

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HWR

Support person present: No

1. My name is HWR. My date of birth is [REDACTED], 1964. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. When I was in Dr Guthrie's I was made to take the name HWR which was the name of my stepfather, the man that married my mother, [REDACTED]. I always tried to keep my own name, HWR as much as possible. To this day I am adamant my surname is HWR. I will not have his name whatsoever. The name on my birth certificate is HWR. It does have at the bottom, 'Adopted', but I ignore that.
3. I was born in Glasgow then moved out to East Kilbride. My parents were divorced in 1968 or 1969 and we were brought up by my mother and grandmother until 1972, until she met [REDACTED].
4. I have two brothers and two sisters. There's [REDACTED], who is the oldest, then [REDACTED] who is about a year younger. He's about sixty or sixty one now. There's [REDACTED], then myself and my young sister [REDACTED]. It should have been [REDACTED], a twist on [REDACTED], my grandfather's name, but she changed the spelling of it. She is a year younger than me. [REDACTED] had two of his own kids, from his first marriage. Their names are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My mum's name was [REDACTED]. From what we were led to believe, her and [REDACTED] were both working on the Kingston Bridge in Glasgow.

He was a truck driver and she was working in the canteen when they met, so the story goes. But [REDACTED], my older sister is possibly his, we don't know. She was the only one of us with ginger hair and he had ginger hair.

5. I can't remember my biological father. His name was [REDACTED]. I only ever met him once and he said, "I'm not your father". This was at a wedding. About two years ago I found out that when we were kids he had actually moved across the road from us in East Kilbride. From his kitchen window he could look into our living room window. His new wife had kids of her own before she met him and as far as I'm aware we were playing with each other as kids. We never knew who they were or who he was at the time. It's a weird story. We didn't get any Christmas cards or birthday cards from him, even though he knew who we were. He just refused to acknowledge us.
6. Unbeknown to us at that age, we were virtually drummed out of East Kilbride, as it turned out [REDACTED] The people of East Kilbride didn't take too kindly to that. We were getting threats and so was he. He got us in the back of the car, all seven of us, and we ended up in Galway in Southern Ireland for two years. He tried to open a business, but it went pear shaped, through alcohol basically.
7. We left for Galway in 1973. I returned in 1975 and they came back in 1976. It was a great relief going to Kirkintilloch. It was difficult going to school in Ireland. We went to a Catholic school there and we were brought up as Protestants, we weren't really religious at all. So in the morning, when they had their prayers we just stood outside the class. I can't remember the name of the school.
8. After two years, my second oldest brother [REDACTED] and I, went to live with my aunt and grandmother as they had clubbed together to bring my two oldest brothers back to Britain, because we were living in neighbour's houses. We had been evicted for non-payment of rent. As kids we didn't know anything about that. It was only a couple of years later that we actually understood what had happened. My oldest brother, [REDACTED], didn't want to come back, so my aunt and grandmother said that I should

come back instead. I stayed with my aunt in Kirkintilloch and [REDACTED] stayed with my grandmother in East Kilbride.

9. I was ten or eleven when I returned from Ireland. [REDACTED] would have been about sixteen, he was born in 1958 or 1959. [REDACTED] was the year older and sitting his exams in Ireland and that's why he didn't want to leave. So that's why I was brought over in his place. [REDACTED] tried to open a business with a friend, who was English, an electrical sort of thing. The money being made was spent on alcohol, so it went bust pretty much straight away. In Galway the nine of us stayed in a three bedroomed house, no electricity or anything like that. We used gas and candles. My aunt in Kirkintilloch was called [REDACTED], it was a big relief going there. She was my mum's sister.
10. About seven or eight months later, my mum and [REDACTED] appeared back, in Edinburgh. They went to the council and told them they were there to get me back. When I was between the house and the assessment centre I'm not aware if the school knew what was happening, but the next thing I knew, I was being taken out of the school by the social work and taken to a children's panel and placed in the assessment centre. I was basically a punch bag for [REDACTED]. He wouldn't hit his own two kids, he wouldn't hit my little sister and he wouldn't touch the older boys, they would hit him back. Anytime anything went wrong, or something happened in the house he would take it out on me. By this time both of them were alcoholics.
11. When I was five I started school at Allers primary school in East Kilbride. It's now a housing estate. I was staying with my mum and granny then. We stayed with them until she married him in [REDACTED], 1972. He was removed from his house because he [REDACTED]. His children, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], moved to Edinburgh to stay with their granny. It was about five minutes from our house. He got two years in Saughton prison. They called it compassionate or something like that. I was told that he was out driving his truck all the time and the boiler broke in the kitchen and she had been hiding all the unpaid bills behind it and seemingly he just lost the rag. But looking back I can see how it happened, because it happened to my mother as well,

the physical abuse and everything. He started physically abusing me literally right away also.

12. My mother and [REDACTED] moved over to Edinburgh in 1976. The whole family were there. [REDACTED] stayed in East Kilbride with my gran. The family had moved to Niddrie. I don't know the address. Most of the time I was at my aunt [REDACTED]. The only reason they wanted me back was for the child benefit. My aunt [REDACTED] had taken me to a lawyers to start the adoption process and they had to ask my mother and [REDACTED] permission. They totally refused, due to the money. I don't know how much money they would have got back in those days, but they were alcoholics basically. They would have been claiming for seven children. I would have loved to have been adopted by aunt [REDACTED]. She couldn't have children. She actually adopted from birth. Her or my uncle [REDACTED]. I'm not sure which one, but one of them couldn't have kids. My aunt had always favoured me, as the youngest boy. Even when I was young they would always come through to make sure I was ok and bring me sweets and things like that. The happiest I was in my childhood was when I was with my aunt and my grandmother.

13. From day one I hated being in Edinburgh because I knew the abuse from [REDACTED] was going to carry on. I knew exactly what to expect as soon as I arrived. When my aunt and uncle brought me through from Kirkintilloch mum and [REDACTED] couldn't even be bothered waiting in the house, they were in the pub. I think the kids were at school.

14. I started going to Niddrie primary school and then moved to Castlebrae High School. I think the school picked up on my behaviour that something was wrong. I wouldn't join in with any of the other kids. I don't even have friends now. I'm very wary of everybody. I have no trust in anybody. I actually remember quite vividly, when [REDACTED], my mum, was on her own, before she married [REDACTED], she took me down to a psychiatrist in Hamilton. All I can remember is sitting in a room with toys and they left me there. Unbeknown to me at that age, it was a two-way mirror and they were watching me to see what I would do and I just sat there and didn't move. I

remember going to the social work office in East Kilbride, but again, I have no idea why.

15. I remember being at the primary school, then on the first day of high school I remember him embarrassing me. I was hunting around the house and he asked what I was looking for. I told him I was looking for trousers, he said I had shorts, I can wear them. They were grey shorts from primary school. My little sister [REDACTED] would sneak a pair of trousers out for me and I would change in the toilets in the high school, so that I wouldn't be embarrassed. He literally didn't care as long as he was getting money from the child benefit or dole money, for alcohol. My mum was starting to drink heavily. She was getting a lot of physical abuse from him in Niddrie, then they moved along to Bingham and the abuse there was seemingly horrendous. By that time I was either at the assessment centre or Dr Guthrie's. They moved when I had left.
16. In the first year of high school the social work got involved and they picked me up from school and I attended a children's panel. They met me at the gate and took me up. My mum and [REDACTED] were at the panel. The result was that I was taken to Howdenhall Assessment Centre on a care and protection order. They didn't contest this, they had all the paperwork to sign me over. At the time, I didn't think anything of it, I was getting away from him. I told the social work what was happening at the time. They saw it at the second panel I attended. He was domineering everything that went on. I was just sitting there, noticeably afraid. They picked up on it and asked him to leave. He went out and they asked me if I wanted to go home and I said I didn't, so they brought them back into the room and told them I was going back.
17. The social work took me straight from the panel to the assessment centre at Howdenhall. This was the [REDACTED] 1977. I was twelve years old. I can't remember the name of the social worker that took me. He was the first one that I had and I heard from other boys that he was notorious for never being at meetings. When I was at Dr Guthrie's I saw a social worker three times, and one of them was on my last day. The name I have in my head is Mr Hamilton, but I couldn't be sure.

Howdenhall Assessment Centre, Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh

18. I know now that the place has changed to a high secure unit, so I don't know if the layout has changed, but as you went in the front door, opposite were three or four offices. There was the headmaster's, the psychiatrist's and maybe the head social worker's offices. You went down the corridor and the junior common room was on the left. Further along and downstairs was the senior common room for boys. The females were separate and I was never in there, so I couldn't speak about that. To go to the female side you would go down the corridor and to the right and this would take you into the dining room. From the dining room on the other side was the female side of the centre.

19. Upstairs there were corridors with locked doors. On the left hand side were the bedrooms. Opposite the bedrooms were showers, toilets and changing rooms dotted along the corridor. There were classrooms, which were split up into whatever age group you were in. I couldn't say what age the oldest ones were in the place because the juniors weren't allowed to mix with the seniors. I think at thirteen or fourteen you moved down to the seniors. I think there were boys there about eight or nine years old. We never mixed with the girls. Both sides were totally separate. I couldn't tell you how many junior boys were in the place.

20. There was a Mr and Mrs **HBQ-HBR** that worked there. She worked on the girls' side and he worked on the boys' side. They were really good. He was a care worker. They were given so many boys to look after and mentor. Unfortunately I got **EWA** **EWA** as my care worker. He had the same role as Mr **HBQ**. They always wore civilian clothes.

Routine at Howdenhall Assessment Centre, Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh

First day

21. I was taken in to the assessment centre, taken upstairs, showered, changed into the uniform and taken back downstairs and told to sit in the common room. That was

literally it. I sat there wondering, what do I do now? Nobody told me anything except showing me my room and told me to do as I was told. It was one of the teachers because they also acted as care workers, looking after you at break times, etc, but I can't remember his name. There were other care staff that worked in the evening when the teaching staff left.

22. There were usually three to four boys in each room and there were fifteen to twenty rooms in the junior boys alone. It was single beds in the room. I was taken there in the afternoon as I remember being picked up by the social worker at lunch time and taken to the panel.
23. I was told where I was sleeping and told to do as I was told or I would get the belt or be locked up. The boys were in their own little cleecks in the common room and I was told who I was with and they spoke to me in the room. I kept myself to myself constantly. I was told what was expected of you by the boys I shared a room with. That's the only way you would find anything out. I can't remember the names of any of the boys I shared a room with.

Mornings and bedtime

24. You were locked up overnight and if you needed the toilet you banged on the door and just hoped the janitor, night staff, was around. In the morning your door was unlocked, you made your bed then showered, dressed and went downstairs for breakfast. The junior boys would be in one part of the dining room, the girls in another and the senior boys at the bottom end. We never mixed. There was well over a hundred children there altogether. You sat in tables of four, sitting with the boys from your room. You would queue up, collect your breakfast, then sit at your table to eat.
25. From breakfast you would go into your dorm room until about nine o'clock and then you'd split up and go down into your classrooms until break time. At break you would go into your common room, then return to the classroom. It was just like a normal school day. We would go into the dining room for lunch, then into the common room

and watch TV. After lunch we would return to class until about four o'clock then return to the common room and wait for dinner. After dinner there would be art activities in the classrooms, if you were picked, if you'd behaved. If you weren't you just sat in the common room until about nine o'clock, then went upstairs, showered then locked in your room until the morning. There was nothing in the dorm except your bed. No TV, no radio. You weren't even allowed to speak. That's when the abuse started from EWA [REDACTED].

26. There was nothing in the common room except a TV. There were no games, nothing, just a TV on the wall. The staff would put it on. There was always a member of staff there. There were staff members everywhere. There wasn't leisure time, it was just the time you weren't at school, eating or upstairs in your dorm. The place was completely secure. You exercised in a small yard in the middle of the place. If the weather was ok and the staff could be bothered you would go out there for an hour or so and walk around in a circle. It was literally like a young offender's place. That's what they based it on.

Mealtimes / Food

27. The food was bulk cooked, so there was no flavour and no taste, it was just bland. The breakfast was something like Weetabix, Corn Flakes and toast. That was it. Lunch and dinner were bland. It was take it or leave it. There was no choice. If you didn't like it you went hungry.
28. There was a tuck shop on a Saturday night, but the money had to come from your parents, so obviously I didn't have any money to buy anything. Now and again, my aunt [REDACTED] and uncle [REDACTED] gave me some money when they came to visit, but I got nothing from my mum or [REDACTED].

Washing / bathing

29. There was one big long row of showers, like five or six cubicles with the shower heads, without the dividers. You walked in one end and came out the other. There

was no privacy. A member of staff would stand at the door, whoever opened your door in the morning. You couldn't have one when you wanted, it was in the morning and at night.

Clothing / uniform

30. The clothing was a uniform of a white shirt, trousers and black lace up plimsolls that we would wear at gym at normal school. I was given this on my first day. There was a laundry on site and your clothes had your name and room number on them, so they knew where to put them when washed. We were given pyjamas too. You never got to wear your own clothes. They were put in a basket that you used to get in swimming pools on a pole and they were locked away until you were going to a children's panel or going home.

School

31. The education was more like watching nature programmes on TV than doing normal schoolwork. There were about fifteen to twenty in my class. We stayed in the same classroom all day and had the same teacher. I can't remember what his name was.

Trips / Holidays

32. At the weekends the staff members would pick their favourites and they would take a group out in the minibus to a bothy they had somewhere up near Loch Leven. They would take the boys up there. I went up two or three times. You would stay there for the weekend, from the Friday night until the Sunday. We would walk in the hills. There would be a maximum of six at any one time. There would be two members of staff. The driver, who knew the area, and one of the normal members of staff. The staff member that was going would pick the boys that could go. The weekends were good there because you weren't locked up at night. You would watch TV in an actual living room. The meals were properly cooked by the staff and fresh rather than banging it out in bulk the week before. That was the only trips I went while I was in the assessment centre. We were in our uniform when we went on these trips. It was

Mr HBQ [REDACTED] that picked me to go to the bothy. Him and his wife at some point just clicked and they were always nice when they were speaking to me. Not just me, but other boys in the place too. They tried to give everyone a chance.

33. At weekends in the assessment centre, to break the boredom of sitting around all day, you would volunteer to go upstairs and sweep the floors and mop the corridors around the bedroom area and reception area, but you didn't have to do it. We didn't do any chores or work in the place.

Religious Instruction

34. One of the teachers was a bible basher and he was always trying to preach religion to you in class and took it really seriously if you laughed in class or made a mockery of it, but we didn't go to church or have to say prayers at any time. You just learned to keep well clear of that teacher. I can't remember his name.

Birthdays and Christmas

35. I was at Howdenhall over Christmas during my second spell there. I went home for it. I was given a kite by my mother and [REDACTED]. I was out for two or three days. I felt I was being forced to go and I didn't want to go at all. The kite was taken from me when I got back as you weren't allowed anything of your own. It would have been put with my clothes. I was back in before New Year, during my birthday. They didn't do anything for my birthday but I didn't expect it. It was just another day. One year my mother and [REDACTED] went to the DSS or the social services and were given new mattresses for us, and they gave them to us for our Christmas.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

36. My aunt [REDACTED] and uncle [REDACTED] came to visit me at weekends regularly from Kirkintilloch. We sat in the dining room. It was in the afternoon. They would leave me some money to spend at the tuck shop. My mum never visited as she was under [REDACTED] thumb, and he wouldn't let my brothers and sisters visit either. The only

time I saw them all was over Christmas that one year. My siblings and I were always close. We still are, we see each other quite regularly.

37. I think I saw a social worker about three times over my two spells in Howdenhall, the same as Guthrie's. I went to the pictures with him once. I think his name was Hamilton, it was the same one that took me there on my first day. We went to see 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'. He wanted to see it more than I did. The social worker never asked me how things were or how I was getting on and I didn't tell him.

Healthcare

38. I couldn't say if there was a nurse in the centre because I never needed to see one during my spells there. Looking back, I'm sure there was a local doctor from a practice up in somewhere like Liberton and they would call them and they would send someone along. I didn't need any medical treatment in all the time I was there.

Running away

39. I never tried to run away, I wasn't interested. I certainly wouldn't have went home. There were senior boys, when they were out gardening, who would run away and the police were informed right away. They would be brought back, given the belt and put in the cells for a week. I don't think any juniors ran away when I was there.

Bed Wetting

40. Nobody in my dorm had a problem with bedwetting, but it did happen and they would just have their sheets changed and made up their bed. You knew this because in the morning you would come out of your dorm and they would do a head count, like in the programme 'Porridge'. You would then walk down the corridor and see the sheets on the floor. I couldn't say how the staff dealt with it, because no-one in my dorm wet the bed.

Abuse at Howdenhall Assessment Centre, Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh

41. If you were caught swearing or were being mischievous you would get the belt from SNR [REDACTED] or you would be locked in a cell. It happened to me, I was a normal teenager. I got the belt about twice. You had to go to his office to get it. I think it was three or four times over the hands. The cells were literally like a police cell. A wooden bench, a mattress, a pillow and a blanket. There was a toilet in the corner. The longest I was in the cell was a week. I spoke to the psychologist about the abuse I was suffering and he told SNR [REDACTED] and I was told to shut my mouth and put in a cell. My meals were brought to me and I was taken for a shower after everybody else had been. I was put in for the night a few times for doing things like being cheeky to staff members. I went in for the week during my first time in the assessment centre. It was SNR [REDACTED] who put me there. I couldn't tell you his name. Him and his wife stayed in a house on site. I was twelve years old. The younger ones were put there at times too.
42. If you were caught talking in your dorm at night you were dragged out into the corridor and made to stand there spread eagled against the wall for maybe half an hour. You were then put back into your room. Various members of staff would do this. I think it came from one person, and then they all started doing it, It was EWA [REDACTED] who started it.
43. I don't know EWA [REDACTED] first name. That's all we knew him by. It was Mr EWA [REDACTED] to his face. He was in his thirties or forties. He was fat and stinking of alcohol. A typical middle aged fat guy. He worked different shifts, on a rota. He was a care worker and in charge of me and a few other boys. If he was on at night, maybe working until about ten o'clock, he would creep along the corridor once the lights were out and listen to hear anyone talking. He would come in, drag the boy out into the corridor, and make them stand spread-eagled against the wall for half an hour. This is where the sexual abuse started. It wasn't only myself he did this to. He would only ever bring one boy out at a time. All the boys knew about it and would say, "You don't want to be taken out by him at night, you know what will happen".

44. You stood spread-eagled at the wall, he would make you take your pyjama top off and start rubbing your chest, and work his way down, while pushing himself into your back with an erection. He then brought your hand round and made you stroke him.
45. Sometimes he would take you into the changing rooms and make you strip off totally and you were made to masturbate him. This happened to me about four times. I told the psychiatrist while he was showing me how to play chess and we were chatting away. I told him exactly what had happened. He immediately got up, left the office and came back with SNR [REDACTED] I was told under no circumstances to ever say or mention what I had said to anyone else again. I was then taken straight from his office to a cell for a week and I was told if I mention it again it would be longer. So I never mentioned it to anyone ever again.
46. EWA [REDACTED] didn't come to see me in the cell and the abuse never happened again. This was about the time Mr and Mrs HBQ-HBR [REDACTED] started being more friendly with me. They had heard what I had said and I don't know if they were taking care of me. From then on I never really had anything to do with him again. We weren't even allowed to be in the same room. So something had been done about it. I think he was still doing it with other boys as it was still the standing joke of the assessment centre of what would happen if he caught you talking at night. And that was happening right up until the day I left.

Leaving Howdenhall Assessment Centre and returning

47. Out of the blue I was told I was going home. I wasn't given much notice at all. The social work got involved again and I was taken to a panel and put back into the assessment centre. Again, at the panel I was asked if I wanted to go home and I said no. When I was at home the abuse from [REDACTED] continued. I didn't see any social workers while I was home. I think it was through the school that the social work got involved again, but I'm not sure. I know [REDACTED] wouldn't have anything to do with them at all. My mother and [REDACTED] took me to the panel and I was placed back into the assessment centre. When we were in the visitor room before the panel the social worker had to sit between them and me, because I just wouldn't sit next to

them. When we went in, the panel were asking questions and he was barking out his answers and then the panel told them they wanted to speak to me on my own. I was asked if I wanted to go home and I told them I didn't.

48. EWA was still there when I went back, but there was no more abuse. There was a school teacher, like care worker, who stayed on after school time, so my care was split between Mr HBQ and him. I can't remember his name. Mr EWA did not speak to me during my second time at the assessment centre.
49. It was the same routine the second time at the centre. Nothing ever changed. The only difference was that my aunt and uncle brought my brother to see me once and they brought to see me on another occasion. When I was being abused by , and knew that if they said anything, or reacted in any way, they would get it as well.

Reporting of abuse at Howdenhall Assessment Centre, Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh

50. I wasn't seeing the psychologist at the centre. He just asked me one day if I knew how to play chess. I told him I didn't and he asked if I wanted to learn. I said I do and we went into his office. That's when I told him and he went and told the headmaster. The only other time I mentioned it was jokingly to the other boys. This is the first time I have mentioned it since then. I haven't even told my partner in twenty-two years.

Leaving Howdenhall Assessment Centre, Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh

51. When I went to Dr Guthrie's, I was basically taken out of my class, taken upstairs and told to change into my own clothes and that was it. The social worker came and got me, the same one, and took me to a panel and that was it. Again, I was asked if I wanted to go home and I said no. I don't know why I didn't stay at the assessment centre and went to Dr Guthrie's. The social worker took me from the panel to there. My mother and were at the panel, but they didn't want me back anyway. They were still claiming child benefit for me. It was just a financial thing. He said to

me once, we don't want you here at the weekend as you are just another mouth to feed. This was when I went home one weekend from Guthrie's. By this time they were both alcoholics.

Dr Guthrie's List D School, Liberton Brae, Edinburgh

52. I went to Dr Guthrie's on [REDACTED] 1978. I was thirteen years old. It was the same social worker that took me there. I wasn't told I was going to a different place. They asked me if I wanted to go home, I said no. They told my mum and [REDACTED] what I'd said and decided I was remaining in care, but I wasn't told I'd be going to a different place. I was taken from the panel to Dr Guthrie's. I never thought anything of it, I was just glad to get out of the assessment centre.
53. Guthrie's was massive. We went up the driveway and in the front door. There was a big non-descript corridor all the way to the other end of the school. I was taken into one of the side rooms, which was like a meeting room, where I was met by one of the care workers or teachers, I can't remember who it was. I was taken up the stairs and told to have a shower and change into their uniform, shown where I'd be sleeping and taken down to the assembly hall, and that was it. Because it was late afternoon the classrooms were coming out and all the boys were coming in to the assembly hall. It was a room about fifty foot wide and at least a hundred and fifty foot long with rows and rows of chairs and a gap up the middle. I was told where to sit and informed that this was where the boys from my dorm sit. That's the only instructions I was given.
54. I met the boys I was sharing a dorm with. There were two main dorms at the front of the school, I can't remember the names of them, but they were big rooms, and there were another two big rooms at the back of the school. There were two smaller rooms, where four or five boys slept in each. I was in one of the big rooms. There were about twenty-five to thirty in each of the big dorms upstairs. There were about a hundred and twenty to a hundred and forty in the school, all boys. The girl's school was in Gracemount and they were kept separate from us at all times.

55. If you went in the front door, on the right hand side was the door to the assembly hall. If you went to the left there was a small corridor, where there were meeting rooms and offices for social workers and care workers. On the right hand side there was a set of stairs that led to the two front dormitories. There was a corridor leading from the front of the school to the back and there were the other two big dormitories there. On the bottom, you went along the corridor and there was a big trophy case that was empty and there was a door that led to the headmaster's house. You would pass the headmaster's office and then there were two medical rooms. After this was the stairs, then the dining hall and the kitchens at the bottom. Both sets of stairs led to a parade square. There was a woodwork room opposite this, as well as a boiler room. If you went through the lane, I was informed it was an old hospital building and it was too high, so they had turned them into classrooms. There was a swimming pool, the gym and the massive playing fields. [REDACTED] went in there to work as a care worker, as it's now an old folk's home, and I told her what it was before. The parade square is now gardens.
56. I got there in late afternoon, so from the assembly hall I went down to the dining room, we had our dinner, then went back up to the assembly room. From five thirty, six o'clock until about half past nine you had a choice of activities you could do. Sit and watch TV or go to the PE hall, music and that sort of thing. It was single beds in the rooms and you had a cabinet at the side of your bed. The matron or laundry staff would put the next day's underwear in, and any books or things that you might have. Nobody went over any rules or regulations. The boys told me what was happening and at what time, because the staff just weren't interested in the slightest.
57. The only two staff members I remember were [REDACTED] GBD who was a senior social worker and Mr [REDACTED] KEP, the P.E. teacher. I can't remember any other names, except the headmaster, who was Mr Guthrie. He was the great-grandson of the founder, Dr Guthrie.
58. Along with two other boys, I ran the cigarette and tobacco side of things every Sunday night and Monday morning. We would pick it up from where it was hidden on the Sunday night before the boys came back into the school from home and ran

things that way. The boys were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The three of us were inseparable. We were the same age. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in one dorm, which I was in, but they thought it best to split us up, so I was put into one of the smaller rooms. I can't remember when I was moved. I remember being in there quite a while, because it was opposite the night watchman's room. I think they were keeping an eye on me.

Mornings and bedtime

59. You were banged up every morning, shouted at, military style. Someone shouted, "Right, everybody up", that sort of thing. Then we would get a towel and go for a shower. When I first arrived in Guthrie's it was a walk through shower, then they decided to put in cubicle showers. So there was six or seven cubicles and you would line up and wait your turn. We would go back and get dressed and wait to be called to go down for breakfast. From there you went to the assembly hall and then split up to go to your classrooms that had been given to you. There were about twenty odd in each class. They had four classrooms in the old hospital and one upstairs next to the sewing room. I think there were six altogether. I was in the same classroom all the time. It was like school going through the years. So you had the juniors, who would move up, then when you were in your teens, you had like first year, second year, that sort of thing. You had one teacher until break, then a different teacher after break until lunch. Different teachers for different subjects.
60. You were supposed to sit in the dining room with the boys from your dorm but we sat with our mates mostly. At break time you would go to the parade square, then back to the class, then lunch in the dining room. Everybody ate together. After lunch it was back to the classroom until the end of the school day. You would then go out into the parade square, before going into the assembly hall. You would then go down for your dinner, back to the assembly room, then pick what you wanted to do that night. There was playing football, there was a swimming pool you could use, if they could be bothered opening it up, or you could sit and watch TV for the night. There were no games, like table tennis or pool. I think they had them but they were destroyed.

61. I don't know how old the youngest boys were, but as soon as you became sixteen you had to leave. Nobody stayed over sixteen. I left on [REDACTED] 1979, as that's when the school finished up [REDACTED] and I was sixteen on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
62. I remember we were allowed to sit downstairs until 'Top of The Pops' finished, then you would go upstairs and have a shower, so bedtime was roughly nine thirty. You weren't locked up, they couldn't do that because it was a major fire risk. Guthrie's was built about 1870 and when they were putting the cubicle showers in they lifted the linoleum and the floor boards and found between six and eight inches of wax. They investigated and found it was right throughout the school. It used to be for homeless kids, waifs and strays, when it first opened and they were made to bees wax the floor every day and it seeped through the wooden floor boards and built up. So the school were very cautious to lock you up overnight. You could go to the toilet overnight if you needed to.

Mealtimes

63. The food was bulk cooked but a bit better than the assessment centre. You did get options at lunch time and dinner time of different meats and potatoes or chips, things like that. I've seen the same coming out of army kitchens in my time. It's not something you would write home about.

Washing and bathing

64. You had a shower every morning and every night. When you go upstairs there were the shower rooms and the toilets, you went upstairs again and it was the dorms, which were parallel to each other. So you would go to the stairs, one dorm would have a shower first, then the next one, and the smaller rooms would go last, so that you weren't all queued up, waiting to go in at the one time. It was all spaced out and well organised.

Clothing

65. You had to wear the uniform all the time. It was a shirt, jeans and a denim jacket. Again, we wore black plimsolls on our feet. There were two women upstairs, at the end of one of the dorms and they mended all your clothes, or if you needed new stuff they made sure it was taken to your locker, and your name was stitched into every item of clothing.

Schooling

66. The schooling was very, very basic. They weren't trying to push anything on you to go and get an 'O' Level or an 'A' Level. In my time there nobody left with any qualifications. When I was fifteen, in my last year, they put me to Castlebrae High School, but that didn't work out because they wanted to put me into a certain class and I couldn't do it due to my lack of education, and they couldn't put me back to year one at fifteen years old. I don't know who's idea it was to put me to Castlebrae, I think it was a trial for me and three or four of the older boys. I lasted about two days, maybe a week at the most. I was there either in the morning or the afternoon. I certainly didn't spend full days there. They would put me to the back of the class and I just sat there twiddling my thumbs. I think it was between Guthrie's and the Education Department, who thought they would see if it was feasible to put boys into mainstream education.
67. I've not had any form of rigid education ever, as I've never stayed in one place long enough. Just out of sheer chance I'm pretty good at maths, but that was maybe working in bars and as a bar manager and totalling up prices in my head. Guthrie's education was more like the end of primary school level. Nothing above that.

Weekends

68. There was a points system in Guthrie's. If you earned enough points you could get home at the weekend. You would leave on the Friday afternoon and return on the Sunday evening. So the points system was from the Sunday night when you got

back to the Thursday afternoon. If you were cheeky or you did something they didn't like, they would write a report about you and it would be passed to your teacher. They would read it out and maybe dock the Friday off from you, and maybe the Saturday morning. If you got both docked off you then you couldn't go home. If you were ok, you would finish up at lunch time on the Friday and be back for eight o'clock on Sunday night.

69. I refused to go home. It was my own choice. I wasn't going anywhere near my house. I basically stayed in the school. They knew I would do something and intentionally get caught, so that I didn't have enough points anyway. It was a way for me to say to them, you have me at the weekend.
70. If you stayed in the school you could go walks at the weekend with the care staff to the Pentlands or the Braids. They would take you in the mini-bus, or the Land Rover, depending on how many there were. If you stayed at the weekend you had to stay in the uniform. There were no trips or holidays at Guthrie's. You could go to the scouts on a Thursday night, which was held in the church on the corner down from the school. I think we went to church at Easter.

Christmases & birthdays

71. I went home from Guthrie's the first Christmas I was there and I came back and said I wasn't going back. My mum and [REDACTED] just got slaughtered the whole time I was there. [REDACTED] was staying with my grandmother in East Kilbride. [REDACTED] was working, and staying in Bingham with them. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were still at the house, as was [REDACTED] daughter. His son [REDACTED] went to stay with his grandmother and then he got married to some American and that's the last I've heard of him. When I did stay at Guthrie's, they did have a Christmas dinner, but you didn't get a present or anything like that. My birthday was non-existent.

Bedwetting

72. There were boys that wet the bed but there was nothing said to them from the other boys, there was no bullying about it. The staff wouldn't embarrass them. They were just told to take the sheets off, take them downstairs and get fresh sheets. They then made the bed.

Running away

73. There were boys that ran away. Guthrie's wasn't just for boys from Edinburgh, it had boys from right across the central belt, Glasgow, Fife, even the borders. Some were there for stealing and things like that and some were there on a care and protection order. You weren't separated. It was an unwritten rule between us that we never asked what someone was in for, and we never said why we were in. If you ran away, you wouldn't get away over a weekend for six weeks minimum. If this happened two or three times you were placed in secure accommodation.

Healthcare

74. There was a matron and a nurse at Guthrie's. The matron would come in, in the mornings and the nurse would come whenever she was needed. She lived just minutes from the school. I don't know if she had set hours. I can't remember either of their names.
75. I saw the matron when GBD broke my ribs and it was put down to food poisoning. I saw the matron every morning for a week and she gave me painkillers. I had an x-ray years and years later, which showed I'd had broken ribs and that's when it clicked. If there was something bad happened to a boy they would get a doctor to attend at the school.
76. If we had problems with our teeth we were taken to a private dentist on the Dalkeith Road, just down from the Commonwealth Pool. The staff would take you in the Land Rover.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

77. My aunt and uncle visited a couple of times, but he was really busy with work. He worked with the Scotsman newspaper and she worked with the BBC, doing the sports programmes and things like that. So I only saw them two or three times.
78. [REDACTED] got called in once. I was taken out of class and told to go to the meeting room. He was sitting there and GBD [REDACTED] came in. They weren't happy with me because of the situation with the tobacco and the cigarettes and he got up and belted me around the face and knocked me off my seat. GBD [REDACTED] took a hold of him and I refused to speak. I was taken back to the assembly hall. It was something I'd got into, me and my two mates just got into rolling cigarettes and selling them. When [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] went home they would buy tobacco from the shop across the road and on the Sunday night, when they came back, they would hide them at the perimeter of the school. On Monday we would go out and get it, and the boys knew to come to us if they wanted a cigarette at break time.
79. I think I saw a social worker three times while I was there. On the day I went there, on my last day and one when a social worker came up and asked me if I wanted to be adopted by [REDACTED] I said no, but it went through anyway. That's why it has 'Adopted' at the bottom of my birth certificate, but I always take the name HWR [REDACTED] my original name. I won't have any association with the name HWR [REDACTED]. I can't recall any inspection of Guthrie's while I was there.

Personal possessions

80. You weren't allowed any of your own possessions. If you took anything in they would ask you to leave it with them because teenage boys being what they are, some would just say to others, "I want that, I'm having it".

Discipline

81. You would have a set amount of points from a Sunday night and if you did something wrong then points were deducted and you would lose your Friday afternoon, meaning you wouldn't get home until the Saturday. Anything higher than that and you'd lose your Saturday morning, so you wouldn't be home all weekend.
82. If you did anything wrong you would get the belt from either GBD [REDACTED] who was a senior social worker, or Mr Guthrie, the headmaster. I got the belt a lot of times. You went to Mr Guthrie's office to get it. It would be two or three of the belt over the hands. If you weren't going home at the weekend and you did something wrong then you could be stopped from going a walk with the staff and be confined to the school.

Abuse at Dr Guthrie's Approved School, Liberton, Edinburgh

83. On one occasion I went home at the weekend. I can't remember why. I think my mum and [REDACTED] were away for the weekend. I think I already knew that they weren't going to be home. It was my sisters that were at home with my older brother. I was there the Saturday and Sunday.
84. When I went back to the school, GBD [REDACTED] was already there and he asked to speak to me in the office. I went into the office and he turned round and asked me where the lead was. I asked what he was talking about and he said he was talking about the lead from the windows. The building was built in the 1800's and had leaded windows downstairs and in some of the upstairs rooms. I didn't know what he was talking about, but he kept on asking me where it was. I told him I didn't know. He said, there was no point in getting the police as I wouldn't admit it to them and there would be no report anyway. He punched me in the ribs and said no one was going to believe me as I was in an approved school. He punched me, then picked me up from the floor and told me I was going to pay for it. I think he realised what he had done and didn't want to go any further with it. That's why he picked me up from the office floor.

85. The council, or the social work department, gave Guthrie's pocket money for if you were going home, to pay bus fares and spending money. If you weren't going home it was put into a savings account for when you left. He said I would pay for it out of my savings. There was a list in the room across from the headmaster's office that was updated every week with how much money you had saved. Mine, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] names were all scored out. He had blamed all three of us for stealing the lead. I couldn't say how much I had, maybe fifteen to twenty pounds because I hadn't been home. He didn't assault [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
86. I saw the matron on the Monday morning because I was complaining to the night watchman that I was in so much pain. He said there was nothing he could do and that he would put me down on the list to see her. The matron came in to the dorm in the morning, asked me where it was sore and examined me on the left side of my chest and said it was food poisoning. I don't know if there were reports made about it. I didn't tell her what had happened. I didn't hear anything else about it and didn't have any money in the savings account when I left. GBD [REDACTED] must have told the headmaster, for him to take the money from us, but he didn't say anything to us at all. Some of the boys asked me why I was in bed with food poisoning and I told them I wasn't and that it was GBD [REDACTED] had attacked me. That's the only people I told. I didn't tell the night watchman what had happened.
87. GBD [REDACTED] called [REDACTED] on one occasion about our tobacco selling and [REDACTED] came into Guthrie's. The three of us were in the meeting room and I had said something, I can't remember what it was, and [REDACTED] got up and slapped me right across the face and knocked me out of my chair and told me not to talk to him like that. GBD [REDACTED] got up and grabbed hold of [REDACTED]. Guthrie's had known about us selling cigarettes, they weren't sure about it, but a couple of younger guys might have told them who they got their cigarettes from. They knew [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I were thick as thieves anyway. I refused to say anything else and I was told to go back to the assembly room and [REDACTED] was escorted out of the building. I was fifteen when this happened.

88. That was all the abuse I suffered in Dr Guthrie's. Because I was there for a while I was aware of what I could get away with and what not to even attempt, because there would be consequences. We all looked after each other.

Leaving Dr Guthrie's Approved School, Liberton, Edinburgh

89. On [REDACTED], 1979, GBD [REDACTED] informed me that I was leaving Dr Guthrie's. There was a few of us leaving that year. After lunch we were told to stay in the assembly room while the rest either went to lunch or went home. We got taken upstairs and got changed. The other boys had people picking them up, parents or relatives, I was told a social worker was picking me up. GBD [REDACTED] saw the car drawing up. He opened the door and told me I was no longer their concern and I was sent out the door.
90. I actually stayed at my mum and [REDACTED] for about two months then told the social work to get me out of there. They tried to find me a halfway house type thing, within their range of being looked after, from coming out of care. I was put into a place in Joppa, just outside of Portobello, between there and Musselburgh. I was taken there and stayed for about three or four months. From there I went to Jubilee Cottage. The only time I saw a social worker was if I needed any money for anything.
91. When I went to Jubilee Cottage I got my first job in [REDACTED] on the Bridges, in Edinburgh. I was a trainee commis chef. It was one of those government job creation schemes back in the eighties. I got twenty-one pounds a week.

Life after being in care

92. After Jubilee Cottage, I literally went from pillar to post finding bedsits, anywhere that would take me. I wasn't sure if I was still under the care of the social work because I didn't see them again after Jubilee Cottage. My social worker had changed to another man. I can't remember his name. The only thing he told me was, when I was in Jubilee Cottage, if I needed money for anything to go to their office at Craigmillar. I went a couple of times, but I never saw him again.

93. When I left Jubilee Cottage I moved over to East Kilbride and I was living with my grandmother in 1985. I'd been bouncing about in various accommodation, bedsits that would take someone on the DSS. That's how I was living, out of a backpack. I didn't have much work after [REDACTED]. I then went over to my grandmothers. I went to catering college there. It was my aunt [REDACTED] that talked me into that and from there I joined the Territorial Army. It was based in Deepcut, in Surrey. Once I'd done my training and was a couple of years in, the camp chef said if I was looking for work there was a place there for me, a fortnight on and a fortnight off. That's what I ended up doing from 1986 through to 1991, working with the military.
94. I was still moving around. I stayed with my brother [REDACTED]. We got a flat at Meadowbank, Edinburgh, then we moved to Swanston, up by the Pentlands. I met someone and I moved over to his house. I forgot all about it, but when I was sixteen I had put an application form in to the council, and my name had been kept on the housing list, gathering points. I never thought anything of it. I then got a council house with my boyfriend, [REDACTED]. We were together eight or nine years. I ended up kicking him out. He was a waste of space. He never worked a day in his life, but expected everything.
95. I worked with the military until 1991. The reason I couldn't carry on was, I was home for the weekend, went to the doctors on the Friday and told I was asthmatic and back then you weren't allowed in the military if you had asthma. It's only just changed in the last ten years. You can get in with asthma now as long as it doesn't affect your ability to do your job.
96. After that I was working with agencies most of my days. In 2000, I met [REDACTED] and he moved in with me to the flat that I had. We were both in catering. I was doing agency work and he was working in hotels as well. So we got together and twenty-two years later we are still together. We moved into the house we are in just now twenty years ago.
97. I started my present job on 7th March, this year. As well as having asthma, I was diagnosed with COPD. I have a bad back and due to this I had to go into corporate

security. I couldn't stand for any length of time and I'm certainly not going to try and chase shoplifters. I've been doing security for the last twelve years. Security being the way it is, it's a zero hours contract, and you're not guaranteed anything on these contracts. I was working with the council and that contract finished in August, 2019, and this is the first job I've had since then.

98. In late March, 2020, I received a letter telling me I was extremely high risk if I caught Covid-19. The doctor sent me a letter to get my first jag, and when I went to the surgery he said I had to have it because of the state of my lungs, that if I caught it I would end up in hospital. Myself and [REDACTED] have never had it. We have been very lucky. My brothers and sisters have had it, [REDACTED] sister has had it, his mother is in a care home and being locked down every couple of weeks.
99. I actually saw EWA [REDACTED] in a bar in Edinburgh. I was sitting at one end of the bar and he was sitting at the other and I thought, what is he looking at me for, then it clicked who he was. I had never seen him in there before and it was one of the regular bars I would go to. A couple of months later he was in again, hanging about the bar. I then saw him up on the Bridges, in Edinburgh, at the Tron. He was on the other side of the road from me. I started walking up towards Newington and I glanced round and he was following me up the road. I stopped at a bus stop and jumped on a bus and got away from there. I wasn't hanging around.
100. I went to [REDACTED] funeral, but for one reason only. That he was in that box and it went in that fire. He died on [REDACTED] 1994 and my mum died nine years later, in 2003. I got a call from my younger sister at the weekend as she had a patio set and didn't know how to put them together. So I was down there recently. [REDACTED] is in Fife, [REDACTED] has split up with his wife and living in Ayr and [REDACTED] lives just outside Edinburgh. I believe [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] see [REDACTED] [REDACTED] daughter, occasionally. I don't know where [REDACTED] is, [REDACTED] son. The last I knew was he had married an American and moved to America. I couldn't say how long it is since I've seen [REDACTED]

Impact

101. Until I took control of my own life twenty-two years ago, I kicked from pillar to post. I still don't trust anyone in authority whatsoever, which is why I have trouble keeping down jobs. This is why I went into bar management, because I knew what I was saying, was what I knew, and it wasn't coming from anyone else that was going to bullshit me. I knew the military weren't going to do it, what you got was what was on the packet. I haven't trusted anyone since I was young.
102. I haven't had any counselling or prescribed medication. I have been told that I'm an angry person, that I just won't listen to anything anyone is telling me. I will always have an answer, or an argument. I'm adamant that I'll do things my way, I won't be told by anyone else, what to do, what to say, what to think. I've always had problems, since I was young, accepting what people are telling me to do.
103. I'm in charge of myself now, and what happens is through me and [REDACTED], and no-one else. As I said, taking responsibility, or taking orders, doesn't wash with me in the slightest. That's a major problem, I don't trust anyone because of what happened in the assessment centre with that psychiatrist. If you have someone like that, that's going to blurt out to someone, something you've spoken about in private, then who can you talk to? There was absolutely no talking to [REDACTED] or my mum, you would just get a slap and told to, "Shut the fuck up".

Reporting of Abuse

104. I have never reported the abuse I suffered to the police. The Inquiry are the first people I have ever told. I haven't even told [REDACTED] in the twenty-two years we've been together.

Records

105. All I have from Birthlink is the dates that I was in the assessment centre and Dr Guthrie's and even these are wrong. It says I left in 1980, but I left in 1979. I know

that for a fact, because it was a week before my sixteenth birthday. What I've been told from Birthlink is that there's no point getting my records as they'll be blacked out because it's only for them to read, it's not for me. I'm on a Guthrie's group [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and a lot of them are saying exactly the same. They are refusing to give you anything that's written about you, it's just blacked out and all you'll get are dates.

106. I'm actually not interested now in what they said about me. I am fifty-seven years old. I can't go back and say to them, "Why have you written this? It didn't happen, it's lies".

Lessons to be Learned

107. Those in positions of responsibility have got to listen. If a kid is refusing to go home and see his parents, they have got to ask why. Why is that kid actually saying, "No, I don't want to go near the family". Look into it seriously, don't just glance over it, because the kid will clamp up. They have to speak to the kid, listen to what he is saying and watch his behaviour. And if they do see something that's not right, get one of the team that are friendly with that kid, and that the kid can trust. Get them to talk to him, and ask him what's wrong. Don't just send out somebody random to write a report on this, that and the next thing, and have the adult dictate what is being written, because the kid just won't say a word.

Hopes for the Inquiry

108. What I hope for is that the councils and people in charge will not just turn round and say, "The kid's getting beaten up, get him out, get him to an approved school under the care and protection". Talk to the child, talk to the person. Don't let the school dictate on how that kid's life is going to be run for the next twenty to thirty years, because when that kid walks out of that school, it's staying with them. He doesn't leave it behind. It's the same with children's homes too, we've got to listen to the kids and hear what they have to say. Don't just go and see them two or three times over two or three years. You're in a kids home for a reason and the social work can't be bothered turning up to see them.

Other information

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

Signed..........

Dated..... 15 June 2022