

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

ACB [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is ACB [REDACTED]. My maiden name was ACB [REDACTED]. I was known as ACB [REDACTED] as a child. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. [REDACTED] I [REDACTED] raised by [REDACTED] grandparents. [REDACTED] My mother was not present at home. She was an alcoholic. [REDACTED] She didn't know who my father was so I never had any contact with him. [REDACTED] I did not see my mother at all until I was three years old when my Grandmother died. My mother was at the funeral. [REDACTED] I didn't recognise her.
3. When my grandmother was alive I had slept in my grandparents bed. When my grandmother died I moved into [REDACTED] My uncle [REDACTED] started abusing me [REDACTED] It was physical and sexual abuse. He would touch me and make me masturbate him. [REDACTED] His name was [REDACTED]
4. When I was six years old I started school. On my first day I must have said something about my uncle to my teacher. I can't remember exactly what I said. The

teacher took me out of the class. The social work department and the police were called. [REDACTED]

5. Nobody told us what was going on except the police. They asked me what my uncle had done to me. I remember I couldn't say the words so I had to write them down. I wrote that he had "shaged me". I remember writing the "s" the wrong way around and only using one "g". The police told me that my uncle was in trouble. They said that he was being charged and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The police were really nice. I remember they gave me my first ever lollipop.

6. My uncle was prosecuted and sentenced to seven years in prison. He had lung cancer so he was released early. He died when I was eight years old.

7. [REDACTED] sent to a temporary placement for two weeks. [REDACTED] social worker was called Mrs Reuch [REDACTED] It was somewhere by the sea. A couple looked after [REDACTED] I can't remember their names. They were nice. They gave me a doll. I kept that doll until I was fourteen.

8. After two weeks, Mrs Reuch collected [REDACTED] from the temporary placement and drove [REDACTED] to Smyllum. She said that [REDACTED] going to a "nice place in the countryside". It was "just while things were sorted out". She gave [REDACTED] hardly any information. [REDACTED] I reckoned it was because of what I had said about [REDACTED] thought [REDACTED] going to be at Smyllum for a few weeks or months. I never imagined I would be there for eleven years.

9. On seeing Smyllum for the first time I was quite excited. It was a huge place with lots of children and places to play hide and seek. There were lots of fields to run around in and a big oak tree in the front field. There were two donkeys called Neddy and Katie and a vegetable patch. It really did look like a nice place for children. I was six, [REDACTED] It was 1968.

**Smyllum Children's Home, Lanark**

10. When I arrived, there were six different houses within Smyllum. The houses were separate and they all had their own staff. The houses were called St Joseph's, St Vincent's, Roncalli House, St Kentigern's House, St Mary's and Ogilvie House. In 1972-1973 Ogilvie House was moved into the main building and St Joseph's and St Vincent's were dissolved. St Joseph's and St Vincent's had been the boys' houses. There went from six house groups to only four.

11. [REDACTED] I [REDACTED] put into Ogilvie House. Sister <sup>EAC</sup>[REDACTED] was in charge for my first four or five years. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When Ogilvie House moved into the main building, Sister <sup>EAC</sup>[REDACTED] left Smyllum. I do not know where she went.

12. The nuns in charge of Ogilvie house during my time there were as follows:

1968-1973	Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED]
1973-1974	Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] (she was only temporarily in charge of Ogilvie House until Sister <sup>HAE</sup> [REDACTED] arrived. Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] was also [REDACTED])
1974 – 1976	Sister <sup>HAE</sup> [REDACTED]
1976 – 1979	Sister <sup>IAG</sup> [REDACTED]
1979 – 1981	Sister Vincent

I left Smyllum in 1979 so I only had a few months with Sister Vincent. I think she had been brought in to close Smyllum down.

13. There were civilian house staff that helped the nuns look after us. They lived on site at Ogilvie House. When I first arrived there was <sup>AFM</sup>[REDACTED] and Miss <sup>IAN</sup>[REDACTED]. I never knew Miss <sup>IAN</sup>[REDACTED] surname. When we moved to the main building in 1972, Miss <sup>AFQ</sup>[REDACTED] and another Miss <sup>IAN</sup>[REDACTED] started. After that we had Miss <sup>FBO</sup>[REDACTED] and <sup>AGL</sup>[REDACTED]. There was one other member of staff called <sup>ACV</sup>[REDACTED]. <sup>ACV</sup>[REDACTED] She was at Ogilvie House from when I was about nine years old until I

left. She was different to the other staff members. She was a really decent lady and was always nice to us. She did not live at Smyllum like the other staff and nuns. She lived in Lanark and would go home every day. I never saw her hit a child. All of the other staff did.

14. There was also a Sister Superior who was in charge of running Smyllum as a whole. The Sister Superiors in charge of Smyllum during my time there were as follows:

1968 – 1972	Sister EAA
1972-1978	Sister AGK
1978-1979	No Sister Superior for a year
1979-1981	Sister Vincent

#### **Routine at Smyllum Children's Home, Lanark**

##### *First day*

15. I arrived at Smyllum house and met by Sister EAC taken into the main house. On the right was the playroom and to the left was the TV room. Sister EAC took Mrs Reuch to the TV room. put next door in the playroom. I had been sick a couple of times on the journey to Smyllum. I had never been in a car like that before. I was not feeling well and immediately threw up on the playroom floor. Sister EAC and Mrs Reuch came rushing through. Sister EAC was nice in front of Mrs Reuch. She told two other girls to help clear it up. Sister EAC left the room to show Mrs Reuch out. We had to go and wave Mrs Reuch goodbye. When Sister EAC came back she had completely changed. She dragged me into the playroom and said "Clean that up young lady or I'll make you eat it". Those were her exact words. I remember because no-one had ever called me a lady before. I did not expect everything to be "sweetness and light" at Smyllum but I did not expect that.



16. We were not given a tour of Smyllum or shown around. I was on my own from the day I arrived. My sisters were put together in a different room away from me.
17. On my first night at Smyllum I remember waking up screaming. I was having a nightmare that this huge rabbit was coming to get me. Miss <sup>AFM</sup> had a room just through the wall from our dormitory. She came running in to the dorm and slapped me on the face. She said "You shut up or I'll give you something to cry about".
18. I wet the bed that night. In the morning the bed was stripped and I had to go for a cold shower. I had to go down a long corridor and down some stairs to where the bathrooms were. I had never had a shower before. We didn't have a bathroom at home in Parkhead. We usually washed our hair in the kitchen sink on a Saturday. I had never even seen a shower. The shower at Smyllum was turned on full blast. I thought I was going to drown. I really thought I was going to die.

#### *Baths/showers*

19. Initially I was in the separate Ogilvie House, before it became part of the main building. There were hand wash-basins and toilets on the ground floor. There was also a mezzanine floor where there was one shower, two sinks and then two baths. One of the baths was for the boys and one was for the girls. Each of the baths had a door on.
20. Saturday was the one day of the week we had a bath. The bath was filled up usually with really hot water. The eldest girls and the eldest boys got to bath first. There was a queue that went by age down to the youngest ones. It was "one in, one out". You didn't have much time. It was just like something out of the Victorian era. The bath water was never changed. If you were at the end of the queue, the bath water was pretty dirty and usually cold. It was far better to get a cold, dirty bath than right at the beginning when it was boiling hot. Some of the older children got scalded when they got in the bath first.

21. When Ogilvie house moved over to the main building, there was then one bath and one shower. You were allowed to choose whether to have a bath or a shower after the age of twelve. It was a little bit more private. It was a slightly different regime.
22. We would have to wash ourselves with carbolic soap. It was a hard lump. It started off a square shape and as it was used it got more rounded. The carbolic soap was replaced with Pears soap when I was about twelve. I have never been so happy to see regular bars of soap.

*Mornings and bed-time*

23. We would get up at 7.30 am. We would brush our teeth, wash our face and get dressed. We would then help the younger children get dressed. We would go for breakfast at 8 am. After breakfast we would have to wipe the tables, brush the floor and some other basic chores. We would then go to school.
24. Tea time was at 5pm. After tea, the younger children would brush their teeth and get ready for bed. The older children had to be in bed by 9 pm. Every Wednesday evening was Benediction at 6.30 pm.

*Dormitories*

25. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I was six so I was put in a dorm for 0-6 year olds, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
26. Initially, there were three girls dorms. The size of the dorm depended on the age group. The young ones had the smallest dorm of six children. There were twelve children in the 6-12 age group dorm. There were eight or nine children in the 12-15 age group dorm.



27. Ogilvie House was girls only but when it was moved to the main building in 1972 it became co-ed. The girls' and boys' dorms were kept separate. The rooms were small and the beds were quite close together. Each room had three or four beds in it. We had a mat beside each bed that we knelt on to do our prayers in the morning and evening. We were given a cubby-hole to keep our things. The cubby holes were A4 size within a large cupboard in the dorm. Everything had to be neat and tidy otherwise there would be trouble.

#### *Food*

28. We would eat meals in the dining room in Ogilvie House. There were 24 children in Ogilvie House and we would be split onto four tables of six. For breakfast we would always have cornflakes. When I was ten we had the choice of cornflakes or porridge. We always had milk and tea, never coffee. We got free milk at school too. There was bread, butter and jam on the table at every meal.
29. At lunch time we would return from school to eat in the dining room. Lunch was at 12 pm until 1 pm. The food was generally not too bad at lunch time. A woman called Mrs Forsyth would normally cook lunch. If she was on duty the food would be relatively good. She would normally cook lunch from Monday to Friday. She only worked as our cook until I was 14. After that we would get food delivered to the different house groups from the main kitchen.
30. Dinner or "tea" time was at 5 pm and the staff or the nuns would cook. Some of the staff were so young they couldn't cook at all. Often the food was really burnt and inedible. You had to eat everything that was on your plate. The nuns would force-feed you if you refused.
31. The food was the same on each separate day of the week. Every Friday we would have fish and every Sunday we would have chicken. On Sundays there would be a more fancy meal. I liked Sundays because I really liked chicken. There was always a fight for the drumstick.

*School*

32. I went to Smyllum Primary school to begin with. I was there from the age of six. We would go to the school building which was located up the hill within Smyllum grounds. It was 100 metres away from the main building on "School Hill". We would have lessons until 12 pm. We would return to Smyllum for prayers before lunch. After lunch we would go back to school until 4 pm. We would then have playtime for an hour until tea-time at 5 pm.
33. The headmistress at Smyllum Primary was a woman called Mrs AEW [REDACTED]. She took a special interest in me because I was bright. I was able to write when I was in primary one. No-one else in primary one could write. She could not understand how I had managed to learn to write as I had never been to school before. She realised that I was interested in languages so she started French lessons for me in primary seven. It was very unusual in those days. She also discovered that I could sing so she got me an audition for St Mary's Operatic Society. She also got me into the choir at St Mary's. She was a God-send.
34. I liked primary school and was top of the class. Academically I had caught up with [REDACTED]. In my school report Mrs AEW [REDACTED] said that I was a "gifted linguist and a gifted musician with a very expressive voice". She said that I should have a career in languages. She really encouraged me and was very supportive and protective. The education I received was excellent; Mrs AEW [REDACTED] made sure that I had a really good start.
35. My teachers at Smyllum Primary were:
- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Primary one           | Mrs AEW [REDACTED]  |
| Primary two and three | Miss Sweeney        |
| Primary four and five | Miss IAR [REDACTED] |
| Primary six and seven | Mrs AEW [REDACTED]  |

36. After Smyllum Primary, most of the children went on to St Mary's. I am not sure if the nuns actually ran St Mary's but it was certainly connected to St Mary's Parish. I never went to St Mary's. When I reached primary seven I had to take an IQ test. We were placed at high school according to how well we did in the test. I must have done well as I was sent to a different school called Our Lady's High school in Motherwell ("Our Lady's").
37. Our Lady's was huge and brand new. It had 2,500 pupils and was the largest school in Scotland at that time. I loved it and excelled. I received the best education. The pupils were funnelled into different classes according to their results in the IQ tests. In addition to the standard subjects, I began learning Latin, French, Spanish and Italian. The nuns wouldn't buy dictionaries or grammar books so I just had to remember everything. I developed a very good memory.
38. I had to take a bus to get to Our Lady's. I was in the athletics team so I had to get an early bus. It meant that I never saw any of the other children who went there.   

39. In my final year at Our Lady's, I got five A grades in my Highers but I got a D in maths. I had applied to Glasgow University and I had a conditional offer. I needed to get a better grade in maths. The school suggested that I stayed on for an extra year to re-take the maths exam and do a few other sixth-form studies. Smyllum refused to let me stay there for an extra year.
40. The school and my social worker really fought for me to stay at Smyllum. My teacher Mr Tully wrote a letter to Smyllum saying that I was a gifted student and it would be tragic if I did not get the opportunity to go to University. He said it would be a huge upheaval for me to leave Smyllum at that time. My social worker Lindsey Cameron said likewise. The nuns were not willing to listen. I was fostered out to a local woman for 9 months and thereafter I went to stay with my English teacher Mr Holden.



41. At the end of my additional school year, I got three A grades in my sixth-form studies but I still got a D in maths. I was devastated. Mr Holden was my English teacher. He wrote a letter of support to Glasgow University. I think his letter may have swung things in my favour as I was accepted onto the course.

#### *Homework*

42. At Smyllum I never had time to finish my homework or to study for my exams. Bed-time was at 9 pm and I was not allowed to stay up to finish my work. I used to lock myself in the toilets until after mid-night to continue working. Luckily I had a good memory so I normally passed my exams.

#### *Nuns clothing/Cross*

43. The nuns would wear a dark blue habit with a belt. The belt was the same colour as the habit. They would have a rope attached to their belt. It had a cross attached to the rope hanging down on the left hand side. The cross was a really substantial wooden cross with a metal Jesus on the crucifix. It was pretty heavy. Often the nuns would use their cross to hit you on the side of your head. It really hurt.

#### *Pocket money/Treats*

44. Every Saturday we went to confession at St Mary's. Afterwards, we were allowed to go into town to buy sweeties. We would go to the "Rock shop" and then go to the cinema. Everyone from Smyllum was allowed free entry to the matinee. It was a real treat.
45. I worked in the chapel until I was twelve. The nuns would stop your pocket money as a punishment sometimes. I then had a Saturday job in a local café. The nuns couldn't stop my wages then.

#### *"Ladies Houses"*

46. We would sometimes be sent to an occasion called "Ladies Houses". It was once a year and only for the best children who had been good all year long. We would be driven to a church hall in Carluke or Wishaw. Lots of families would come along. A family would take you to their house for the day. Quite often they would give you clothes, money and gifts.
47. I didn't get to go to Ladies Houses every year but when I did I loved it. I was really popular with the families so I would be given clothes, sweets, money. I remember the nuns saying "Oh didn't you do well? Well ok, give it here". The nuns would just take everything off you. They said that the clothes were to be distributed amongst the other children. Sister **HAE** would always come and take whatever you had been given. Often the gifts would just disappear. I don't know where they all went.

*Gifts/Personal possessions*

48. We had a second Mother Superior called Sister **AGK**. She was a penny pincher. If any of us came back to Smyllum with anything that was new or worth something, she would give instructions that it should be taken away. Gifts from home, from visitors or Ladies Houses were taken away. The nuns would say that they were communal. If someone got a toy for their birthday or Christmas it would become everyone's toy.
49. I used to read these "Diana" magazines. I would use my pocket money to buy them. I remember saving up my wages and going to buy a "Diana Annual" from the local shops. I absolutely loved it. When I took it back to Smyllum, it wasn't long before my annual was taken away from me. It was put in the playroom for everyone to use. The pages soon got ripped and dirty.
50. It was only if you received a new toy that it was taken away. I had a doll when I arrived at Smyllum that was not taken away from me. It was raggedy so I was allowed to keep it until I was fourteen. If you arrived at Smyllum with an old toy from home you were normally allowed to keep it because it was "filthy".

*Friendships*

51. When Ogilvie House moved to the main building, I was put into a dorm with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] her younger sister [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I became friends with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] We would play and hang around together. I also had a "friend" called [REDACTED] Apart from them, I had no friends at Smyllum.
52. Friendships were not encouraged. I think the nuns were afraid that we would gang up on them and have strength in numbers. They probably didn't want us to be talking about what they were doing to us or telling each other what was going on. The nuns would physically separate you if they saw that you were being friendly with someone.
53. Before we moved to the main house, I would play chess with my friend [REDACTED] [REDACTED] We had an old chess board and would play chess together in the playroom. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] would come in and say "Separate!". She would just kick the chess board over. We never knew why, she never gave us any explanation. Looking back, I think she just didn't want us to be happy.

*Clothing/uniform*

54. All of our clothing at Smyllum were "hand-me-downs". There was a huge cupboard at the end of the hall. It had tons of clothes in. The clothes I received were just what was available in the cupboard. Often the clothes would be too big or too small. They were always tatty and had holes in. It was embarrassing sometimes especially when we went into town on Saturdays. We could hear the locals muttering "Would you look at that skirt" or "Look at that poor wee wean with her hole in her trousers".
55. We wore a uniform for school from Monday to Friday. We were allowed to wear play clothes on Saturday. On Sunday we would wear our Sunday best clothes. We would have to wear these hats. They had an elastic band that went under your neck. If the band snapped it would get tighter and you would end up with a red mark under your neck.

56. If you were pretty, you would be given the best clothes. If you were a tom-boy like me you would get the worst of everything. I remember I had one pair of knickers from the age of eight until I was fourteen. They were red flowery knickers. When I got my period the sanitary pads couldn't fit in them. It was the first time I got a different pair of pants. They weren't new pants, they were from the cupboard.
57. Saturday was the laundry day. We would have our clothes washed and an old-fashioned wringer was used to dry them. The clothes would be hung up in the laundry airing cupboard or drying room. We only had one pair of underwear each. If you soiled your underwear, you would be told to wash them yourself in the sink. We would put them on the radiator to dry. You would have to hope that they were dry by the following day otherwise you would have to wear them wet.
58. There were wooden and metal hangers to hang your clothes up but I never had anything nice enough to hang up. The hangers became a favourite instrument for the nuns to hit us with. They would normally use their cross to hit you. If their cross wasn't available, they would hit you with a hanger.
59. Just before I was leaving Smyllum, Sister Vincent arrived. She saw that I was wearing a pair of bell bottoms that came half-way up my leg. She asked me whether I had been wearing them when I had gone out to Ladies Houses. I told her that I had. The next morning I had a pile of new clothes on the end of my bed. It was the first time I had ever received new clothes from the nuns.

#### *Hair*

60. Up until the age of twelve, we were not allowed to have long hair. It was to stop us from having lice. If you were one of the nuns "pets" you were allowed long hair and could wear them in ringlets.
61. We would wash our hair on Saturday because it had to be nice for church on Sunday.

*Periods/Puberty*

62. The nuns had never taught us anything about periods. Before attending high school I had never studied biology. I did not know anything about menstruating so I was totally unprepared. I got my period aged eleven. I did not understand what was happening. I literally thought that I was bleeding to death. I thought I was dying. I ran out of the toilet and told Sister <sup>HAE</sup> [REDACTED]. She told me it was the devil's curse. She said that periods were a punishment to prevent me from "being a bad girl".
63. I never received any medication or support. Sometimes I would be doubled over in pain. I would have to ask the nuns in front of all the other girls and boys for a sanitary towel. The nuns would only give us one sanitary towel at a time. They were Dr Whites towels that were big thick things, like a nappy. They came with a belt and there wasn't room in my pants for them. I discovered years later that I had endometriosis which was why I had such heavy painful periods. Sometimes I had to ask for a new sanitary towel every two or three hours.
64. I had no real contact with the older girls or with my sisters. They were kept separate from us. They were put into different dorms and on different tables in the dining room. Friendships with the older girls were not encouraged. I didn't really have any support or any one that I could ask about periods and puberty.
65. We had no books or internet to learn about our changing bodies or sex. Anything to do with sex was taboo. If the nuns thought that we were touching ourselves, they would tell us we would go to hell. I thought I could get pregnant from a French kiss. We were completely closed off from the outside world. It fostered warped ideas about things.

*Bed-wetting*

66. When I arrived at Smyllum aged six, I regularly wet the bed. It lasted for about six months. I stopped wetting the bed until I was eight. When I was eight I began being



sexually abused by one of the priests called Father <sup>ADA</sup> [REDACTED] I started wetting the bed again after that. It lasted until the age of ten.

67. When I re-started wetting the bed, the nuns became even worse. As a six year old it was deemed almost acceptable to wet the bed. When I was older I was chastised much more. I felt so ashamed. I didn't have any control. I would pray to the angels to have a dry bed in the morning. Often I would try to hide that I'd wet the bed. I felt like a failure and a bad person. I thought it was inconsiderate of me to cause problems for the nuns and the staff. The nun's attitude was that bed-wetters were lazy and just couldn't be bothered to get out of bed. When it happened two or three times a week the nuns would get really angry. They would stop me from taking my sheets to the laundry and say "You can sleep in your own muck".
68. Whoever was on duty would shame and humiliate me in front of the other children for bed-wetting. It was often Miss <sup>AFM</sup> [REDACTED], Miss <sup>IAN</sup> [REDACTED] Miss [REDACTED] Sister <sup>HAE</sup> [REDACTED] and particularly Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] would make me strip naked and then strip my bed in front of everyone. Sometimes I would have the dirty sheets draped over my head. I would be dragged along the corridor to the showers. Sometimes I would have to walk completely naked along the corridor to the showers by myself. I would carry my soiled sheets and try to use my hands to cover my private parts. The boys dorms were all along the corridor. There were glass windows in their dorms that faced out into the corridor. The boys could look out and see me walk past naked. They would laugh and point at me. I was developing and felt very uncomfortable about my body. It was deliberately shameful.

#### *Holidays*

69. I remember being taken on holiday to Girvan. I loved the seaside so I would look forward to it to begin with. We would stay in a different kind of house to Smyllum. It was called Glengarry House. It was a boarding school or maybe another care home. It had smaller rooms that were nicer than we were used to. We were given ice cream every day at lunch time.

70. The downside to Girvan was that we had to go to the beach every day. We were given no sunscreen or shade. If you got burnt by the sun it was "too bad". A lot of the children were like me and had very fair skin. I had red hair and freckles and I got terribly burnt. I developed huge red blisters all over my shoulders that would pop. The nuns never gave us any calamine lotion or a cardigan to cover up. I still had to go out in the sun all day every day.
71. The nuns had ice-lollies, cold drinks and parasols to sit under. We were not given any water, food or shade. We were not allowed to sit with them in the shade or go back to the house. Sometimes the nuns would invite a certain girl to come and sit with them. We knew that it meant the nun would try to "touch up" the girl. We did not really want to sit with the nuns in case they tried to touch us up.
72. It was quite a weird situation at Girvan. In some ways it was better than Smyllum but it was really difficult with the nuns rubbing our noses in it. There was nothing worse than sitting there watching the nuns licking ice creams when we were sweltering hot, burning and thirsty. The nuns told us we had to stay on the beach from 9 am until 12 pm. We would go back to the house for lunch and then back to the beach all afternoon. By then the beach had kind of lost its appeal.
73. There was a priest called Willy Monaghan who would come to Girvan with us. He was lovely. He was what you would imagine a "real priest" to be like. He was at Smyllum for five years. He would take his own holiday time to come to Girvan with us. He would try to make the holiday better for us.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

74. Birthdays were not generally celebrated unless you were one of the nun's "pets". [REDACTED] was at Smyllum from the age of two weeks and was one of the nuns "pets". She was very spoilt by everyone; everyone loved her. She got presents on her birthday. I never witnessed any other child receive a present for their birthday.

75. I never got presents, a card or a cake on my birthday except when I was sixteen years old. The only kind member of staff, <sup>ACV</sup> [REDACTED] gave me a present. She said it was my sweet sixteenth. She gave me some underwear and some perfume. I remember the perfume was called "Worth".
76. On my seventeenth birthday Sister <sup>IAG</sup> [REDACTED] allowed me to have a party in the playroom. Some of my school friends came and we had cake, Irn-Bru and so on. That was the first time I had ever had any kind of celebration on my birthday. I did not receive any gifts.
77. Christmas was a difficult time for me. Quite a few of the other children at Smyllum went home for Christmas. They would come back with lots of new things. They were allowed to keep the things that they "needed". We would get a present from the nuns at Christmas but it was never the kind of gift that you would want. It was always something that was useful or needed. I always wanted a watch or a transistor radio. I remember getting a pair of slippers. One year I got a hairbrush to replace one that had been broken from beating me.
78. There was a local hotel called the Carlton Bridge Hotel where some of the children were invited to have a slap-up meal and to meet Santa. Only certain children were allowed to go. It depended on whether you had been good or not. I went twice during my time at Smyllum. It was amazing. I had lamb and mint sauce. I had never had it before. Santa gave us presents. I remember the girls getting a vanity set.

#### *Visits*

79. I did not have any regular visits from my family. Initially, my grandfather came to visit but he was quite elderly and he became ill. He died when I was eleven. I was told that my mother had come to visit once. She had not been allowed to see us because she was drunk. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

80. Occasionally I would see other parents visiting children at Smyllum but it was not very often. There were [REDACTED] twins called [REDACTED]. They were only two years old. Their father would visit Smyllum every single week. They weren't there for long. Their father was obviously trying to get them back. Family visits were actively discouraged.

*Social work support/visits*

81. I had Mrs Reuch as my social worker for two years. She was replaced by a man called Mr Dobson. When they were my social workers I did not receive any regular visits. Mrs Reuch drove us to Smyllum and I never saw her again after that. I saw Mr Dobson twice; Once at the Pitt Street social work office, once at Smyllum. He never spoke to me other than to tell me that he was my new social worker. He did not ask how I was doing he just went to speak to Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] behind closed doors. Both spoke only to the nuns, never to me. If I had seen a social worker annually or bi-annually, at least there would have been a channel of communication. I could have had a way of telling someone what was happening.
82. I didn't see a social worker properly until I was sixteen when Lindsey Cameron took over from Mr Dobson. She was straight out of university where she had studied French and Spanish. She took an interest in me because I was studying French and Spanish. She was brilliant. She would come to see me once a month and take me down to town. We would go to a café and have something to eat.
83. Lindsey Cameron was by far my best social worker but she was young, new to the job and had arrived so late. I told her some of what was happening. I think she knew what was going on. She was very perceptive. Lindsey said "I can't really do much without rocking the boat but I can promise you I'll be good to you". I realised that if I did tell her what was going on she would be trapped between a rock and a hard place. She would be putting her job in jeopardy. I just accepted that I had a nice social worker and tried to enjoy it as much as I could.

84. Lindsey did try to make my life better and she did fight for me on various occasions. She would bring me things like lavender bath salts and lavender talcum powder, little luxury things that I had never had before. She really tried to help. When Smyllum refused to keep me for an additional school year, Lindsey fought hard to persuade them otherwise. She told them that my Highers were coming up and I needed all the support I could get. She got the sack shortly after that. She was accused of having an unhealthy relationship with me. They said that she had lost her judgement.

#### *Healthcare*

85. From the age of twelve I had a once yearly check-up with the local GP. His name was Dr Allan. He would measure my weight and height every year. He would ask if I was menstruating yet and whether I was still wetting the bed. I wet the bed until I was ten years old. He noted everything down. His records must be somewhere.
86. I think Dr Allan shared a practice with a dentist called Dr Aitkenhead. I never saw a dentist during my time at Smyllum - even when I broke my tooth. I showed Dr Allan my tooth when I saw him. He just wrote it down in my notes. We didn't get many sweets so not many of us got toothache.
87. Sister **FAM** was the nurse at Smyllum and she could fix most things. She had a little office beside the community room. If she couldn't fix the problem then she would arrange for Dr Allan to attend. It was on an ad hoc basis for more serious things. It was not a regular occurrence. A lot of us had bumps and bruises through being punched and kicked by the nuns and staff. If we went to see Sister **FAM** I don't know if she ever wrote anything down or not. I know that there was trouble if you told anyone else what had happened.

#### *Religious instruction*

88. Religion was all around us at Smyllum. We learnt the Bible. The nuns would come around and spray holy water on us. Father **BAK** and the nuns taught us the



catechism. There was a lot of emphasis put on good and evil. We were constantly told that we would go to hell if we did this or that. We were told that we would go blind if we touched ourselves. It was a Cardinal sin. It was the usual 1960's and 1970's dogma.

89. We had prayers called "The Angelis" every day before lunch and again after dinner at 6 pm. It was communal and every house group had to attend. Every Wednesday evening was Benediction and every Sunday we had mass. On a Saturday we would go to confession down in the local town at St Mary's.
90. There were three parish priests at St Mary's - Father BAK, Father ADA and Father O'Hare. Father O'Hare said mass at St Mary's but never came to Smyllum. I remember going to confession with him on several occasions. I remember telling him about the abuse that was going on. I said that Father AFS had done this and Sister AGK had done that. He said "God have mercy on you young lady" or words to that effect. I said "I am not lying Father, I don't lie and I am scared to lie". On two occasions he told me to "Pray for them". He had heard what I had said and just told me to pray for these people. I remember thinking that it was a strange thing for him to say. I thought "No, no, I need your prayers, not them!". Sometimes I prayed that the nuns and priests would get sick or something would happen and they would have to be removed from Smyllum.
91. I had no problem with the religious teaching. It taught me to be a good moral person. I was good at reading and used to do the Sunday readings at mass. I had my little job in the chapel where I would open up the Bible at the right page for the readings and the priest. I can still quote the Bible today. I am still a practising Catholic.

#### *Grandfather's death*

92. I was called from the playroom to the community room one day. I was eleven years old. There was this white old-fashioned phone in there. My Aunt [REDACTED] was on the phone to tell me that my grandfather had died. She said "I am sorry to say my dad has died". I just started crying.

93.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I remember going to the corner of the room and just blubbing. My granddad was nice. He was the only family I had. It was a strange way to hear about his death. It was the only phone call I ever received at Smyllum. There was no comfort from the nuns. The attitude was "Are you done yet? Hang up".

94. There was a also a pay phone beside the laundry on the ground floor. I think the staff used it to call friends and family. We never used the phone because it was a pay-phone and we never had any money.

*Running away*

95. I never ran away from Smyllum. I had nowhere to run. Both of my grandparents were dead and I had no parents to speak of. I just decided to keep my head down and "do my time".

96. Some of the other children did run away. I would see them come back bruised and battered. [REDACTED] who shared my room would run away a lot. There was also a girl called [REDACTED] who was in Roncalli House. I remember she ran away but never came back. She was run over by a car and died.

97. Occasionally the police would bring back children who had run away. On two occasions I saw the police car outside and snuck out to tell them what was happening at Smyllum. There was a PC Allan who had ginger hair. There was another more senior officer whose name I can't remember. He had dark hair and dark eyes. I told them that I didn't like it at Smyllum and that the nuns were doing things. I remember explicitly saying "They are hurting me". I told them that I was not the only one. I told them that my sisters were being abused too. On both occasions they took me by the arm straight to the nuns. On one occasion it was to Sister EAC [REDACTED], on one occasion it was to Sister AGK [REDACTED]

98. When it was Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED], the police officer said "Come with me". I thought he was going to confront her but instead he just gave me back. I remember Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] saying "Thank you very much officer, you are absolutely right, she has an over-active imagination. We are so sorry that she bothered you". As soon as the police had left I was beaten by Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED]
99. I learnt very quickly that I couldn't trust the police. Back then the police felt their duty was to the nuns, these holy women. They just did not believe the children. I assume that the police officers were Catholic. They instantly believed Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED]. As a Catholic you are taught to respect priests and nuns. You are taught to protect other Catholics, stick up for them, believe the best of them. They certainly wouldn't want to believe that the nuns would lie or do something wrong.

*Rumours/playground stories*

100. There had been a boy at Smyllum called Sammy Carr. He had died in 1964 whilst at Smyllum. It was before my time but everyone still talked about him. I was told about it by the other children as a sort of mythical story. I can't remember all of the details. The story amongst the children was that he had been hit over the head with a golf club by Sister <sup>AEG</sup> [REDACTED] or <sup>BAC</sup> [REDACTED]. I heard stories that blamed both of them individually so I don't know. Sammy Carr had died from a massive brain haemorrhage. His family were convinced that he had been killed by a blow to the head. The official story was that he had eaten rat poison and died. The staff would often use the story of Sammy Carr as a threat of what would happen to us if we didn't behave. <sup>AFM</sup> [REDACTED] and <sup>AFQ</sup> [REDACTED] in particular. They would say "Mind you don't end up like Sammy Carr".
101. There was another story about a boy called Frances McColl. He had died in 1969. The story was that he had been kicked to a pulp by one of the nuns wearing pointy boots. The nuns did wear horrible leather boots. They were like lethal weapons.

102. There were a lot of rumours about sexual abuse. It wasn't just abuse of the girls, it was the boys too. The student priests were the worst because they had free access to the children. We would hear about the girls feeling sore or uncomfortable because they had been touched somewhere. There was one boy called [REDACTED] who was at Smyllum when I was six or seven years old. The rumour was that [REDACTED] had been bleeding from his backside. I didn't see it or hear from him directly but someone told me about it. They said that he had been "shagged in his bum". It could just have been Chinese whispers so I can't say for a fact that it happened. We certainly all knew about it though.

### **Abuse at Smyllum**

#### *Force-feeding*

103. Sister <sup>EAC</sup>[REDACTED] and Sister <sup>HAE</sup>[REDACTED] would force-feed the children. I regularly saw Sister <sup>EAC</sup>[REDACTED] force-feed children in the dining room. If the child vomited, they would be forced to eat their own vomit. It was just as Sister <sup>EAC</sup>[REDACTED] had threatened me on my first day when I had vomited in the playroom. Sister <sup>HAE</sup>[REDACTED] would make someone else hold your nose whilst she would force food into your mouth with a fork. If you vomited it up, she would hold your face down and put it in the vomit. She would rub your face in the vomit and tell you to eat it up.
104. On one occasion I refused to eat the chicken supreme at dinner. It was really badly burnt and totally inedible. They tried to force me to eat it but they couldn't hold me down. By that time I was a bit older and quite athletic and strong. They just couldn't force the food into me. I was told that I would have to eat it for breakfast. They gave me the same chicken supreme for breakfast but again I couldn't eat it. They gave it to me again at lunch. Again I couldn't eat it. By this time it was going off as it had not been kept in the fridge overnight. They gave it to me again at dinner but I managed to throw it away in a bin when the nuns weren't looking. I told them that I had eaten it. It was the first time I had ever lied.

*Corporal punishment/Discipline*

105. There were things that the nuns did which just seemed like Smyllum policy. One was being hit by the nuns with their crosses. Another was being hit with the metal hangers or a hairbrush. Sometimes they would drag you along by your ear at such a quick pace you were almost in the air. They would also knock you on the head with their knuckles. The boys would often be punished by being put in the “dummy corner”. They would have to stand in the corner with their hands behind their heads facing the corner of the room. Those were the basic things that the nuns did. Sometimes there were the really nasty nuns who would hit you with a hard leather slipper or kick you with their spiky boots.
106. The nuns would find out what your weakness was and cater their punishments accordingly. If they discovered that you were scared of water, they would hold your head under water. With me, the nuns knew that their words and beatings didn’t work. They discovered that I was scared of the dark so they would lock me in the pantry. They would deliberately put the key in the keyhole so that no light at all could get in. They would say “Now you think about what you have done young lady and I will come and get you later”. The other children and staff were ordered not to open the door. That was the worst punishment for me. I would have to stay in the dark pantry for about an hour.
107. I think that every child at some point during their stay at Smyllum was subjected to eating their own vomit, being locked in a dark room, beaten and bullied and so on. It didn’t happen to every child, every day but I would say virtually every child I saw at some point or another received those punishments. You could tell that the children were all hyper-vigilant just waiting, all asking themselves “Ok, what kind of mood are the nuns/staff in today? What is going to happen today? Am I the one that they are going to pick on?”. There was a constant feeling of insecurity and uncertainty.

*Washing mouth out with carbolic soap*



108. The nuns would regularly “wash your mouth out” with carbolic soap. It was normally if they thought you were lying or answering back. A lump of carbolic soap would literally be stuffed in your mouth. I had my mouth washed out with carbolic soap by Sister <sup>AFR</sup> and Sister <sup>HAE</sup>. The soap was really strong. Even though you rinsed your mouth afterwards everything tasted of soap for two or three days. It was a disgusting thing to do to a child. It was a relief when they changed the carbolic soap to Pears soap. It wasn't quite so easy to get into our mouths.

### *Bullying*

109. When I started doing well at school the nuns started to call me “snobby” and “Madam <sup>ACB</sup>”. Sister <sup>HAE</sup> used to call me “snobby little madam” and “Her Highness”. The children would hear the nuns and pick up on it. They would repeat it. I would tell myself that “sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me”. I remember thinking “if this is what it takes to get a better life then I don't mind”.
110. I think the nuns picked on me because I was a threat to them. I was clever at school so the teachers believed me more than the other children. I was a good girl, I never did anything wrong, never got the belt and never got punished. I wanted to do well and I had great teachers who took an interest in me. The nuns knew that if any of the other children made an allegation against them, the child would be disbelieved; They would just be deemed a liar and an attention-seeker. My teachers on the other hand would believe me and the nuns realised that.

### *Sexual Abuse*

#### *Father <sup>AFS</sup>*

111. Father <sup>AFS</sup> was an assistant priest in his twenties. Although he never did anything directly sexual towards me, I would like to talk about the way he behaved.
112. Father <sup>AFS</sup> was studying at St Vincent's Seminary at Cardross.   
 He had free access to children at Smyllum. He would take

one of the girls called [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] house at weekends. It was to give her a "nice time".

113. One weekend I went with [REDACTED] to Father <sup>AFS</sup> [REDACTED]. She was scared and didn't want to be left alone with him. We were both in his parent's house and Father <sup>AFS</sup> [REDACTED] asked me to leave him alone with [REDACTED]. I said no. A bit later on he asked me to go and get him an ice-cream. I said no because I didn't want to leave [REDACTED] alone. I was never asked to go back to Father <sup>AFS</sup> [REDACTED] again.

114. Father <sup>AFS</sup> [REDACTED] would come to Smyllum quite often. He would walk into the room I shared with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. He would always push his way into our room when we were changing. He was just a dirty old man.

Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED]

115. Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] was the Sister Superior after Sister <sup>EAA</sup> [REDACTED]. I would like to talk about an incident involving her.
116. When I was twelve or thirteen I was a keen runner. I was going through puberty and had started developing. Mrs Boyle was my PE teacher at school. She told me that I needed a bra. I told Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] what Mrs Boyle had said. Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] told me to go to her room with her. She told me to remove my top. She started feeling and squeezing my breasts. I think she gained some sexual pleasure from it. She said that she was looking to see what size I was. I ran out of the room without my top on. I ended up getting a bra from Mrs Boyle, I never got a bra from Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED].
117. I think Sister <sup>AGK</sup> [REDACTED] liked me. She never punished me. I had won a part in a production called "South Pacific" in the local town. She would take me into town to practise. I think she was quite proud of me. I always felt that she was trying to touch me.

Father <sup>ADA</sup> [REDACTED]

118. I would like to talk about Father ADA who was one of the parish priests at St Mary's. He started sexually abusing me when I was preparing for my confirmation. He used to come to Smyllum regularly. It must have been April or May 1970 when the abuse started.
119. I had a job cleaning the chapel for pocket money. On Sunday we had mass at 9.30 am. Before mass I would go down to the chapel and clean the pews and prepare the readings. I would go down alone, earlier than the other children. When Father ADA discovered that I attended the church by myself, he started to come to the church to see me.
120. The abuse started gradually and progressed. We wore very short skirts for mass on Sunday. Father ADA started by putting his hand up my skirt. He would then put my hands on him. I could feel he was erect. He would make me rub him up and down his genitalia.
121. I remember saying to Father ADA that I thought it was wrong. It felt wrong. He asked me what I had learnt at catechism. I said that I had learnt to be "a soldier of God". Father ADA said that I was helping a man of God so I should be "a good little soldier". He said that what I was doing wasn't wrong because he was a man of God.
122. One Sunday, just before mass at 9.30 am I was with Father ADA. I was rubbing him up and down. He was holding my hand around his erect penis. One of the other nuns called Sister AFR walked in. She flung me across the room and broke my arm. I remember having communion just an hour later and not being able to lift my arm up to receive the body of Christ. Father ADA gave me the sternest of looks.
123. I was never alone with Father ADA again after that. I lost my job cleaning the church due to my broken arm. It meant that I didn't need to spend time with him alone anymore. I always avoided him around Smyllum. I wouldn't even look at him in Communion. I would put my head up and open my mouth to receive the bread and



wine but I would always close my eyes. When I was twelve I changed school. I sang in a different choir so I didn't have to see Father <sup>ADA</sup> after that.

### *Physical Abuse*

Sister <sup>AFR</sup>

124. There were two nuns at Smyllum called with the same name.. One was spelt <sup>AFR</sup> the other <sup>AFR</sup>. It is Sister <sup>AFR</sup> that I would like to talk about.
125. Sister <sup>AFR</sup> was quite old. She was not in charge of any groups. She was quite aggressive. She was best friends with Sister <sup>FAM</sup> the nurse.
126. It was Sister <sup>AFR</sup> who broke my arm. I heard the door in the Sachristy creak open and Sister <sup>AFR</sup> walked in. The look on her face; I had never seen such a rage. Instead of saying "Father <sup>ADA</sup> what are you doing?" she looked at me and scolded me for being a "hoor". She pronounced it like that. She grabbed my arm and pulled me away. She flung me across the room. I hit my head on the wall.
127. Afterwards, I tried to tell Sister <sup>EAC</sup> what she had done. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> just sent me back to see Sister <sup>AFR</sup>. Sister <sup>AFR</sup> told me to clean my "filthy mouth" out with carbolic soap. She stuffed a lump of carbolic soap into my mouth.
128. I remember not understanding what Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had meant when she called me a "hoor". I asked one of the older girls called [REDACTED] She said it meant prostitute, someone who sells sex for money. I was really shocked.
129. The incident was not reported to the police or the social work department. I was told not to tell anyone what Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had done. The people who knew that Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had broken my arm were:

Sister <sup>AFR</sup>

Father <sup>ADA</sup>

Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED]  
 Sister <sup>FAM</sup> [REDACTED] – the nurse  
 Mrs <sup>AEW</sup> [REDACTED] – my headmistress  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]

Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED]

130. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] was involved in a number of different incidents of physical abuse. She was totally unpredictable. She did not have that much to say. She was quite hot and cold. She could be nice or nasty. She could fly into a rage and none of us really knew why. It didn't have to be anything we had said or done. Sometimes she was just in a bad mood. She was in charge of Ogilvie House when I arrived in 1968. She left when I was ten in 1972-1973. She was friends with my grandfather because he was from Derry in Ireland. His name was [REDACTED]
131. When I had my arm broken , I told Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] who . told me to "stop lying". She sent me back to see Sister <sup>AFR</sup> [REDACTED] and then Sister <sup>FAM</sup> [REDACTED] the nurse. Both of them also said that I was lying. The following day my arm had become swollen, blue and I couldn't move it. I went to school but I was sent back by the headmistress Mrs <sup>AEW</sup> [REDACTED]. She insisted that I be taken to hospital.
132. On instructions from Sister <sup>EAA</sup> [REDACTED] the Sister Superior, Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] took me to Law Hospital. I remember she drove me in the Variety Sunshine bus. She said that if I "dared tell them" what Sister <sup>AFR</sup> [REDACTED] had done, she would break my other arm. I was confused because Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] was telling me to lie. I asked her "But how can I lie?". Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] said I could because I was protecting a woman of God. I remember being very confused.
133. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] told me to tell everyone that I had fallen out of a tree. At the hospital, she tried not to leave me alone with the doctors or nurses at any stage. The doctor took me to get an x-ray. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> [REDACTED] wanted to come into the x-ray room too. She

wasn't allowed to because of the radiation. When we were alone in the x-ray room, the nurse asked me what had happened. I didn't want to lie so I said that I couldn't remember. She said "How can you not remember?". I just looked down and went quiet. I was scared of what Sister <sup>EAC</sup> would do if I told the nurse what had happened.

134. When the doctor was putting the cast on my arm, he asked me what had happened. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> was present. I told the doctor that I had fallen out of a tree. He said that the injuries were not consistent with a fall. He said that I had a spiral fracture. A spiral fracture could only happen when your arm was twisted. If it was caused by a fall, it would have been called a "clean fracture". I could see that he thought that there was something else going on. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> just said "Ok we need to go" or something like that. When I turned to leave, the doctor gave me a lollipop and said "Now you take care of yourself". He had this really concerned look on his face.
135. On the journey back Sister <sup>EAC</sup> told me not to tell anyone what Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had done or what the doctor had said. She repeated her threat; I remember her exact words were "If you tell anyone about this young lady, I will break your other arm".
136. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> would get really angry with me if I ever spoke back to her. She would just fly into a rage. On one occasion I spoke back to her and she dragged me by my hair and flung me against the wall between the TV room and the playroom. I literally saw stars like in the comic books. I broke my tooth and had a thumping headache. I think I broke my nose as well. I still have a deviated septum in my nose which causes sinus problems.
137. That night I was moaning in pain from my nose and tooth. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> gave me some paracetamol and a wet face cloth to hold against my face. I couldn't chew. She did not take me to see the nurse Sister <sup>FAM</sup>. She did not take it seriously. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> said that it was a milk tooth so it would fall out. The tooth fell out a year later.
138. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> was not all bad. On occasion she could show fairness. I remember being punished for something and Sister <sup>EAC</sup> told me that I was "a bold girl". I



had to go straight to bed from school with no tea or supper. I didn't go straight to bed as I thought Sister <sup>EAC</sup> wouldn't notice. The nuns didn't usually go into the drying cupboard where I was hiding. On this occasion Sister <sup>EAC</sup> did come into the committee house and saw me. She said "You bold young woman, you get to bed right now". I said "I'm sorry Sister, genuinely". She said "That's ok, you don't need to go to bed". I thought "Wow!", Sister <sup>EAC</sup> is showing fairness.

Sister <sup>HAE</sup>

139. Sister <sup>HAE</sup> was nasty to everyone but she had a real problem with me. There was a bit of a power struggle with me and her. She used a number of different forms of physical abuse. She would hit me on the head with a hairbrush. Often she would hit me so hard it would break the hairbrush in two. I would then have to go without pocket money for weeks until I had paid for a new hairbrush. She would shame and chastise me for bed-wetting. She would twist my ears really hard. She would hit me on the head with her knuckles. She would always push, slap and kick me or hit me with her cross. If I was rude I would be slammed into a wall.
140. We all witnessed her doing things to each other. Sometimes it was quite a relief that she was picking on someone else other than you. She hit all of the girls in my room. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were all slapped and hit with her crucifix at some point. [REDACTED] was very often held by her hair. [REDACTED] was hit with an old-fashioned leather slipper. The slipper had hard leather on the bottom. On one occasion she was hit for about ten minutes with that blasted slipper.
141. On one occasion I told Sister <sup>HAE</sup> to stop hitting a boy called [REDACTED]. He was a good boy but a bit bold sometimes. He got a few thumpings. Sister <sup>HAE</sup> said "You watch your mouth young lady". I said "No, you watch your hand". She pulled me by the hair and stuffed a bar of carbolic soap into my mouth. She made me drink a plastic cup of water to wash it down.

142. On another occasion, I remember sitting on my hands to keep them warm. I was ten or eleven years old. It was in the dining room. Sister <sup>HAE</sup> pulled the chair from under me. She said I should stop "touching myself". I remember thinking "but I wasn't touching myself".
143. I broke my tail-bone in the fall. I didn't know that it was broken. I couldn't sit down and had trouble going to the toilet. I went to see the nurse Sister <sup>FAM</sup> but she didn't believe me. Eventually I saw the local doctor, Dr Allen. He pushed on my tail-bone and I squealed in pain. He said it was broken. I had to take a little rubber ring around with me from then on.

Sister <sup>FAM</sup>

144. Sister <sup>FAM</sup> was the nurse at Smyllum. She was best friends with Sister <sup>AFR</sup>. Sister <sup>FAM</sup> did not believe me when I went to see her with injuries. She would tell me I was a liar. I remember when Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had broken my arm I was sent to see Sister <sup>FAM</sup>. She said that I was lying and sent me away. Then my arm turned blue and I had to go to hospital. There was also the occasion when Sister <sup>HAE</sup> had pulled a chair out from under me and I had broken my tail-bone. Sister <sup>FAM</sup> again said that I was lying and wouldn't help.

Sister <sup>IAG</sup> (She told the children to call her Sister <sup>IAG</sup>)

145. Sister <sup>IAG</sup> really did not like me from the outset. She started at Smyllum when I was fourteen. She had been to college at [REDACTED] and studied [REDACTED]. She thought she was better than me and made it her mission to break me down. I wasn't the only child she picked on. She really tried to break down another boy called [REDACTED]. She picked on [REDACTED] because he would fight back. She picked on me because I never cried. It was part of my defence strategy.
146. Sister <sup>IAG</sup> purposely tried to make me cry in front of the other children. She would say deeply personal things to me in front of the other children like "Your mother was a whore; You will end up the same as her", "You fucked your uncle",

"Don't think that you are going to be anything in life young lady". She would poke me with her finger in my chest. I would have lots of little bruises. She would say "You need to cry, it's not good for you. I need to break you down. You can't have a wall up, you can't be this hard". She would make it seem as though I was abnormal for not crying. I needed to have a wall up to survive in Smyllum. It didn't make me hard inside but I certainly did not want her or the other nuns to see that I was weak or vulnerable. They would have taken advantage of it.

147. Sister IAG would also find extra punishments for me. She would send me to bed without food. She would prevent me from doing my job at the weekend so I that I wouldn't get my wage. Anything to break me, it was psychological as well as physical abuse.
148. Sister IAG would constantly try to belittle my achievements. She would say things like "Even though you got five A's in your O-Levels, it doesn't mean that you will go to university". I remember when I was seventeen I had won the Modern Languages prize and the trophy for the most outstanding pupil at Our Lady's High school. She was driving me to Motherwell for the prize-giving. I had my hair down loose and I was wearing my moccasin shoes that I always wore. Sister IAG told me I had to wear my hair tied back. She told me I had to wear these really horrible clumpy shoes. I realise now that she just wanted me to look bad on stage receiving my awards and making a speech.
149. She would also try to ruin my running competitions. She wouldn't let me have shoes to run in. I would only have my school moccasins to wear. Sometimes I would have to run bare foot. Again, she would deliberately try to make me look bad. Whenever she thought I was doing well or "going up", she would try to bring me down. I was this kid from nowhere doing really well and all she wanted was to pull me down, remind me of where I came from and tell me that I would go back there. I remember thinking "Why aren't you proud of me?".
150. Sister IAG also tried to sabotage my schooling. She would spill things on my home-work deliberately. She would make me go to bed at 9 pm every night so that I



couldn't finish my homework. I had to sneak into the toilet until midnight to finish it. I told my social worker Lindsey Cameron what was happening. She said "I'll see what I can do". The next thing I knew I was being told off by Sister IAG [REDACTED]. She gave me a couple of thumps and said "You stop telling tales"

151. A while later my head teacher Mr Tully told me that I was slipping a bit at school. I told him that Sister IAG [REDACTED] was making my life difficult. I don't know if she was removed but she left Smyllum very abruptly after that.

AFM [REDACTED]

152. AFM [REDACTED] was a member of staff at Smyllum when I first arrived. She was really nasty and aggressive. I had nightmares and I wet the bed when I first arrived. She would drag me along the floor to have a shower. She would be very violent towards me for no reason. She was the worst.

153. When Sister AFR [REDACTED] had broken my arm, AFM [REDACTED] had tried to lift my arm up. She told me to "stop faking it". After I had been to the hospital and had my cast put on, I went to show her. I said "Look, I wasn't faking it". She whacked me over my head and told me never to speak to her like that again.

154. AFM [REDACTED] would often use the story of Sammy Carr as a threat of what would happen to us if we didn't behave. She would tell me it would happen to me.

IAR [REDACTED]

155. IAR [REDACTED] was my teacher at Smyllum Primary school in primary five and six. She was a nasty teacher. She did everything to down-play my achievements. She would say things like "Don't get above your station young lady, you are just a big fish in a little pond". In my school reports she would begrudgingly say "I hate to admit it but she has maintained her progress since primary three and she is now top of the class. We will see how she does when she gets to primary six".

156. IAR [REDACTED] was quite violent towards the other children in class. She would wrap their knuckles with a ruler. She would also use her big thick leather belt. The belt would hang on a little hook on the wall beside the black board. She would use it to hit children on the back-side or on the backs of their legs. She loved using her belt, she seemed to enjoy it. She never hit me because I never gave her a reason to. I was probably the only child she did not whack with that belt.

*Teaching staff who were aware of abuse*

157. I told a number of my teachers at school about the abuse I was suffering at Smyllum. Their names were:

Smyllum Primary

Mrs AEW [REDACTED] (headmistress)

Miss Sweeney

Our Lady's High School

Mr Tully (head teacher)

Mr White (assistant principal)

Mrs Boyle (PE teacher)

Mr Connell

Mr Lynch

Miss Frances Quither (music teacher)

Miss Hilary Vernon (music teacher)

As far as I am aware, neither the police or the social work department were ever contacted by any of the teaching staff in relation to the abuse at Smyllum.

**Leaving Smyllum Children's Home, Lanark**

158. As I was to remain at Our Lady's High school for an additional year, I had to be sent to a foster family. Smyllum would not let me stay for an additional year. They decided

to foster me out instead of sending me to Wilton Street in Maryhill. Wilton Street was the hostel Smyllum girls were normally sent to from the age of sixteen to eighteen. I don't know why they made that decision, nobody spoke to me about it.

159. The nuns put an advert in the local newsagents in Lanark, Carluke, Wishaw and Motherwell. The advert called me Laura. It read "Laura is seventeen, she has done very well in her Highers and she has to do a sixth year. She is looking for a place to stay for the next year until she goes to University".
160. A woman in Wishaw called Margaret Mary Watters decided that she would take me in. She was a 55 year old spinster. She was not used to children. She definitely was not used to a child that had nightmares, woke up at 6 am in the morning and followed a regimented routine. She found me really difficult and I found it really difficult living with her. I just wasn't used to living in a normal home. I was pretty institutionalised.
161. After a few months it was clear that it was not working. My social worker tried her best to get me moved. She was told that If I didn't stay with Miss Watters then there was nothing else the social work department could do for me. I lasted with Miss Watters until March or April 1980. After that my English teacher Mr Holden and his wife Moira took me to live with them instead. They were my "angels". I think Mr Holden knew that life was quite difficult for me.
162. The Holden's thought I was "quirky". I think it was because I struggled with people being kind to me. I remember them asking me to tell them if I needed anything. I didn't have money for the train fare to school and I remember thinking "Ok, how do I get to school today?". I wouldn't tell them that I didn't have the money. When they found out, they paid for my train fare every day from their home in Kelvingrove to my school in Motherwell. They said "You really have to tell us if there is something you need". I said "I know, I know, I just don't want to be a bother". Mr Holden said "Look we are not the nuns, we want what is best for you. We will give you what you need. You are a good girl and we want to make sure you get to university".



163. I didn't know how to deal with their kindness. I was well-functioning but I was traumatised and had become obsessive compulsive (OCD). I was constantly on edge. I felt that I needed to repay them because they were doing this big thing for me. I was always helping around the house, being constantly polite, tidying and working hard. I wouldn't have a shower because I didn't want to use up the hot water. They arranged a summer job for me in the summer of 1980. I would send them my wages every week. I wanted to pay them back for all the money they had spent on me. I studied really hard to get to University to try to thank them for everything they had done.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Smyllum Children's Home, Lanark**

164. We were not allowed to speak about what the nuns or staff did to anyone. We couldn't tell each other, other nuns, the staff or our teachers. There was a cloak of silence amongst the children. If we were caught speaking about what the nuns or staff had done to us we would be punished. For me it was being put into a dark room or being sent to bed with no dinner for a week. When I was running around all day I would get really hungry so no dinner for a week was pretty harsh. Sometimes I would get no pocket money or not be allowed to go to the cinema on Saturday. Mostly I would just get hit again and told that if I ever spoke of it again "you will be sorry young lady".
165. There were numerous times that I tried to tell people what was happening in Smyllum. I remember when I was in first year at Our Lady's High school I was struggling with my homework and I told my teacher Mr Lafferty that I didn't have time to finish it. I told him that Sister <sup>IAG</sup> was making my life difficult. When I got back to Smyllum I was sent to see Sister <sup>AGK</sup>. She gave me a couple of thumps and said "What goes on here is no one else's business". She said that I would "be sorry" if I ever did that again.
166. There was the occasion when I broke my arm. Sister <sup>EAC</sup> had told me that if I told anyone what Sister <sup>AFR</sup> had done she would break my other arm.

167. There was also the occasion when I tried to tell the police officers what was going on and they handed me straight back to the nuns for “telling tales”.

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

168. In 1980, I started Glasgow University. I should have finished my degree in 1985 but I went to Norway to get married before completing it. I finally graduated in 1989. I then went to the University of California, Berkeley. I did an MBA so that I could start my own company as a translator and interpreter. I worked as a translator and interpreter for ten years.. In 1999 I then went to do an accelerated honours degree in psychology at Aberdeen. I graduated in 2002 with a 2:1 honours degree. I then did my Ph.D in 2002 at Oslo University. I finished my Ph.D in 2005 and set up my practice the same year. My practice is in Frederickstad in Norway where I still live. I am no longer married.

### **Impact**

#### *University Degree*

169. When I left the Holden's and went to Glasgow University I began to fall to pieces. I think my body started to react to the experiences I had been through. In my first term I was living in halls of residence. When it came to the winter holidays, all of the other students went home for Christmas except me. I had no family to go to. I was entirely alone. I had been working so hard and everything was so new. I had a week-long crying episode.
170. I managed to scrape through the rest of the year and pass my exams. I tried to pick myself up over the summer holidays. I got a job in the local Forbuoy's newsagent. I had a bursary of £1500 a year but no family or other financial help.

171. In second year I failed my ordinary Portuguese exam. It really affected me. In my head I heard all of these nuns voices saying "You are not going to be anything" . I thought it was the end of the world. Mentally I just crashed. There was clearly a lot that I hadn't dealt with. I took an overdose of paracetamol and ended up in the General Western Infirmary in Glasgow.
172. Whilst I was in hospital I was referred to see Dr MacDougall and a counsellor at Glasgow University. I went back to university and started seeing Dr MacDougall throughout term time for 2 years. She really helped me to work through things. I told her everything. She was horrified. She said "The fact that you are sitting here is a miracle" and she was probably right.
173. The next two years are quite blurry. I was still in panic mode thinking "After all this I am going to fail". I was really stressed out and wasn't sleeping. I was working so hard. I was trying to keep up my running and singing. I was struggling financially. It was all getting on top of me. I was prescribed diazepam and some valium for my anxiety and some other drug I can't remember the name of. I became withdrawn and stopped going to lectures and tutorials. I just dis-associated. I couldn't handle things anymore. I had no fight left. I did not get onto the Honours course as planned. It was all because I had failed that one Portuguese exam.
174. I decided to repeat the year. I missed out on a year abroad and was a year behind all of my peers. It all added to my feelings of failure. I had moved in with my boyfriend [REDACTED] by that stage. He was supporting me because I didn't have a student loan. We were just waiting until 1985 when I could re-sit the Portuguese exam. If I passed the exam, at least I would get an ordinary degree. The University had said that it was out of the question for me to sit the Honours exam. I studied and studied. On the morning of the exam, I made myself breakfast and put the coffee machine on. I always had a coffee in the morning. When I went to get my coffee, there was a moth in the coffee filter. I just fell to pieces. I panicked and didn't go to my exam.
175. It sounds stupid but I had a strong belief that my survival was connected to my education. If I didn't get that education I would not survive. That was the

rationalisation going on inside my head. I was literally fighting to survive and losing the battle. When I went to University and faced any kind of resistance I just fell to pieces. After failing that one exam, all of these voices in my head told me I was a monumental failure. I just didn't know how to deal with it.

176. I left Glasgow University with no degree. I moved to Norway to marry [REDACTED]. I studied Norwegian and languages in Norway. After things had settled down I decided to contact Glasgow University to see if they would allow me to re-sit that one exam. I regretted not getting my degree. Richard Stalley was the head of the Faculty of Arts. He agreed to let me sit the exam and sent me over all of the course-work and materials. I sat the exam and passed. I remember thinking "yes, ok, I am back on track".

*Family life/Relationships*

177. I met my husband [REDACTED] at a cheese and wine evening. It was held at the Maclay Halls of Residence where I was living. [REDACTED] was another Glasgow University student. He was this handsome, athletic, Scandinavian "hunk". He would take me to fancy dinners and try to impress me. He was a really good man. He proposed on Valentine's day. After my exam difficulties, we moved to Norway to get married and live together.
178. [REDACTED] and I were married for seven years but we never managed to consummate our marriage. I don't want to go into all of the details but the doctors basically told me that "your mind is telling you one thing and your body is telling you something else. They are just clashing". By 1992 I was thirty and [REDACTED] was thirty-one. I said to [REDACTED] "Look, you want children, I am getting older and I have endometriosis as well. It doesn't look like we are ever actually going to manage to do this". I told him that we needed to get a divorce in order that he could meet someone else that could give him children.
179. We got an annulment of the marriage on the grounds of non-consummation. I was still a virgin. The Catholic church insisted that I have a gynaecological exam to check

that my hymen was still intact. They had to put me under a general anaesthetic as I couldn't cope with the pain of the physical examination. The Catholic church made a statement that I was "virgo intacta". We were granted an annulment.

180. The church said that I was free to marry again in the Catholic church provided I could prove that I was capable of having sex. I was shocked and angered by that clause. First the church taught me that I was not allowed to have sex outside of marriage; Now they were telling me I had to prove that I could have sex before I got married again. I was angry because it was the Catholic church that had caused my problem in the first place. They had taught me from childhood that sex was bad, sex was horrible; A priest made me masturbate him and a nun broke my arm because I was a "hoor" for obeying the priest. All in all, I was really "fucked-up" when it came to sex.
181. The Catholic church's insistence that I prove my ability to have sex meant that I never married again. I was proposed to twice but I had to turn them both down. I did speak to a priest about getting married on one occasion. He said that if I couldn't prove that I could have sex, then he couldn't marry us. I couldn't have sex before getting married so I was in an impossible position. I asked the priest "What do you want me to do here?" and he said "I'm sorry, I have never been in this position before".

### *Vaginismus*

182. I was the first woman in the world to get Botulinum Toxin, or "Botox", injected into my vagina. People use it now for wrinkles but back then it was used to treat people who had hyperhidrosis. Hyperhidrosis is a condition where you sweat too much. I read an article about it by Mitchell Brimm in New York describing how Botox was used to paralyse the sweat glands. I thought that if Botox could paralyse the sweat glands, it could maybe be used to treat the pain and spasm in my vagina. I persistently called the clinic until they couldn't ignore me anymore. I travelled to Mount Sinai hospital in New York to be assessed. I spent tens of thousands of pounds getting the procedure done. The doctors injected Botox into my vagina. It was very painful but it worked. It stopped the muscles in my vagina from spasming and allowed them to relax. I had to

get several treatments. In 1996 I convinced the Norwegian authorities to let me have the experimental treatment in Norway.

183. Botox is now common place for treating vaginismus because of me. It is used in Norway, America and Britain. I have a support group in Norway where I give my time for free and help people to talk through their issues. Unfortunately a lot of them have been through similar experiences as me. The Catholic church has a lot to answer for.
184. Sadly it was too late for me to have children by the time I had finished the course of Botox. It wasn't until 1998 that my vaginismus was cured. I would say that my inability to have children has been the biggest impact on my life. I blame the Catholic church and my experiences at Smyllum . I have no family and I was unable to create one of my own. I have finally got the life I always wanted except for children.

#### *Mental Health*

185. Dr McDougall diagnosed me with moderate depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) or Anancastic disorder. She said individuals like me got it when they had been abused and had been in survival mode over a long period of time. My PTSD meant that I never felt safe. I always thought that someone could take everything that I had achieved away from me. That feeling has continued throughout my life. My degree was almost taken away from me. My marriage was taken away from me. Being able to have children was taken away from me. I remember thinking that I was always in danger. No matter how hard I tried to achieve something, someone could always take it away.
186. Even though I have set up my practice and am now financially secure, I still encounter some difficulties. Some people have concentration difficulties, Fibromyalgia, black-outs, selective amnesia and other problems. Thankfully I don't have any of them, just this feeling of not being safe. If the phone rings I still jump. I still sleep very lightly. I can hear the slightest sounds. I am still hyper-vigilant and hyper-aware of details. I find it tiring but it has gradually become better over the years.



187. I have always had a very good memory especially for details. I think this is as a result of both my OCD and learning so many languages without any dictionaries or grammar books. I studied French, Spanish, Italian and Latin and I just had to remember everything. I became extremely neat and detail orientated. I could see pictures of exactly where everything was. I memorised all of the details. My OCD has gradually become better over the years. The neatness has got better. I can leave things that are slightly out of place now. I don't need to put everything into a straight line.

### *Religion*

188. When I left Smyllum, for two or three years the nuns had almost destroyed my faith. I couldn't stand the sight of a cross anywhere, even if it was just something that resembled a cross. I would literally feel sick. To this day I can still feel the cold metal Jesus slamming up against my head.
189. I didn't go to church after Smyllum until 1982. I was at University and really struggling financially. I couldn't afford to pay for my halls of residence that summer. There was a Catholic scholarship available for a gifted student in financial hardship. It was called the Bishop McIntosh scholarship. The Catholic priest at the university chapel was called Monsignor Conway. He organised the scholarship for me. It got me out of a really difficult situation and I was incredibly grateful. I started going to see Mgr Conway at mass and I started singing in the choir. It helped to restore my faith in the Catholic church.
190. After a while, I managed to separate Catholicism from a few bad nuns. I could distinguish the few "bad apples" from the apple tree. I recognised that I had met some really bad nuns but I had also met some really good ones. I remembered that the Catholic ethos is a good one; it is peace-loving and tries to help people. It does not cause wars and tries not to cause harm. I like the philosophy of being Catholic and it is quite important to me. I got married in the Catholic church in Norway. I thank God that I found my faith again.

*Family*

191. I was afraid of my mother. She was rough and hard. She spoke a language that I didn't really understand. I don't mean just swearing. She had such a broad accent I couldn't understand what she was saying at all.
192. I met my mother in 1983. I was engaged to [REDACTED] and I wanted them to meet each other. [REDACTED] told me her address in Easterhouse in Glasgow. [REDACTED] drove us to meet her. She was with a guy called [REDACTED]. They were sat in front of [REDACTED] and I. I could see that they were having sex on the couch underneath a cover. [REDACTED] was flabbergasted. We were both struggling to understand what they were saying as they were both drunk. As we left, [REDACTED] gave them £50. They didn't have basic necessities like toilet paper; They had been using newspaper to wipe themselves. They had no food in the cupboard. As soon my mother received the £50 she said "Right, ten pints of McEwan's and a half of whisky" or whatever other alcohol she wanted. I just remember thinking I came out of her stomach and this woman is so strange.
193. I just didn't understand my mother and she didn't understand me. She looked at me with this look of contempt. On the one hand it was "Who do you think you are coming here with your fancy car?" and on the other it was "Give us money because you have money and we don't". For my own sanity I just decided that it was best not to have any further dealings with them.

194.



195.

[REDACTED]

196.

[REDACTED]

197. When my mother was dying in hospital I sat with her all day. I did not know the woman nearly as well as [REDACTED] but I felt real empathy and sympathy for her.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I

organised and paid for the funeral. I arranged for a Catholic burial by the priest Willy Monaghan. I had kept in touch with him since Smyllum. The service was at St Michael's in Parkhead, Glasgow.

198.

[REDACTED]

199. At the wake there was a big fight. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] My flight didn't leave for two days so I had to go and stay with Willy Monaghan the priest. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

*Anger*

200. I used to feel sad and upset about my time at Smyllum but now I feel only anger. I am not used to feeling angry. I am used to being forceful, determined and not giving in but I am not used to being angry. It goes against my whole ethos. For my work I have to remain calm but I feel like I have become snappy and irate just recently.
201. I have this sense of injustice. Not so much for me but for the other children who were at Smyllum. Some of them have been in touch with me since seeing my interview on the BBC. I have received calls from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Dubai, Germany, Austria, Britain and the USA. Some of them are alcoholics or drug addicts, some have been in jail and had their children taken away from them. Some have difficulties with relationships, some can't hug people, some can't marry, some can't show love, nearly all of them are angry and bitter.
202. It makes me angry that these victims are suffering because of what the nuns did to them. It upsets me that their life-difficulties mean that they are not believed when they come forward. I feel like I should be there for them even though it is affecting my life and my practice. I am trying to find a balance that will set boundaries but it is not easy. Hopefully I will be done with thinking about Smyllum after all of this is over.

*Lack of emotional support*

203. There was no- one to talk to at Smyllum. There was no therapy, no nurse, no counsellor. No one ever asked "Do you need to talk about this?". I am pretty sure if someone had talked to me back then about all the things that had happened to me, first with my uncle and then with Father [REDACTED] ADA, I may not have ended up with the difficulties I had with intimate relations.

*Support network*

204. I have an amazing network of friends. I don't have any family, not a single soul but I do have friends who are like family. I have realised more and more recently how lucky I am. I thank God because I can still love, I can still be loved and I can give and accept affection.
205. I am also part of the Norwegian Psychological Society so I have 900 psychologists to talk to if I need to talk to someone.

**Records**

206. When Smyllum fostered me to Margaret Mary Watters I asked for my records. Sister Vincent showed me a manila folder with my name on it. It was dated August 1968 which must have been my admission date. When I opened the folder there was nothing inside. Not a single record about me. I really wanted my school reports as they were important to me.
207. I remember seeing my school reports during my time at Smyllum. We were given a copy of our school report to take back from school and give to the nuns. Sometimes the nuns would look at them, sometimes they wouldn't. I don't know where they were put or if they were even kept.
208. In 1983 or 1984 when I was at Glasgow University I got in touch with the social work department in Glasgow. I was planning to move to Norway and I thought it was important to have as many records as I could before leaving the UK. I spoke to a man called Mr McKendrick who tried his best to help. He was the head of the social work department at the time. He contacted the National Archives at Mill Hill in London to go through the children's care home records. Despite his efforts, he could not find anything about me.

209. I would have really liked to have obtained my medical records. I find it quite bizarre that there are no records from when I broke my arm, broke my tail-bone, had bronchitis or sprained my ankle. I was always running around and pulling a muscle and seeing Sister <sup>FAM</sup> [REDACTED]. Yet there is not a single medical record to my name.
210. It would have been really helpful to my recent doctors if they could have seen my old medical records. Some years after I had left Smyllum I had some medical diagnoses. The doctors thought it might be genetic but they couldn't say. It is a shame because sometimes doctors can prevent things if they know about your genes.

### **Other information**

#### *Lessons to learn*

211. I think it is important that the Catholic church figure out who the bad nuns and priests are and have them removed. I think the church needs to actually defrock the nuns or priests and get them out of the church altogether. It is not enough to just move them to a different parish or have their records conveniently "lost". They need to get routines and systems in place where things can be reported in a safe way for the victim.
212. There needs to be transparency, accountability and protection for those coming forward to report abuse. There needs to be very clear procedures in place for reporting abuse and dealing with those complaints. The child should always be believed until the opposite is proven. The child should feel safe reporting what has happened to them. They should see a social worker at least once or twice a year. They should be given privacy to speak to their social worker. They need to be able to speak to their social worker without the presence of those people who are actually abusing them.
213. The nuns of the Daughters of Charity are in denial. Maybe they don't want to believe that the abuse went on. Maybe they don't remember. Maybe they are just bare-faced



liars and don't want a scandal. They still have care homes and still have an income from them. Yet even now they don't have a procedure in place for complaints. I know from my own practice in Norway that if anyone has a complaint about me, they can go to the Psychological Society. They can go to their doctor. There is a whole procedure and I am obliged to help; I have to show my files, show my patient notes, I have to show everything. Everything is transparent. I can't just say "No, no, no, we don't believe you. Just go away".

214. Since giving my BBC interview, I have been contacted by a number of ex-Smyllum residents. Many of them have expressed their concerns about how the Inquiry would treat them if they were to come forward and give evidence. A lot of them are afraid that their anonymity will not be protected. They are worried that there will be consequences; That the nuns will know who they are and find them on Facebook. They are concerned that they will not be believed, especially if they have not made anything of their lives. They feel that everyone is on the side of the nuns. They don't know who the nuns are. They don't know who is still alive. They are worried that they might mix people up, they might forget dates or get confused about certain details. They are afraid that their accounts will be turned around and twisted; That they will be accused of making it all up and lying. Some of them actually asked me to tell their experiences for them. They think I will be believed but they will not. I told them that I couldn't. I said "I can't lie for you. I can't make you more credible, I can only be credible as myself".
215. I think that the Inquiry should publicise that people can give evidence anonymously and will not be interrogated or cross-examined. I think more people would come forward if they knew that they wouldn't be ambushed. I think it is important to make it really clear that if these people were to come forward, they would be protected. They have got this idea that contacting the Inquiry would involve an interrogation and a grilling. Everyone seems to think that it would be some kind of horrible process. I haven't heard from one single person yet who thinks contacting the Inquiry is a good thing to do. I will certainly now inform those people and I will write on Facebook that there is nothing to fear, just go and tell your story. Don't worry if you are articulate, don't worry if you don't remember everything. Just tell what you do remember.

216. I have no objection to my witness statement, photographs, medical information and other documents I have provided to the Inquiry being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..  .....

Dated... 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017. .....