

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IJT

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is IJT My date of birth is 1991. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in the Vale of Leven. I don't remember much about my mum and dad back then. I was never really with them, my dad was never there. I didn't spend any time in my mum's house, I lived with my gran.
3. My mum's name is , my dad is and my nana, . I have no brothers or sisters.
4. I lived with my nana in Dumbarton. My Uncle stayed there and sometimes my Auntie was there too. My nana was my mum's mum.
5. I went to St Michael's Primary School in Dumbarton for a short time but they had to put me into a special school, . I was just flipping all the time with my ADHD and needed one to one. I tried to take my mum into the school to sit with me but that didn't work. I don't know what age I was when I went to the special school, I was young though.
6. I didn't get on well in . Everywhere I went it was just trouble. I just didn't like listening to people.

7. I was diagnosed with ADHD when I was young. I think I was about seven. That was at the Acorn Centre in the Vale of Leven. A man and woman used to pick me up and take me. I think I had some counselling there. They gave me tablets as well, Ritalin and something else but sometimes I just didn't take them. They put me off my food. I'm still on tablets now.
8. I found school hard. I was always too hyper for school. I didn't want to sit in a chair and be quiet. I couldn't do that. I was seeing things happening, people shouting and bawling, things you wouldn't have got off your parents. I saw people fighting as well, that sort of thing. I don't think seeing these things helps you. It's more like a punishment. Bad stuff happens and eventually you think it's normal to grow up that way but it's not.
9. I was hanging about with my pals and running away from home. I started getting into trouble with the police.
10. I've had a few social workers over the years but the first one was a woman called Ilene Stansfield. After Ilene I had Jim Lusk, then Mark Mulvenna. Mark was the last social worker I had.
11. I was at a children's panel before I went into care. That's where I realised I was going into care. I was getting into so much trouble. I remember my mum saying she was putting me into care to see if it might help me.
12. My ADHD was really bad at the panel meetings. I used to just hang about the room. I didn't want to go into care. I wanted to stay with my nana. My nana was always good and took my side in these things. I remember being told I was going into Craigellachie Children's Home. I didn't want to go. I think I was around seven years old.
13. I didn't know anything about the place before I went there. It was in Clydebank.

Craigellachie Children's Home, Clydebank

14. I think I was in Craigenllachie from about seven years old. I went there twice on two different occasions.

15. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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35. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

36. People with ADHD think that's normal because we have fought with people from such a young age. Even in prison now, I'll argue with the staff, I've always got an issue with them. I won't let them speak to me the same way I was spoken to when I was in care. I'll tell them not to shout at me as if I'm a wee boy. They try and belittle people.

Leaving Craigellachie Children's Home

37. I don't know why they moved me out of Craigenllachie. They moved me to a lot of places when I was younger. I don't know what age I was when I moved but I was young.

Blairvadach Children's Home, Helensburgh

38. I remember going to Blairvadoch. From my records, I think it was in 2003 when I was around twelve. I went to Blairvadoch on two occasions as well. I don't know how long I was there. I don't think it was that long.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Schooling

43. I think I was being taken to Seafield School from Blairvadoch. They didn't have a school there. I can't remember what I was learning there. Seafield School was horrible. Staff behaved like animals towards us.

44. There were only about six or seven pupils in the class and there were different classes. We didn't always go to the same classes together. Maybe some pupils were older. I met a boy called [REDACTED], he was the same age as me and we became friends.

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Abuse at Seafield School whilst residing at Blairvadach Children's Home

50. The staff at Seafield School were horrible to us. There was a mad teacher who used to punch us. He would batter all of us. I don't remember his name but he was a teacher. I can't even remember what he looked like other than he was young. He always whacked you about. He would kick us and we would be walking about with black eyes. We were only young people in there. He shouldn't have been doing that to us.
51. If you were trying to run out of the class, he would grab you and fling you about, shouting and bawling at you. He would punch you in the face. That's why most people tried to run away.

52. He would throw the stick they used for the blackboard at you. Everybody used to go mad in the class. He was a pure animal. I can't even remember what he was supposed to be teaching us. As soon as that class was over, we were off. He used to hold the door closed and make us all sit on our chairs.
53. There were different teachers in the school. He was the only one who treated us that way.
54. There weren't many people in his class. Me and my pal [REDACTED] I met [REDACTED] at Seafield School. Both of us were treated bad by that teacher but he treated everybody in the class like that.
55. If someone asked me why I had a black eye I would usually just say I had been fighting with people. They wouldn't have listened to me if I said it was the teacher who had done it to me. They didn't really care.
56. I remember another staff member at Seafield called Senga. She was alright with us.

Reporting of abuse at Seafield School whilst resident at Blairvadach Children's Home

57. Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
58. Sometimes we did say to the staff at Seafield Residential that the teacher was hitting us but they wouldn't listen. They would say we had done it when we ran away. They didn't really care in these places.
59. Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] this teacher at Seafield School who was the problem.

Leaving Blairvadach Children's Home

60. I was still going to the children's panel when I was at Blairvadoch. I was on some sort of section or care protection order, I'm not sure what it was called but it was to keep me in the children's home.
61. I'm not sure what age I was when I left Blairvadoch. I was still quite young and it was before I was a teenager. I wasn't there for years but it was for a wee while. I don't know why I had to leave Blairvadoch.

Ramsay House, Clydebank

62. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Ramsay House, Clydebank

78. I don't remember leaving Ramsay House.

Seafield Residential School, Ardrossan

79. I was between nine and twelve years old when I was in Seafield, 2000 to 2003. I was a day boy and then I was residential there. It was a horrible place. I don't know how long I was a day boy for.

Routine at Seafield Residential School, Ardrossan

Mornings and bedtime

80. I never used to sleep and would be up for two or three nights. I didn't get medication for ADHD in secure. I don't know when the medication stopped. The staff were telling me not to take it in Seafield. The staff wouldn't give me it and say I didn't need it.
81. When I stayed at my grans, they gave me melatonin and I would sleep straight away with that. I didn't get that in secure.

Discipline

82. If you were punished, the staff wouldn't give you any money, or wouldn't let you go out the unit and stuff like that. They wouldn't let you go to activities or they'd take your telly. It was daft things.

Abuse at Seafield Residential School, Ardrossan

83. There was a lot of sexual stuff that happened with kids in there, with staff. It was not with me but with other people. It was bad in there. I heard people had been doing stuff with the boys, doing things they shouldn't be doing.
84. The staff would put you down and shout at you. We were only young boys and they shouldn't have been shouting, no matter what we do. They're meant to care for us. That's their duty and their job, to fix our behaviour and make things better not to constantly put us down and punish us. It doesn't help, punishing somebody in those places. It makes them worse.

Closeburn House, Dumfries

85. I was about twelve when I went to Closeburn House. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Unknown Children's Home

112. When I was about fourteen, I was in a care home somewhere and going to St Philip's day school. Staff from St Philip's would come and take me there.

St Philip's Residential School, Airdrie

113. St Philip's looked different to St Mary's and Rossie Farm. It was three units and they were all separate. It was built in a big, open space.
114. I was in the day unit at St Philip's sometimes and then I went into the residential unit. I met some people there that I still speak to, there's a wee group of friends. There's [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is in Aberdeen jail. A lot of boys I was in secure with are in jail now. They're people you never walk away from because they're in the same situation as you. We've been through some bad times but there's been good times too.

Routine at St Philip's Residential School, Airdrie

First day

115. There was a cell in St Philip's with a bed and a long wooden board, like a table. They used it to search you when you first came in.

Schooling

116. In the classroom, some teachers were bad and some were alright. Sarah was brand new. She did the cooking class with us. She was footballer John Hartson's wife and he came in and put his signature on our tops for us.

Abuse at St Philip's Residential School, Airdrie

117. St Philip's was horrible. It wasn't as bad as other places but it was the same as other places with strip searches and violence from staff. It's the same everywhere. Most places I've been, they strip searched you and laughed at you when you were a wee guy, on the floor naked. That happened at St Philip's. The staff stripped you and took your clothes off. They grabbed you and pulled your trousers and your top, taking your socks and all that off you. Their hands were on you. They searched your clothes. They took your trainers so you couldn't run away. The staff told us to squat, to turn round and show them. I was always fighting against it. We were too young and they shouldn't have been searching us that way. They shouldn't manhandle you for a search either. Imagine if they'd done that to a woman. If they do it to a guy then it's normal.
118. It was horrible and nasty, somebody doing that to you. It's against human rights. The strip search was in your room. There were two or three male staff there. The main one I remember doing that was GXP or GXP. He was a horrible, bad man. Sometimes the staff came and laughed at you for ten minutes. Sometimes they'd leave you for an hour like that.
119. Strip searches happened whenever they wanted to and whenever somebody had run away and come back into the unit. The staff would think there was this and that here. They were searching for fags, drugs and weapons. Female staff weren't allowed to do strip searches.
120. The staff were chasing you about all the time and dragging you. Every day, GXP or GXP was always chasing us about and trying to give us it. He would do that if you had a class and you got out to have a smoke. You weren't allowed to do that and he would chase you and try to leather you. He volleyed you. By that I mean GXP was hitting you all over. He slapped you on the face and kicked you on the body. He held you down on the ground himself and had your hands. You'd be shouting for him to get off you. GXP would be asking "where's the fags" and saying to get back to the 'fucking class' and he would take you back to the unit. I probably had injuries but I didn't report them to anybody.

121. Some staff would shout in your face and try to terrify you. They did terrify me. At that age and older person shouting at you is scary. They wouldn't do that to me now.

Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS)

122. It was ISMS who decided I was going to secure care. I was around twelve or thirteen years old at the time. It seemed they were part of the social work all built into one big team. ISMS had a small place in the retail park in Clydebank at the time. They were good to me. If I was at home they would come and pick me up in a car and take me out to do things. One of the staff there was Tommy Long, he's dead now. Me and other boys who were difficult would go there and play the PlayStation. They would help us cook lunches. Their staff would take us out and we would do activities. Sometimes we would go one by one and they would take us go-carting or to nice places like beaches. They were good and they worked with me. I think they came into my life when I was ten or eleven, maybe a bit later than that.
123. When I was thirteen, ISMS decided to put me on a tag because I kept running away all the time. I can remember I was the first in the West Dumbarton area to go on a tag at that age. The tag was on my ankle. I'm not sure whose decision it was but it was because I kept running away. They told me that I would be going to secure care if I didn't stop running away and that's when they gave me the tag. I was thirteen then and kept breaching the tag. The base unit was in my nana's room. My nan was going mental because it would always be beeping when I breached the conditions. I think I had to be in by 8:00 pm but I wouldn't bother, I'd just go out anyway.
124. I think the unit must have been connected to ISMS and it would flag up to them when I went out. I once cut the tag off, that's when I was put to secure care. Tommy came up and told me I had had my chance and would be going to St Mary's Secure. I remember telling him I wasn't going and him saying I could go with him or that the polis were waiting down the street for me. They weren't even there but I just went with him. He told me everything was going to be alright.

125. I felt horrible wearing the tag out with my pals. I felt like an idiot. I didn't want to wear it and felt bad from my gran and family that I wore a tag at that age.
126. I went to secure but kept going to ISMS. Tommy used to come up to the unit to take me out. He was brilliant with me.

INLUDEM

127. I worked with Includem, who are a youth support charity, around the same time as I was involved with ISMS. Includem were separate to the schools and secure units. They were there to stop me thinking about stuff. They would take me places and show me there was good stuff to do rather than getting involved in the bad stuff. They weren't bad to me, they always tried to help. They would ask me why I was running away and say that I didn't need to do that and tell me I could have better things.
128. They would come to my grans and take me out to the park or for a drive. Sometimes they would take me go-karting or for something to eat or play a game of bowls. They were always there for me.

St Mary's Kenmure, Bishopbriggs – Secure Unit

129. The first secure unit they put me in was St Mary's. I went in 2005 when I was about fourteen years old and stayed for a year. It was horrible. There were five units called Unit One, Two, Three, and Four. Unit Five was for sex offenders. The staff tried to mix us and put them to play football tournaments with us. They tried to involve the sex offenders in our lives which we didn't want.
130. There were a lot of staff. I can remember Paula or Pauline, Sarah, Gaby and Jim. The teacher was Tracey. Dan McIntyre did the education. **IHK** or **IHK** was horrible as well. There were three or four staff on shift in one unit.
131. St Mary's was newer than Rossie Farm and looked completely different.

Routine at St Mary's Kenmure – Secure Unit

First day

132. It was the ISMS scheme that took me from the home. They said I was going to secure. I hadn't been in secure units and ISMS said to come. They said the police were waiting outside but they weren't. I laughed because Tommy from ISMS was funny and I got on with him. He took me up himself and was still trying to work with me while I was in there. Tommy was trying things. He said if I did this and behaved then I'd come back out. The first thing they do is take you in and search you. They have a cell to do that in.

Mealtimes/Food

133. There was a central area with tables and chairs and we ate in there. The kitchen was off it and there was an area of that with couches and a telly where we could sit and chill. The food was alright but I was a fussy eater and if I had taken my medication I wouldn't eat. The staff would be there but they wouldn't eat with us.

Abuse at St Mary's Kenmure – Secure Unit

134. St Mary's was mad. They were doing the exact same with the strip searching, telling you to turn round and all that. At St Mary's they were more full on with strip searches. They just grabbed you and grabbed your shirt off. They said, "Give me this and give me that." I didn't want to and, because you were refusing, they shouted in our faces. They were telling you to 'get your fucking clothes off'. You don't want to when you're a wee guy.
135. You'd end up getting restrained by them and they pulled your trousers down. You'd assault staff. The staff were laughing at you. Women were coming in. Some woman used to say, "Show us your thingy" and laugh at you. One of them might have been

called IHR [REDACTED] We'd be strip searched whenever. It happened when people came back from home leave.

136. The restraint was the same as restraint at all the secure units. Every time you got restrained, you came away with carpet burns on your face, elbows and everywhere. They were big grazes. I was brought up with a guy and we called him [REDACTED] because he was always getting burns from restraint. He's dead now.
137. The science teacher was called IHP [REDACTED]. He was beastly and horrible. He tried to touch our legs. He did that to all of us. That class used to flip my head. I think he got sacked for that a couple of years after I left St Mary's. Somebody told me he got charged.
138. IHK or IHK [REDACTED] was a creepy guy. He was an old man. He said horrible things to the lassies in there about the way they looked. The staff were creepy old guys. You heard them making comments all the time. The way the guys spoke to the lassies was horrible.
139. The way the staff treated you in general was abusive. They tried to put everybody down and laugh at them. They shouted at people.

Leaving St Mary's Kenmure – Secure Unit

140. I don't know why I left St Mary's and went to Rossie Farm. They just put me there.

Rossie Farm School, Montrose

141. I was in Rossie Farm for a short period when I was about fourteen or fifteen. It was an old building. That was horrible up there. It was the worst secure I've been in in my life. I was in the Lunan Unit.

Routine at Rossie Farm School, Montrose

First day

142. They had a mad room downstairs. It was underneath the Lunan Unit. There was nothing in there except a mattress and a toilet. There was a window. It was like a police cell. When you first come into that place, they put you in that cell to search you. They used the cell as a punishment too.

Family Contact

143. My gran did come and visit me though. I never got home visits from Rossie, I did from the other units but not Rossie. I don't know why this was, maybe you had to earn home visits but I don't know.

Running away

144. When I didn't go back from home leave, the schools would phone the polis to come out. They would always get me at my gran's house. My gran used to say I needed to stop doing it but I told her I just wanted to be home with my family.

Abuse at Rossie Farm School, Montrose

145. The staff would drag you downstairs from the unit and fling you in the cell for hours. The staff were horrible people and they were horrible to you. They'd put you there for arguing with them. The staff would do stuff and you would shout at them. Then they'll hit you and put you down in the cell. They hit you anywhere they wanted. The way the staff treated us in general was bad. They basically locked us in a room and left us there until we calmed down. The staff put us in that place but then they were shouting and telling you to bolt.

146. They left you in that place even though you were shouting, "please." You'd be left for an hour or so. It depended when they wanted to come and get you and until you calmed down. You couldn't calm down because you had anxiety at that age. I'd take asthma attacks. I was greeting and saying, "Please help me, please help me, let me out, I can't breathe." I felt claustrophobic. When I get claustrophobic in a wee room, I feel my asthma and my breathing goes all dodgy. I can't breathe at all. I didn't get any help for that. You'd kick doors for an hour to try to get them to let you out. The staff said you were kicking the door and so you weren't getting out. They said to shut up and they'd leave you. All you want is to get out for fresh air and not be locked in a wee square. When you banged the door, they'd come in and hit you.
147. There was a guy called IHL. He was horrible. He was kind of bald and a wee, solid guy. He'd fling you about and drag you down the stairs.
148. Strip searching always happened at Rossie Farm. St Phillip's and St Mary's were ten times better than Rossie Farm, in every way. Rossie Farm was a completely different level and wasn't like the way the other secure were. It was an old layout and old staff. They were horrible. Anybody who's been up there will say that.
149. There were a lot of restraints. The staff grabbed you and put you on the floor. They put your arms up your back and your head on the floor. You got carpet burns.
150. I never told anyone about the abuse I was getting at the residential schools. I just always did the same thing, I ran away, just avoiding everything.

Peer Abuse

151. I got my nose broke by some boy and the staff didn't take me to the hospital to get it fixed. I got whacked by a pool cue on the nose and then the person ran away with the staff. The staff grabbed me because I had grabbed pool balls to get at him. I had to stick a towel on my nose for ages. It ended up all dried blood. The staff did nothing for you. They didn't care for your health. I phoned my mum and told her somebody had hit me with a pool cue.

Leaving Rossie Farm School, Montrose

152. I don't know why I was moved out of Rossie to St Philip's. There was a lot of bad stuff happening. We would kick off because of everything that was happening to us. They were bullying young people. We would think we weren't having that and we would do something. Then we'd get moved.

St Philip's School - Secure Unit, Airdrie

153. I was fourteen or fifteen when I went to St Philip's. The secure unit was a different environment from the residential school. You weren't allowed as much freedom. There were a couple of staff from the residential in the secure. There was a woman called Corinne who was always good to me. She was always nice to me when she saw me. She was in the residential with me and she worked in my unit.
154. There was a room we sat in which had a telly and a couch on either side. The kitchen was off that and had some tables and chairs where we ate.
155. Some of the boys in secure care had been sentenced. I think they were fifteen or maybe sixteen. They could be murderers or anything and they were mixed in with us. That was except the sex offenders who were kept separate.
156. If we played football and we had tournaments, the sex offenders were mixed in with us to give them the chance to play. They would just get battered. It was horrible. They tried to mix us in with people like that, it made us feel bad.

Routine at St Philip's School - Secure Unit, Airdrie

Mornings and bedtime

157. The routine at all the secure units is basically the same. At St Philip's you got up in the morning and had your shower. I wouldn't have my shoes on, they would be put away with me running out the unit all the time.

Mealtimes/Food

158. St Philip's had a room with tables in the middle where we could eat. We all ate in there at the tables. We just had normal meals, curries and that. I was always a fussy eater and when I took my medication I wouldn't eat. The staff would be there at mealtimes but they wouldn't eat with us.

Washing/bathing

159. I would have a shower in the morning. I had a toilet and a shower in my bedroom and had privacy to shower.

Clothing/uniform

160. There were staff that would wash our clothes for us.

Leisure time

161. We had a room with a telly and couches in it. We just chilled and watched the TV. We could also watch TV in our rooms. At night-time we would go to football, swimming or go to the gym.

Trips and holidays

162. Sometimes if we behaved, they would take us into Glasgow. They would basically take us into Glasgow, buy us fags and then take us back. We weren't allowed to smoke in any of the secure units but when they took us out at St Philip's, they would buy us fags and tell us not to say anything. They knew that we wanted to smoke.
163. Sometimes they would take us home.

Schooling

164. The secure units had education daily. It wasn't really up to much. I would go down and listen to music on a computer. There was a weird science teacher at St Philip's he used to say some strange things.

Healthcare / medication

165. I had asthma and the staff would have been aware of that. Every time I got lifted by the police, I used to go mental and say I'm claustrophobic and need my inhaler. The staff would have been aware but just blanked it. They didn't care.

Visitors

166. The social workers used to come and see me at the residential schools. Mark was the best social worker I would say. He was good to me, a gentleman. He was different from everyone else. He played football with my uncle, they were in the same team. He was a good guy. He had a good heart and would try and help me with things. He would tell me what I needed to do. I would understand him a bit more. I think he's now the head of the social work or children's panel in Dumbarton. He always said if I did this and did that, he would make sure I got home for visits. If I didn't behave, he wouldn't let me home. He didn't let me down.

167. Between St Philip's, St Mary's and Rossi I would have been going to panels. I don't think I really got the chance to speak at the panels.
168. They said I was going back to secure and my gran said to Mark that she didn't want me going back to secure because it was making me worse. Mark said he had found a place in Blackpool for me. He said it was like a job experience.
169. My gran would visit me some of the time and my ma too. My mum would bring me CDs, DVDs everything. My mum was really good to me to be fair.
170. I also had home visits but if I didn't behave, they wouldn't let me go home.

Family Contact

171. I got home leave from all the residential schools and secure units but I just wanted to stay home all the time. I wouldn't tell them the days I was to go back and I would just stay home. I just wanted to be with my family.

Discipline

172. I was always clean and kept my own room tidy. I've always been a clean boy. If we used a plate or that in the kitchen, we had to put it in the dish washer.

Abuse at St Philip's School - Secure Unit, Airdrie

173. There were riots all the time. St Philip's was the same as everywhere else. There were restraints and they stripped you. The staff did what they wanted with you. It was horrible. You were only a young boy and they shouldn't have been doing that to you. You should be entitled not to take your boxers and your shorts off. If you refused to take them off then they were grabbing you and ripping your clothes off you. Sometimes you were on the floor. Sometimes they grabbed you and pinned you to the wall. There were two or three male staff doing that. You had staff looking at you and laughing.

174. After that, there were women who came in and searched your room. You had a towel to hold round yourself. They didn't say to put your clothes back on. They are horrible people in those places. A search could be random, or if somebody came back from home leave. It was in case anybody brought stuff in. They didn't need to drag you in and search you. The search would be in my room. Searches happened whenever the staff felt like it or if they smelled smoke.
175. There was restraint in the same way as the other secure units. The staff were the same as everywhere else. They shouted and swore at you. They put you down and belittled you.
176. There was a weird science teacher at St Philip's. I think he was gay. He would say strange and sick things about people's backsides. I used to kick the door to get restrained and get put back to the hall.

Leaving St Philip's School - Secure Unit, Airdrie

177. When I left St Philip's I was going home and doing things other people were doing. I was drinking a lot and getting into trouble with the police. Just being stupid really.
178. Most of the time I was being influenced by my mates. Three of my pals I grew up with in the housing scheme in Dumbarton died when I was in secure so my head was fried when I came out.
179. Every home, secure unit and now jail, I've basically been with the same boys all the way through. It's weird, it's a bad circle you cannae get out of. People used to tell me years ago that I was going to end up in secure and then in jail. I used to say that I wasn't. I wish I could go back and change it because it was the truth.
180. The only good things I remember were ISMS and Includem. They did things with us and I've got memories of going places with other people. They used to take me and

my pal [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was from Dumbarton as well but he died. They used to take us two together, we would go gorge walking. It was good.

Unknown residential accommodation, Elgin

181. After I left St Philip's School they sent me to a chalet in Elgin. It was supposed to prepare you for home but I only lasted for two days. I was fighting with the social worker. My social worker came up and said I was going back to secure. My nana was going mental and saying I wasn't going back to secure, so they gave me the chance to go to England.

Lowther Avenue Children's Home, Blackpool and The Larches, Preston

182. I had just turned sixteen when I went to Blackpool. I spent time in both of these homes. They were the same. I did like it down there. It was a different life, not the way it was in Dumbarton. To be fair I could have got a lot out of it.

Trax Care, Blackpool

183. Trax Care was owned by [REDACTED]. It was a motor bike and go-cart place. It was good to start with but, as we got into stuff, [REDACTED] thought he was a gangster.
184. There were lots of boys at Trax Care and there were two places, one in Blackpool and one in Preston. I was in the Blackpool home and there were maybe seven folk in there, boys and girls. I was there for maybe a year or so.
185. Sometimes we would go fishing. We went to the football games, sometimes they took us down to see Manchester City and Chelsea. I've watched Blackpool play a few times. We did motor biking and go-carting. They showed us how to be marshals at events, put up the flags and things. We got to make up our own bikes. We had a KTM

and we stripped the full bike and we could build it to how we wanted it to be, put on the parts, stickers and all the guards on it.

186. They let us have our own bikes. I had been involved in vehicle crime so doing things involving bikes was my favourite.
187. I went to a couple of pubs down there too. Me and a couple of the boys were getting into places. I think I would have been seventeen by then.

Abuse at Trax Care, Blackpool

188. One person smashed a window. [REDACTED] said we could all pay for it. He said we'd get found in the ground and he had money to get done what he wanted. He said he could make us all disappear. Apart from that, Trax was alright.

Leaving Trax Care, Blackpool

189. I started drinking all the time and ended up getting into trouble with the police. I then got a three year sentence with two year extended so five years in Lancaster Farms. I was seventeen.

Healthcare in care

190. Before I went into care and when I was younger than seven years old, I was diagnosed with asthma. I had a nebuliser and all that. My ma says I was on that for ages. My asthma wasn't really managed in care. It's given me bad anxiety. When I feel I'm not breathing then I take bad panic attacks. I need to go for fresh air. If I can't get fresh air then I feel I'm not breathing.

191. I wasn't seeing a doctor or having a medical examination in the homes. There were no doctors or even nurses in the secure. I had my inhaler at home but I didn't have anything in there. I have a blue and a brown inhaler now. I take the brown one every day and that helps. If you feel a bit wheezy then you take the blue one.
192. I've got epilepsy and they never diagnosed me in the secure. I took a fit at my gran's house, while I was in the secure. They took me to hospital and sent me for scans. They diagnosed me with epilepsy. I didn't get any medication in secure. I get medication for that now.
193. I didn't get medication for ADHD in secure. I don't know when the medication stopped. The staff were telling me not to take it, in Seafield. The staff would just not give you it and they said I didn't need it.
194. I never used to sleep and I'd be up for two or three nights at a time. When I stayed at my grans, they gave me melatonin and I sleep straight away with that. I didn't get anything for that in secure.
195. My pal had died and I was on a home leave. I drank absinthe. I can't even remember doing it. I woke up in hospital and the staff from the home were next to me. The staff had to come because I was outside. I just went away because I wanted to be away. The staff never took me anywhere.

Life after being in care

196. I got the jail in Blackpool when I was sixteen. I was a juvenile. I ended up in Lancaster Farms when I was seventeen. I got a three year stretch with two years added on. Between seventeen and now I've been out of jail for four years. I felt traumatised, stressed and would fight against everything. That's all we know. I would always just fight everything.

Impact

197. All that stuff I've been through would make some people kill themselves. I think it's made me think life is bad. I was always against the system. Still to this day I feel I'm against the system. It's just a big bad world your stuck in and no matter what you do to change now it's not going to change the last thirty years. It's not going to make you do all the things you wanted to do as a young boy. I cannae go back and start life again.
198. I feel as though I'm judged all my life now for what has happened in my life. They speak about people that have been hurt and this happening and that, they don't speak to me normally. Everyone thinks they're better than you, a step above you. They just think you're a silly boy. It's not like that, some of us have problems and bad mental health.
199. When I do get outside, I end up back in here. It's hard to adjust into the normal world because I feel institutionalised. It's horrible and my anxiety is through the roof, I take panic attacks, PTSD, my head's fried. I feel that the only place I'm wanted is in prison. I cannae stand in a busy room or a big shop, I walk away. Anybody that comes near me I get a bit defensive towards them. I think someone's coming to do something to me. It's a defence. That's bad because maybe people aren't doing anything and I could do something to them. I'm always on the defensive.
200. I never talk to my family. My mum gave up contacting me a few years ago. She's washed her hands of me and I don't blame her. My cousin [REDACTED] has too. My nana isn't well and I haven't spoken to her since last year. I try and phone but my auntie just says she's in bed sleeping. The last time I visited her I felt weird. I felt like I went in there and silenced the whole house. I felt self-conscious because my Uncle [REDACTED] wasn't there. I felt they were all just looking at me.
201. My uncle [REDACTED] was like my brother. He was the person I was closest to. He had been in jail himself and he knew there was more to life. My mum and other family members would say I was just going to go out and do this or that. My Uncle [REDACTED] would always

say let's go to the gym or play football, just go and do stuff. Since he died my head has been a bit fried. When your used to having someone then you don't have that person anymore, it's hard.

202. The staff were the adults so, if you did say anything back then, who were they going to believe? They weren't going to believe us. They were going to believe the staff. They were supposed to be the people who looked after you but they didn't look after you at all. They put you in hurt and trauma. In all those care homes where I was, not once did they look after me. They didn't bring me up right. They taught me that bad things were good things. I wish I could go back and change the world. I hate this way.
203. All that I've gone through in my life hasn't made me a better person. It's made me a bad person. The way I think about people now is fried. By that, I mean anybody that tries to help me, I think they don't want to help me or they want to cause trouble in my life. I don't trust anybody. I keep myself and my family safe and anything else doesn't matter to me in life. People don't realise that all these places affect your mental health. It's given me anxiety, stress, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I was diagnosed with PTSD in 2014 or 2015.
204. I have my missus outside. If my son ends up in care then I'll be taking him out. I would stop everything in the world for the wee man.
205. I will always bring my own boy up to understand that this life in care isn't a life. It just keeps you in the system, it traps you from a very young age. It's a trap you cannae get out of because no matter what you've done in life your past will catch up with you.
206. Even when I go to children's panels with my son, they bring up my past from 2000. I would say that I wasn't even at an age to be charged back then but they're still looking at that and my convictions. Everything just gets brought back up. Everything before I was sixteen still gets brought back up. You cannae get by because of the stuff you've done in your younger life. They cannae just leave it out your life now, it's always used against me.

207. It's terrible. I always say to them that they shouldn't be bringing that up. They don't know if I'm violent now, they don't come and work with me to see if I'm violent. They just decide by what that piece of paper says from 2000 all the way up to 2023 and say you've done this and done that. They never ask why I've done that. It's not for no reason.
208. They've not been letting me see my son. That's why I've had to go to the panels. He's not allowed to come to prison to see me. When I was in Barlinnie I had family bonding visits for an hour and forty-five minutes every Wednesday with him. I would get to paint with him, draw pictures and buy him things from the vending machines. I did a parenting course there.
209. They fry my head with it and say I can't see him. I'll just have to wait for another panel. They say he's traumatised because of me and the way I am. I've not done anything to anybody and always made sure everything was good. They say it's because I'm coming in and out of his life and that because I'm always in jail it's affecting him. I cannae say I'm at work to him anymore. I speak to him on the phone and I say I love you wee man and he says, 'I love me too'.
210. I've said they should know from other people who worked with me. They knew I had a problem back then. They said I had ADHD and learning difficulties.
211. My ma has him, she's bringing him up. He's better staying with my mum, she's family and he'll be brought up properly. His mum was caught with drugs. She was staying with some other boy in my son's house. I wasn't happy about that.
212. Benny was a staff member at St Mary's. He had worked in Polmont and he used to say to us that we'd end up in the jail. It's mad that was his actual words. When you grow up in care, you go to secure and then you end up in jail. The only thing after that is to be dead or a junkie. Hundreds of people are dead and hundreds of people take smack (heroin) now. It's as if our life was laid out in front of us.

213. I hope the secure system isn't still being run that way, with strip searches. They didn't help you but traumatised you for life.
214. I've done bits and bobs of education but I could have done a lot better. It was always hard for me to sit down and take stuff in because of the ADHD. I would just run mental round a class, under tables, climb out windows. I was always on the go.
215. My mental health is bad. They say I have borderline personality disorder. I don't even know what that means. I've got PTSD, depression, anxiety, epilepsy, asthma, quite a lot of stuff. I'm getting to the point that my whole life feels bad. I'm actually starting to hate this life.
216. There's no going back. It's just hard to try and find that one thing that's going to change it for ever.
217. I think being in care has affected my relationships. I'm always away so long that when I go back there's nothing. I can change my mood on someone so quickly. It's hard in here because you don't get a minute.
218. I do have friends who haven't been in trouble. They write to me and ask if I want them to visit. It's hard not to go back to the friends that do get into trouble. You think they're loyal friends but they're not. They're just going to get you into more trouble. They're like family some of them. We've been through so much together and we're still here together now.
219. Most of the people roundabout me have died with heroin. I haven't taken that and I'm still here so that's one good thing. One of my friends died from taking it when I was young so I've always been against it. I think at times taking alcohol has had a part in my offending.
220. I'm always thinking about the past. I always refer to the past when someone says something to me. It's pure trauma from the past.

221. It always makes me feel horrible when I drive past any of these places I was in as a boy. It makes me angry when I think back about the staff.

Treatment/support

222. I remember back in St Mary's there was a man and woman who came in to see me. They used to put lavender in the room, lie me down and massage my back and put music with sounds of water and things on for relaxation. They would talk to me about things. It was therapy but it didn't help.
223. I was trying to see a psychologist and did have one that came to see me in Barlinnie. She said I was going to be referred but then I was move to Perth. I always ask to see a psychologist and psychiatrist but it's hard to get to see one. I just want to see one so I know what's happening in my head.

Records

224. I have some of my records in reception here. They're from a children's panel I went to for my son. I've never asked to see my records but would like to do that.

Lessons to be Learned

225. I think they need to learn to care for people, learn to love them and treat them for what they are. Don't put anybody down or make them feel any worse than they already feel. Treat people the way they would like to be treated.

Hopes for the Inquiry

226. I hope that if there is anybody in care still doing these things to kids, they get what's coming to them. There have been some horrible things happened.

Other information

227. 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.....5/5/23