he was telling me horror stories of ghosts being in the tower. He would lock me in there for hours at a time and there was no window, it was just an empty dark room. There was no food or water, and I didn't know how long I was going to be in there. KSP did that to me a few times. Other staff knew it was happening but they didn't take any action.
78. KSP's abuse usually happened at the weekend or at night when the place was quieter. He used to batter me, really batter me. That took place in my bedroom. He would batter me for being bad which could be anything, such as coming out of class early or swearing at a teacher. He used to throw his keys at me, he threw me off a wall, but he wouldn't hit me in the face, only on the body. I had bruises all over me but if KSP would just say that I had fallen off my bike again. Other staff like the nurses must have noticed my bruises.
79. KSP used to abuse me regularly. It happened any time that I did something wrong, in his eyes. That continued throughout my time at Balrossie and I was there for years.
80. The two boys I shared a dormitory with, and were bullies. I woke up one morning and was trying to stick his penis in my mouth. He had tried it many times before that. He and other boys would hold me down and pretend they were going to do that. Mostly I fought them off but I had seen what they had done to other boys.
81. and were like predators, but was the worst. What they would try and do to other boys was they would make a lot of dens in the bedrooms and elsewhere. They would make them out of sofa cushions, quilts, and



things. They used to go into these dens and touch each other. They did it to me as well. [REDACTED] would get you to go into a den and dare you to do things, like pull your willie out and touch it. I didn't understand, I thought it was a game they were playing.

82. Staff would be around when they were using these dens but either they didn't see what was going on or they didn't want to see. There were only a couple of good staff, most didn't care.

### **Reporting of abuse at Balrossie**

83. I was too young to understand what [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were doing to other boys but when [REDACTED] tried to stick his penis in my mouth and I told a member of staff, the whole unit went mental. Then I understood it was a bad thing. I told the staff member and they then spoke to [REDACTED] about it. I think the staff member might have been Jean Smith, my keyworker. [REDACTED] managed to get to me in the shower room and battered shit out of me. There were other boys hanging about with [REDACTED]. Then the member of staff got us isolated. I told them that I wanted to tell my mum and dad but they tried to discourage me from telling them, but I did. I telephoned my dad from the staff phone. They tried so hard to discourage me because of the problems it would cause. I can't remember the names of the staff members involved in that. There were male and female staff members, it should be in my notes.
84. They kept a member of staff with me all the time because [REDACTED] was trying to get me again. I could hear him all the time. That went on all day until my parents arrived that night. I remember I saw my dad's car and I ran away from the member of staff, ran out the fire exit, and ran round the unit and into the main building. I walked into the SNR [REDACTED] office and my dad was there with two of his mates. SNR [REDACTED] LWH [REDACTED] said that the best thing to do would be for them to take me home that night and they would figure things out from there. That's what happened.

## **Leaving Balrossie**

85. I went home from Balrossie with my dad. My uncle [REDACTED] had died a few weeks before and people seemed more occupied with that than with me. Things became normal very quickly for a few weeks. I was home for four weeks in total. I didn't go to school or anything.
86. I didn't have any Children's panels when I was at Balrossie but there was a panel after I left in 1997. It was in Bell Street in Glasgow. The panel wanted me to stay with my mum and dad because I was getting to that age but my dad said no chance, so I went back into care. I was there when he said that, I was gutted.
87. I went from the Children's Panel straight to back to Newfield Assessment Centre. That time at Newfield was the first time I tried to run away properly. I remember being on the flyover on the way to Johnstone city centre. I only went so far, then I turned and went back in again. I was only gone about half an hour but the staff noticed. They just locked me in my room for half a day. I was at Newfield for three months and then they found a place for me in South Annan.

## **South Annan, Fairley and Seafield, Ardrossan - 1995 to 1997**

### **Routine at South Annan**

88. I got moved to South Annan in Fairley when I was nine years old. Then that building got closed down and then we moved to a new building called Seafield, in Ardrossan. Seafield had been a day school before they changed it to residential. In total I was there for about three years. Both places were run by Quarriers.

### *First day*

89. South Annan was in Fairley, next to Largs. South Annan was completely unlike any other residential home I have ever been in. There was more freedom, we could do what we wanted, but it was also more structured than anywhere else I had been before. It was mixed boys and girls and there were about thirty-five to forty kids from the age of eight up to fifteen. Neil Armstrong, he was one of my managers.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

90. South Annan was not split into units, it was like one big house. It felt more family oriented.

### *School*

91. The schooling was in the same building we were living in. We didn't really get any encouragement with things we were interested in at school. The schooling was mediocre. If you did your work, you did your work. If you didn't, you didn't.

### *Leisure time*

92. We could run around the grounds, we could climb trees, just do kid things. I liked fishing and there was a freshwater pool I used to go to and chase trout all the time. I got my own stuff from my pocket money.

### *Chores*

93. I used to do the laundry so that was my job in the place.

### *Trips/Holidays*

94. They took us out on trips at South Annan, ice-skating and things like that. They encouraged hobbies. I got into ice hockey through South Annan and Seafield. We



went ice skating in Stevenson. The member of staff who encouraged us was the one who took us. The outings were great. The way the members of staff were, to some degree, was great. Some of them were amazing, like Neil Armstrong. He became quite close to me.

95. Sometimes I would get home leave to my mum's in Springburn but my mum was still going through a lot of stress with [REDACTED] Sometimes I would go to my mum's for the school holidays but the excuse was usually [REDACTED] They just made excuses so they didn't need to deal with me.
96. I was problematic because of all the things going on in my life. I was rebelling and climbing up on roofs and things. Neil Armstrong saved my life one day. I went to school from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm and one day he just took me out of school and took me to Kelburn Country Park, a private stable. He said he would get me a job there as long as I went to school from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm every day. From 2.00 pm until 7.00 pm I would work at the stables, and that became my job. I was doing that every day, for five pounds a day. On a Sunday he would take me to his mum and dad's house for dinner. Neil was my unit manager, he didn't need to do all that.

#### *Visits*

97. I saw my family on and off in South Annan. The older I got the more they let me down. They would say they were coming to sports days and they wouldn't show up. I would be waiting on them coming after they said they were coming. One time I ran away to the train station and sat there waiting on them. I was sobbing my heart out when the staff came and found me. Even the staff went off their nuts about the way my mum and dad were. It was just more and more disappointment and it got harder and harder. I hated them.
98. If they did come and visit they took me out sometimes but it was as if my dad didn't want to be there. Sometimes the Social Worker would bring my mum and dad up for sports days, visits, and things.

99. The older I got, the more stuff I got off the schools and the more stories I had to tell when went home for visits, the more jealous my brother became. The more my dad saw this, the more he started hating me. It was shocking, it had a terrible effect on my relationship with my brother as well.

100. I don't remember attending any Children's Panels at South Annan.

#### *Healthcare*

101. I didn't see a psychiatrist or a psychologist at any time when I was in care. I was just seen as a problem child.

#### *Running away*

102. We did run away from South Annan when we were younger. We used to jump on the train at Fairley and go into Largs. We would steal pick 'n mix from Woolworths and then go back to the school. They didn't even know we were away. I never ran away to Glasgow at that time.

#### *Bed Wetting*

103. Bedwetting was an issue at South Annan for others but not for me. There was a boy called [REDACTED] and he was my Key Brother, so called because we had the same key worker. He used to wet the bed a lot. I remember we went fishing one time and we were under the same covers. I woke up in the morning in the back of the van and it was soaking because he had wet the bed. The staff weren't happy, they were shouting at him. They shouted at him in the home as well as the van. He didn't used to just wet the bed, he had faeces in his bed as well.

## **Discipline at South Annan**

104. There wasn't any discipline at South Annan or Seafield, they didn't use restraints. They were softly softly, it was very different from the other places.

## **Abuse at South Annan**

105. There was an older boy in South Annan called [REDACTED]. I don't know his surname. He was fifteen and I was still about ten years old. He had his own bedroom. It started off one day we were in his bedroom and he started masturbating. He ejaculated in front of us kids and he started to abuse us one at a time. There were about four or five of us younger kids there. One of the other boys there was called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] would touch me and get me to touch him, things like that.
106. I suffered physical bullying as well at South Annan. It was one boy in particular called [REDACTED]. He was older than me and he started picking on me one day and the staff just let it go. He gave me physical beatings and made threats about beatings. [REDACTED] used to stamp on my head and I had injuries on my face. I remember one time I went to one of the male members of staff about it but they more or less said just deal with it. I can't remember the name of that member of staff.
107. The staff noticed my injuries but I never got medical treatment for them. The staff did ask if I wanted to report it but I couldn't report it. If you report it you get labelled a grass, and it gets worse. I saw that happening to other kids in every home I was in. [REDACTED] bullied a boy called [REDACTED] and he went to the staff. The staff went to [REDACTED] and told him what [REDACTED] had said and it just got worse for him. [REDACTED] was about the same age as me, I don't remember his second name.
108. The beatings from [REDACTED] ended because he got older and left and he went to a unit for older boys. I then became one of the older boys after we moved to Seafield at Ardrossan. That's when I decided I wasn't going to be a victim any more, or at least that's what I tried to do.

109. We used to get taken to Inverclyde National Sports Centre when we were at Seafield. The gymnastics teacher there, he abused a few of us. His name was HKD something. He abused me when I was nine or ten years old. He was a predator and at that age we didn't know there was anything wrong with it. The way he used to carry on with us, it was like he was having a laugh but he would go for our private parts all the time, slapping our arses. It came out about fifteen years ago that that's what he was doing. Another boy and a lassie came out and said that he had been tampering with them. None of the staff from Seafield knew about it at the time.

### **Reporting of abuse at South Annan**

110. I think there were situations where kids had gone to staff about being abused by [REDACTED] but there wasn't any action taken.
111. There were a few times I reported boys together, to the staff. There were boys together from the age of eight to twelve years old. The staff would come up with me and see the boys together, touching each other and the staff never done anything about it. I think Eric and Ricky were two of the staff members I told. They acknowledged it, they saw it but never did anything. They would send one of the boys to their own room but looking back on it, it seemed to be normal.
112. The staff were more family oriented. They took more interest and they took you to their family homes. They tried to understand what was wrong with us, but I still didn't disclose any of the abuse I had suffered.

### **Leaving South Annan**

113. I had been at South Annan quite a while when it closed and I got moved to Seafield in Ardrossan. Seafield was like the open part of South Annan and they must have decided Seafield wasn't worth it, or they sold the building, or the lease was up.

### **Seafield 1994/1995 to 1997**

114. It was the same staff when we went to Seafield but I preferred South Annan because of the grounds. In Seafield it was more segregated units whereas in South Annan we were in one unit. The two units at Seafield were Clyde View and Arran House. I was in Clyde View.

#### *Schooling*

115. The schooling at Seafield was different, it was organised classes. Because of what was going on in my life I couldn't concentrate at school.

### **Leaving Seafield**

116. My behaviour started to get worse at Seafield. I was starting to run away into Ardrossan, buying fireworks, picking on other boys. I was just rebelling. I got moved on from Seafield because I was just too much of a problem child. I was told in school I was bad and I was getting moved. I was devastated. I was about twelve years old.

### **St Phillips School, Airdrie - 1997**

117. I then went to St Phillips when I was about twelve years old. They had taken me for a visit to St Phillips and it looked like a good school. They showed me round and then a placement came up within a couple of weeks and my social worker took me to St Phillips. I just had a bag of clothes with me.

## **Routine at St Phillips School, Airdrie**

### *First day*

118. We first went to the main building. It was one of the unit managers who met me and we drove up to my unit. There were three different units Bute, Arran, and Loch Islay. Arran and Loch Islay were for older boys, Bute was for younger boys. The three units were all in the main grounds but they were quite far apart, we drove to my unit from the main building. Going into the unit all the other boys were sniffing about asking who I was. It was like a dog going into a new enclosure. People asking me where I came from, things like that. There were about ten or fifteen boys in Bute unit from age ten to about fourteen. There were about forty to fifty boys at St Phillips.
119. Downstairs was the living room, dining room, and toilets. Upstairs, it was just corridors and that's where all the bedrooms were.

### *School*

120. Because of bullying, a member of staff would have to take me from class to class. It was the only way they could stop me from getting battered. The first chance I would get I would run away.
121. School was alright when I was there. If you did misbehave there was a time out building next to the education block. It would mean five or six men restraining you. You would end up with carpet burns from resisting them restraining you. I taught myself how to read and write when I was on the run by reading road signs and things.

### *Trips/Holidays*

122. At the start they used to take us camping for two weeks at a time to Loch Morar. Most of those trips were dreadful as well because the staff would be drinking when we were in bed. The staff who did that were HKF, HKG, HKE, and HKH.



HKH . HKF would terrorise us and throw us off the pier, and Loch Morar was supposed to be the coldest Loch in Europe.

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

123. I didn't have a support worker at St Phillip's. My social worker did visit me at St Phillip's, I can remember going to meetings about my behaviour. Sometimes my family would come for these meetings. They asked why I was absconding but I didn't tell them. By that time I was emotionally drained.
124. I can remember going to Children's Panels too. Every time I got charged with a new offence they had another Panel. It was just a slap on the wrist from the Panel, I never really understood what they were having Panels for, I never felt like my voice was heard at the Panels. I didn't have a lawyer representing me at Children's Panels, just the social worker.

#### **Foster care while at St Phillips**

125. Because my mum and dad weren't taking me home I started getting weekends to foster parents. I was on and off to different foster parents. There was one in Alloa, one in Cumbernauld, and one in Bo'Ness. I loved it in my foster placements. I was in a normal family where I could be a normal kid. I went to foster parents in Alloa called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They wanted to adopt me but my mum and dad put the blockers on it.
126. The one in Cumbernauld was an older man and wife and they were brilliant. One of the boys I grew up with at school was there as well but because my mum and dad put the blockers on them adopting me it fucked my life even more.
127. I had a befriender from when I was in South Annan as well, all the way up to St Phillip's and he wanted to adopt me but my mum and dad put the blockers on that too.

### *Running away*

128. When we started running away, however long we were away for, that's how long we had to sit on the Time Out Chair. It could be five, six, or ten hours. We would be allowed off the chair for lunch and things, then back on the chair.
129. Then in 1997, I was thirteen years old and I had run away from St Philips. I was in Glasgow City Centre on the way to my auntie's house. I was making my own way there from Airdrie to Springburn. I met two guys and a lassie I had seen before. They were in their thirties, I can't remember their names. I had been in their company before in the town and because the woman was there I thought I could trust them. They offered to give me a lift and they gave me a drink of Buckfast in the back of a motor. That's all I can remember. They kidnapped me for a week and abused me. Now, the two men are in this prison for murdering that woman a few years ago. When I woke up the woman was trying to give me water and I could feel blood between my bum cheeks. I could see blood on the bed. I don't know where it was that they took me. The only thing I could remember on the way there was the smell of sea air. Thankfully, after a week, they dropped me off in Glasgow city centre. I didn't make any formal report about it. I did try to talk to the staff but they were suggesting I was a rent boy because I came back wearing new clothes.
130. I used to get terrorised constantly in St Phillips, I used to run away to get away from it. After the abduction, I just wanted to get back. I made my own way back and a member of staff <sup>HKE</sup> got a phone call from another member of staff, <sup>HKF</sup>. They asked who had been on the run and <sup>HKE</sup> said that I had been. <sup>HKF</sup> blamed me for breaking in to his house. When the other boys got to hear about this, I couldn't get any peace. All I wanted to do was have a bath but they were all round me and I still had to do my time on the Time Out chair. Because I had come back in new clothes, boys were asking me if I was a rent boy. You just couldn't talk to these people. No one asked me where I had been or what happened, I was just treated as a bad boy. Other times I had absconded I got caught shoplifting so they just assumed that's



what I was doing. Any time I went to my parents' house and tried to tell them, my dad just handed me into the police station, so there was no point going there.

131. I had a nervous breakdown when I was thirteen years old and I tried to kill myself. I [REDACTED] I nearly suffocated. I woke up in the morning thankfully. No one knew what had happened.
132. I didn't want to stay there after what happened when I ran away, but I didn't want to stay and get beaten up all the time either. They ended up taking my clothes and trainers off me to try and stop me from running away, so I would stash trainers, clothes, and money outside in the grounds. It meant when I came back after running away, I only had to stay there that night and I would be able to run away again in the morning.
133. When I was running away I was committing crime through the people I was meeting. I was getting involved in the underworld when I was stealing perfume and aftershave. I never had a childhood, I started stealing cars when I was thirteen years old.
134. Another time when I was thirteen, I was at my cousin's house in Milton in Glasgow. He was smoking heroin. I was in his bedroom and he was lying sleeping. His girlfriend said, "Try this." Her name was [REDACTED], she would have been in her mid-twenties. She gave me a metal pipe and she blew into my mouth. It was as if all my problems had disappeared. That's what introduced me to drugs.
135. When I went back to St Phillip's I was smoking cannabis, everybody in the school was smoking it. When I started taking bits of cannabis back from my cousin's house in Milton, I was making pals. I started fitting in and got respect. The more I took back, the less I got bullied. The staff at St Phillips were aware of our drug use but it was just swept under the carpet. If they found it, they would put it in the bin and people would get time out. Some of the older boys had dads who were gangsters so I learned about drugs from them. Some of their parents were drug addicts on speed and Valium. That's where I learned how to commit crime and how to steal cars.

## *Discipline*

136. One thing that stood out at St Phillips was Time Out. It was a chair behind a pillar against a wall in the main living room. If you swore, you got thirty seconds Time Out. If you kept going you would get more time added on. You had to sit there and not talk. If you did talk, you had to start the Time Out again. I ended up sitting in that chair every day. That became a big part of my life. It wasn't a big part of my life to begin with but it did become a large part.
137. When I first went to St Phillips School everything was fine, I went to school, I had a great life. I was just coming in to my teenage years. I joined the Army Cadets in Airdrie. I loved it, I was training to be a sniper in the Army. I was in the Cadets for two years. That came to an end because I was absconding so much.

## **Abuse at St Philips School, Airdrie**

138. If I was getting bullied at St Phillip's, staff like <sup>HKE</sup> and <sup>HKF</sup> would tell me to stick up for myself, they made out it was my fault.
139. Certain members of staff used to organise thirty second square go's between us. One member of staff that did that was called <sup>HKL</sup>. He was on the nightshift and he used to be allowed to smoke. He would organise square go's between boys when he was on nightshift on his own.
140. Years after I was in St Phillips, I would have been about fourteen or fifteen years old, I was out with my parents outside Dunoon. <sup>HKF</sup> a member of staff from St Phillips saw me and thought I had absconded from somewhere. He had it in for me because he believed that I had broken into his house. He told me that the police told him that they found my fingerprint on a concrete slab at his house. He abducted me and said he was going to do all sorts to me but then he thought better of it and I got back to my mum and dad. My parents contacted the police but no action was taken against <sup>HKF</sup>.

### **Reporting of abuse at St Philips School, Airdrie**

141. I never made any report of abuse while I was at St Phillips.

### **Leaving St Philips School, Airdrie**

142. They decided that because of my absconding they were going to put me in a secure unit. When I left St Phillip's School, I went to Rossie Farm School.

### **Rossie Farm, Montrose - 1999**

143. Rossie Farm was a secure unit so I wasn't allowed to go out when I felt like it. By that time I was institutionalised so it just felt like Newfield except I was locked in. I can't remember much about Rossie Farm School.

### **Routine at Rossie Farm**

#### *First day*

144. I was at Rossie Farm School for about eleven months when I was fifteen years old. I was taken there from a police station by emergency social workers. It was after I was caught when I had absconded. They told me they were moving me because of my absconding.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

145. I had my own room at Rossie Farm. It just had a bed, a chest of drawers, and a TV. We were locked in at night.

### *School*

146. Rossie Farm was good. It was structured and I got an education there. I did my Standard Grades and SVQ's at Rossie Farm School. I got 12 SQA's in English, science, modern studies, P.E. and other subjects I can't remember. I got Standard Grade English and maths. The maths teacher was really good.

### *Leisure time*

147. There was a swimming pool in Rossie Farm School. You would get taken out in handcuffs to go to the swimming pool. They also used to put us in handcuffs to go on walks round the grounds of the school with a member of staff. They were called Held walks.

### *Trips/Holidays*

148. They took us on trips to the cinema.

### *Visits*

149. My Social Worker would come and visit and I would get given a day pass so that she could take me out. You had to build up to getting a day out. There was basic, standard, and enhanced, based on your behaviour. She took me into Montrose or to the beach. She would ask me how I was getting on, ask about home leaves.
150. My mum and dad did start coming to visit me at Rossie Farm and I did get home leaves but I just felt like a stranger. By this time my mum and dad had moved. They stayed eleven miles outside Dunoon so if I went on a home leave I was just stuck.

### *Discipline*

151. We were put in restraints and put on the silent cell. There was only one silent cell, just a room with a plastic mat. That could happen if you were fighting or for smashing your

room up. That happened quite a lot, where you would have five or six staff restraining you.

152. There used to be a call sign on the radio, "Bravo, bravo, bravo." Then all the staff used to rush to the person who made the call. Sometimes the staff would carry you, rather than just restraining you. They would carry you to the silent cell and you would be there for two or three hours.

### **Abuse at Rossie Farm**

153. I didn't suffer any abuse at Rossie Farm. There were a lot of sexual relationships between the boys and the girls. The staff knew about it but they turned a blind eye. There was one female member of staff who was involved with a resident and they ended up getting married. I can't remember the name of the member of staff, she must have been in her thirties.

### **Leaving Rossie Farm**

154. I can't remember where I went to after Rossie Farm School. There are a lot of details about the different places I have been in that I can't remember. There were a couple of times I was in Cardross Assessment Centre.

### **Cardross Assessment Centre - 2000**

155. Cardross was an assessment centre. I was in there for a few weeks a couple of times.

### **Routine at Cardross**

156. Cardross was shocking. It was just for older boys and there was a lot of bullying again.

### *School*

157. There was schooling at Cardross but I can't remember anything about it.

### *Leisure time*

158. The thing I remember most was that I saw Braveheart for the first time when I was in Cardross. We watched that in a film class.

### *Visits*

159. My social worker didn't come and see me at Cardross, I was only there until they found another place for me. I was at Cardross twice for short periods.

### **Abuse at Cardross**

160. [REDACTED] he was known by all those different names but I don't know why, he was a bully. He took me on the run with him. That was the first time I absconded from Cardross, the first time I stayed out overnight. We stayed at his brother's house in Springburn. There was [REDACTED], his brother, and another guy. They were making threats that they were going to tie me up and rape me. It was frightening. The next morning I managed to get out of the house and handed myself in at Springburn police station. I didn't tell them what had happened, I just got taken back to Cardross.
161. There was a lot of bullying at Cardross, a lot of violence. I was injured physically and mentally. It wasn't just [REDACTED] that bullied me, there were others. The staff were aware that bullying went on but they wanted an easy time. I can't remember the names of any of the members of staff.
162. I don't have any good memories from Cardross.

### **Leaving Cardross**

163. When I absconded from Cardross, I got caught and got taken to the police station and I got taken straight from there to Kerelaw by the social worker and the police.

### **Kerelaw, Stevenston - 2000**

#### **Routine at Kerelaw**

164. Kerelaw was just the same as Cardross, it was a secure unit, it was fenced off. It was just a baby jail.
165. It was just constant bullying by all the older boys. Some of the staff were alright, some were just intimidating. There were no members of staff like Neil Armstrong at Kerelaw, none of them took any particular interest in me.

#### *School*

166. The school was shocking. It was mediocre, it was just do what you want to do. Participate if you want to participate, don't if you don't.

#### *Discipline*

167. There was a lot of Time Out at Kerelaw, you could be put to your room for hours. You could be put to your room for swearing, fighting, things like that and you were locked in.
168. The restraints in there were really bad. I don't remember any particular members of staff as being bad for restraints, it was just generally like that with staff. Some didn't do it, some did and some were worse than others. You would have both your arms

twisted right up your back at the same time, you would get hurt. They would also grab your legs, it took six members of staff to do it. It was called Getting Turkey'd Up.

### **Abuse at Kerelaw**

169. You were getting attacked all the time. You were getting threatened all the time. Other boys would talk other boys into doing it. It was just stressful.

### **Leaving Kerelaw**

170. I was just turning sixteen years of age. I managed to bide my time for six weeks. I was bidding my time to get away from Kerelaw. Then members of staff took me on an escorted trip to the cinema in Kilmarnock and I absconded. I was away for six months.
171. During that period, my aunty took me in and I stayed with her on the south side of Glasgow. She understood what had happened to me when I was younger. I didn't have any social work involvement at that time, they didn't know where I was. I managed to stay out of trouble for six months, the police didn't know where I was. It really felt like an escape. I fitted in and I was accepted. I wasn't a victim any more.
172. My time leaving care could have been handled better. You are meant to get a Leaving Care grant, get set up with a house, I never got any of that. Any time I went back to care with new clothes, they took the clothes off me and I never got them back.
173. Then drugs and drink became a big factor in my life. Drugs such as ecstasy, acid, and cocaine. This was as I was turning sixteen years of age. I started stealing cars and ended up tied in with the a criminal family. They ended up taking me under their wing and I stayed with them. I was getting respect for what I did.
174. I phoned Kerelaw one day because I wanted to go back, I don't know why. They said they didn't have a bed there for me anymore. Then they took me to Bell Street



Children's Panel and told me my supervision order was getting lifted. I was quite scared about that. No one asked me about whether the supervision order should be terminated. That was me cut loose from the social work. Then I ran away again.

175. After that I went to Polmont Young Offenders Institute. I got thirty days for theft. That was from Paisley Sheriff Court. I remember the court preparing reports about me, I saw a social worker but I don't think they spoke to the social workers who had been involved in my care. It was a terrifying experience going through the adult court system. I got sixty days and I did thirty days.
176. I was in Kibble for a short period as well. It is just a blur because I was always absconding. I think I was only in there for about three months. That was when I was about sixteen years old, maybe. Every day a member of staff just sat in a room with me. They sat on a chair and I sat on the floor because I used to run away constantly.
177. Anything that I had of my own, that they hadn't given me, they took off me. Anything I had been bought by my family was taken from me. It was like taking my identity.

#### **Polmont Young Offenders Institution - 2001**

178. Polmont was terrifying. There were so many beatings from staff, so many beatings from other inmates, because I was a first-timer. I was in the under 21's, the worst hall in the jail.

#### **Routine at YOI Polmont**

179. I got told about Open Secret when I went to Polmont. Open Secret is a charity dealing with abuse in care. I was in a disciplinary cell and I was suicidal. I was about 17 or 18, it wasn't my first sentence. I was doing a sentence of three years and eleven months. I had several other periods of custody in Polmont. It was the first time I opened up and

spoke about the abuse I had suffered in childhood. My support worker listened to me, it was the first time anyone had. I was involved with Open Secret for about eight years.

### *School*

180. There wasn't education like school classes but there were more work parties. I was in the engineers doing welding.

### *Leisure time*

181. I just sat about and played cards all day most of the time.

### *Discipline*

182. You would be restrained in Polmont and the staff would put your arm right up your back. They would run into doors with you when they were taking you to segregation.

### **Abuse at YOI Polmont**

183. I first encountered staff violence when I smashed my cell up. <sup>HKI</sup> was the Unit Manager at Polmont. He came in to my cell and said, "You think you are a wee gangster?" and he battered the shit out of me. <sup>HKI</sup> was in his forties. There were three of them when he beat me up. One of the other two got called <sup>HJX</sup>, I don't know the other one's name. They were punching and kicking me on the body, everywhere from the neck down. That went on for about five minutes. It was sore where they had hit me. I was quite a big boy when I was sixteen but I was terrified by the beating I got from these men. I didn't know how long it was going to last.
184. I saw some boys getting really battered by staff, not the same staff who battered me. I saw Mr <sup>HJY</sup> battering a boy. If boys smashed up their cells, the staff would go in

one cell at a time and you just heard boys screaming. I saw boys with burst lips, black eyes, and sore mouths.

185. I saw proper violence in Polmont. Boys were getting slashed, getting stabbed. It was blatant, it wasn't being hidden. I lost count of the number of times I saw boys being slashed in Polmont in the course of the times I was in there up until I was 21 years of age.
186. I did get beaten up in Polmont but most of the problem was psychological. More of my pals came in from where I was from and I was getting respect for being involved in things I shouldn't have been involved in so the bullying stopped.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Polmont**

187. I never made any report of abuse while I was there.

#### **Leaving Polmont**

188. Whenever I was finishing a sentence at Polmont there was no support for me going back into the community when I was released.
189. In 2003 I was involved in a serious car crash, I fractured my skull in three places. I was in hospital for three days but then they put me in Polmont. When I was released from hospital to Polmont, they gave me some Cocodamol and put me in a single cell on the top landing and just left me to get on with it. I have been numb to everything ever since then. The courts haven't tried anything different with me, it's just been a revolving door into prison. The courts don't know what I have been through. It is difficult to talk to a lawyer about all the abuse I have suffered, so the lawyer can't explain it to a judge.

## **HMP Barlinnie - 2007**

### **Abuse at Barlinnie**

190. I was addicted to heroin by the time I went to Barlinnie. I was out exercising and there were boys from a different scheme in at the same time. I was fighting with one of them and another one slashed me from behind. I had to get stitches and it has left a scar.

### **Leaving Barlinnie**

191. I have done seventeen years in the jail since I was sixteen. I am now thirty seven. I have about 250 convictions. I didn't have any after care support after leaving any of my care placements, I just moved straight into the prison system.

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

192. I always wanted to be a soldier but I got my first conviction in 1997 and I got a dishonourable discharge from the Army Cadets. That ruined my chosen career.
193. I have a partner now and she has been great. I have a house and a dog at home waiting for me when I get out of prison.

### **Impact**

194. The biggest impact my time in care has had on me is the mental trauma. It has affected things like relationships and trust. I don't know how to trust people. I have tried to get help for my mental health problems but the mental health services in prison don't want to label you in case they get it wrong. They don't want to be responsible for labelling you. They don't want to take responsibility so I have had no medication or anything.

195. I want to sue the people who were responsible for my care because they ruined my life. If they've done it to me, then they've done it to others too. I will have to see a civil lawyer about that.
196. I became a stranger to my brothers and the rest of my family. I am still a stranger from my family. I haven't stayed with my mum and dad for more than seven months since I was seven years old. I blame them for putting me in care, for what happened to me.
197. My issues with substance abuse are definitely linked to the abuse I suffered. It was a way of making it go away. I started with the incident where I was kidnapped and abused. I started making out in my head that it was all a dream, like it never happened. I am clean from drugs now, I have been clean for about eighteen months. I did it myself. I had to break it down to rock bottom, to find out who I was. I wore that many masks that I had lost my identity. There is a lot of help out there. With my past being a criminal, there was always something missing. My past follows me but it is getting better. With what I am doing now, I have never felt better.
198. I am now in the process of setting up my own security company and want to run that when I get out of prison. I used to steal [REDACTED]. I wrote to Virgin [REDACTED] three years ago [REDACTED] and they wrote back to me. Now I have a company in England [REDACTED] I have got someone who helps me. She has got a Masters in Business Accounts from Napier University. She has helped me set up an Instagram page for my security company. I want to set up a charity for boys like me. I have started writing a book, I will be the first person to write a book about male abuse in care in Scotland.
199. My time in care definitely had an impact on my education. I never really went to school because of the bullying. I am self-taught. When I did go to school I enjoyed it and I learned the basics.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

200. I have never made any report about the abuse I suffered in care. Speaking to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry is the first time I have discussed these things in any official capacity.
201. I did previously speak to Open Secret and that was a form of counselling but that finished about ten years ago and I have had nothing since then. I would like some more support. Obviously I know I suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I would like to see if that can go away, I don't know if it can.

### **Records**

202. I recently got my records. I only recently found out from my lawyer that I could get a copy of my records. My lawyer has helped me a lot over the past three years and has helped me to understand how I can get a hold of these things.

### **Lessons to be learned**

203. People in charge of children in care need to be more hands on, they need to be more family orientated. What would have helped me was having staff members to talk to, for them not to be the enemy.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

204. I hope that abuse in care won't happen again, because it ruins children's lives. It is devastating. I see the perpetrators of abuse in prison, they are old men now. 85 per cent of people brought up in care are in prison. I think I heard that statistic in a course I was on. Some are boys like those that I have mentioned. [REDACTED] is doing a life sentence now. That will have been the impact of what happened to him in care. He

got abused in care and he got put on suicide watch in [REDACTED] prison. There was a sex offender in that ward with him and [REDACTED] murdered him because he was an abuser. It might have been [REDACTED] that happened, I'm not sure.

**Other information**

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

Signed <sup>HKC</sup> [REDACTED] .....

Dated <sup>HKC</sup> 28/9/21 .....