

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

PKC

Support person present: No

1. My name is PKC. My date of birth is 1977. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. I am the youngest of six children. was the oldest, then , , , then me. There was roughly eighteen months between each of us. I was born and brought up in Bellshill. I lived with my mum and dad until I was fifteen. My mum was a binge alcoholic. My dad was a heavy drinker, violent and gambled a lot. They eventually divorced. My mum has passed away. My dad is still alive.
3. We didn't have much as children but we were kept clean and quite happy. There was a lot of violence and general chaos in the relationship between my mum and dad. When they were off the drink everything was fine at home but when they had been drinking it was frightening. In the past my mum has stabbed my dad. My dad has broken my mum's nose and her legs. I remember when I was six years old my mum used to put me out the back window in my pyjamas at two o'clock in the morning to get the police because my dad was battering her. We didn't have a phone then.
4. I was terrified of my dad. He was an animal. I got battered regularly by him if I did anything bad. One of the first beatings I remember was when I was around seven years old. He had a metre long piece of plastic. He beat me with it until it broke into

pieces. I rarely saw any of my brothers or sisters getting a beating. I was the only one who got the beatings from my dad. As I got older the beatings were getting harder and harder. I know that my sister [REDACTED] and brother [REDACTED] went into care when I was very young. They went to Quarriers. We had social work involvement with my family but I wasn't really aware what was going on.

5. I went to Belvedere Primary then Bellshill Academy. I was no angel when I was young. I wasn't interested at school and I hated it. I didn't learn anything. I was called a 'Rem dem' because I had to go to remedial classes. I was disruptive and got suspended. I was sent to child psychiatrists and by the age of around fourteen was diagnosed as being hyperactive. I didn't get any medication but I was put on a special diet. My other siblings, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were really quiet and they stuck in at school and got on with things.
6. I know exactly when my life changed dramatically for the worst. I would have been about thirteen and I was taking a shortcut home from school. I saw two boys who I knew from primary school but who didn't go on to the same high school. They were sniffing solvents. I didn't know anything about it but I started doing it. That was me hooked. Initially I was doing it with deodorant and then gas, air-freshener and then nail polish. I started dogging school and would just sit about sniffing nail varnish. I had a social worker because of my truancy. I was going to the children's panel every week because of it. They were only interested in my school life. They didn't care about my family life or ask me why I was dogging school.
7. I was getting beaten regularly by my dad. The violence was unbelievable. I started running away, usually with a friend. We would get the train into Glasgow and sleep in the parks. Sometimes we were away maybe two or three days. The police would catch us and take me back home. My dad would beat me again. He may not have caused me much physical injury but he broke me inside. He always beat me when there was no-one else there.
8. By the end I was too frightened to even look at my dad. The final straw was when he smashed a plate over my head and poured a glass of milk on me. I just wanted out

of that house. It was a few days before my fifteenth birthday. I went into the social work offices in Bellshill. I spoke to a social worker called Campbell Duke and I told him my dad was battering me and I wanted out of my house. I took my shirt off and he had a look at the bumps and bruises on my body. He marked them all on a diagram he had. It was like the outline of a human body. I did have a few from playing football anyway.

9. The social work department found a bed for me that night at Carluke Children's Home as a place of safety. They drove me there then came back for me the next day and took me to Bellshill Children's Home. The police had no involvement in this.

### **Bellshill Children's Home, Lanarkshire**

10. The building was on two levels and sat in its own grounds around other council houses. When you went in the front door there were offices on either side and there was a room where the night shift staff would sleep through the night. That door was always locked. There was a games room which was wrecked. It had been trashed at some point and it was never used. There was a laundry room, TV room and the kitchens. There were some bedrooms downstairs. There was another TV room upstairs and more bedrooms. The home was run by Strathclyde Regional Council. It was for boys and girls. There were six boys and seven girls when I first went there. At fifteen I was probably the youngest until William McGovern came, he was three years younger than me. The oldest was probably seventeen or eighteen. They were just waiting to get housed somewhere.
11. My bedroom was at the end of the corridor upstairs. There were two single beds in it. I had a bed and a chest of drawers and that was it. There was one other boy in there the first night then he left so I was in the room on my own after that.

**Other Children**

12. I can remember the names of some of the other children who were in there. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was probably the oldest boy in there. He made my life a misery. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]'s girlfriend [REDACTED] was in the home and she was pregnant. Others were [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. At some point William McGovern arrived, he was only twelve or thirteen.

**Staff**

13. Managers, whose names I can't remember, ran the home. There were key workers, and some general staff, like cleaners and a chef. There was always one member of staff on during the night. I had a female as my key worker. I can't remember her name. John Blair was a member of staff and was William McGovern's key worker. There were other staff members called James Connelly and George. George was a really good guy. Each key worker was allocated probably two children each.

**Routine at Bellshill***First days*

14. Initially I thought everything in Bellshill was okay. I didn't have any fear and there was no violence. When I was there I continued to occasionally abuse solvents.

*Mornings and bedtime*

15. The staff used to come in every morning, wake us up and tell us to get ready for school. Some didn't go to school, because they were sixteen or seventeen and had finished with school. I wasn't interested in going to school. I had a spare bed in my room which was a square box with a mattress on top of it. On the bottom of the base there was a black material. I ripped a big hole from one end to the other in this

material, lifted the bed and crawled under it with a pillow. I used to lie in there all day. Nobody knew I was there until the cleaners found me. The staff thought I was away to school. I did it for days and days. I used to only come out when it was late in the afternoon. The school wouldn't have been looking for me because they had washed their hands of me and didn't care about me.

#### *Mealtimes / Food*

16. There was a dining room where we had our meals. It was just like a wee room with a dining table in it. There was one in the second flat and there is one on the first flat. Some of the older residents used to have cookers in their rooms so they didn't eat meals with us.
17. After school the chef would turn up and cook dinner. I was dogging school and abusing solvents. By the time that I got back to the home the chef had gone, and dinner time has over. I didn't really eat when I was at Bellshill. I wasn't even offered food. If you were there on time you got food but if you weren't you got nothing. Staff didn't open the kitchen up or offer to make you anything to eat. I was high on solvents and that was my food at that point. I wasn't interested in food. My mum used to give me money and I sometimes bought a bag of chips. If I didn't have any money I would go into a shop and steal chocolate or crisps. I was solvent abusing so food was the last thing on my mind.

#### *Washing / bathing*

18. In Bellshill there was a room with a shower a toilet and a sink. We had to look after ourselves. We washed when we wanted but to be honest hygiene wasn't a priority for me. No one checked or made sure we washed.

#### *Clothing / uniform*

19. The home never bought me clothes when I was there. If I needed anything the social worker would contact my mum and she would buy it for me. She couldn't always get

me whatever it was that I wanted because she struggled and never had a lot of money. I believe I could have got a special clothing grant but nobody ever applied for one for me. If your clothes had holes in them you just had to wear them.

### *School*

20. I continued going to Bellshill Academy. I hated it and I learned nothing. I regularly ran away and often didn't go to school. I was thrown out of school and they washed their hands of me. I was found a place at a centre where you would go instead of going to school. They would take you to the pictures, ten pin bowling or take you to MacDonald's. Basically they would take you wherever you wanted to go. They tried to do this for me but I didn't want that. I did it for a week then I decided I didn't want to do it anymore. I learned to read and write later in life when I was in prison.

### *Leisure time*

21. If ever we went anywhere we travelled in the Home's yellow and blue minibus which had 'Strathclyde Regional Council' written on the side. This made people think we were the local handicapped children.
22. It wasn't safe to go out and play football outside. The local boys were always hanging about. They wanted to batter us because we lived in a children's home. The local gangs couldn't get us when we were in the home but as soon as we stepped outside we were fair game.

### *Trips / Holidays*

23. In the beginning the staff would sometimes take us ice skating. They would come round and say if anyone wanted to go the minibus was leaving in five minutes. I always checked to see if [REDACTED] was going. If he was there was no way I would go. If he wasn't, I went because I didn't want to be left in the home with him there.

*Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention*

24. My family were barred from coming in to visit me. My mum had come to see me but she was drunk. She had her own problems. My dad had come up to see [REDACTED], I presume after he heard I was getting battered by him. My dad didn't get to see me. My oldest brother came to see me but he was drunk and didn't get in. My other brother came too but he wasn't allowed in. I think they all wanted to sort [REDACTED] out.
25. I saw the social worker Campbell Duke every now and then. He came to see me when something had happened. He came when William hung himself and when I stabbed [REDACTED]. He came most often because I wasn't going to school. He didn't just randomly pop in to see me. He only came if there was a reason.
26. I didn't go to a children's panel again when I was at Bellshill Children's Home. The next time I went was when I was at St Mary's Secure Unit at Kenmure.

*Healthcare*

27. Twice when I was at Bellshill I ended up in Hospital. The first time I was in the home and some of the older ones gave me and William McGovern some magic mushrooms. About an hour later I was aware that I was acting weird and felt like I wasn't part of this world. I eventually admitted to staff what I had done and they took me to hospital. I was kept in overnight.
28. The second time was more serious. The home had organised a trip for us to somewhere up in the hills, near Stirling. This house we slept in was owned by the social work department. There was no electricity, just gas lights and bunk beds and that was it. There was me, four other boys and four members of staff. In the evening we never saw the staff because they were in another room drinking alcohol. I know that because I saw their carry-out in a rucksack. The first night we were inhaling the contents of the fire extinguisher and we finished it. The second night we got another fire extinguisher and started inhaling it. The next thing I remember was waking up

and I had blood on my face. I think I must have had some sort of seizure and bit my tongue. The staff had to take me to Stirling Royal Infirmary. My parents were never told about either of these incidents.

### *Running away*

29. William McGovern and myself started running away. I never forced him to come with me, and sometimes he suggested it. I feel guilty because I think he started abusing solvents because of me. I had told staff about [REDACTED] bullying me but they did nothing. My choice was to either stay there and put up with it or run away. I chose to run away. As time went on I was more and more hating having to go back to the children's home. Almost every time I ran away the police caught me and I started fighting with them because I didn't want to go back. I would have done anything I could to get away from the police because I didn't want to go back. I would end up black and blue after fighting with the police.

### **Abuse at Bellshill**

30. One time I was in the home and was made to go into the dining room to eat my dinner. Staff told me to get in and eat it and ended up dragging me in. They sat the plate of food in front of me and told me to eat it. I don't know what was on the plate but there was nothing wrong with it. I was just in a bad mood and pissed off at getting forced to be there. I refused. The chef got involved and said that he was going to come over and kick my balls. He called me a 'wee cunt'. I still refused to eat it. The argument escalated and my brothers were brought into the conversation. The chef knew my family and he just said they would get it as well.
31. I had been there about two weeks and I remember going to my key worker. She was a woman but I can't remember her name. I told her that I needed my school clothes washed for the next day. She came with me and put my clothes in the washing machine. I didn't know how it worked. When I went to put my washed clothes in the tumble dryer there were clothes already in there. The key worker told me to take

what was in the machine out, and put my clothes in. About half an hour later, when I had finished, [REDACTED] came into the room where I was like a raging bull and asked who had removed his clothes from the tumble dryer. I told him I had done it and tried to tell him that the key worker told me to. He didn't listen or care. He grabbed my throat and pinned me to the floor and told me never, ever to do that again. I was terrified. He was a lot bigger than I was. Staff, I can't remember who, were just sitting there watching and eventually pulled him off me.

32. From the day I took his clothes out the tumble dryer [REDACTED] bullied me. It happened on a daily basis. He did it constantly at every possible opportunity. He wouldn't do it in front of staff. It went from him saying things when he was passing me in the corridor to pinning me to the floor, spitting in my face and threatening to kill me. He hated me and I hated him. Other children would have been there when I was getting bullied but they never stood up for me. He was the top boy in that home, and everyone feared him. His girlfriend [REDACTED] spat in my face sometimes too. I was the only one that [REDACTED] bullied.
33. One time I was lying in my bed sound asleep in the early hours of the morning. All of a sudden I felt a presence and I opened my eyes. The room was dark but he was so close I could see it was [REDACTED]. He pinned me down onto my bed and I let out a scream. I am not sure if this spooked him but he just turned and ran out. For a while I actually thought I may just have dreamt that this had happened. Two or three nights later it happened again. It was in the early hours of the morning when everyone else was asleep. This time he put a pillow over my head and he battered me. He punched and slapped me.
34. I was frightened even in my own room so I barricaded my door. This was my way of protecting myself and telling everyone that they weren't coming in my room. The staff ended up forcing my door off the hinges to get in. They more or less said that I was being disruptive. After that I couldn't even close my door, I just had to prop it up in the doorway. It was like that until I left.

35. There were some nights in Bellshill when the home would be in chaos. Some of the boys were running about, going into people's rooms. They were peeing on the walls and in people's beds. They were putting coffee, jam and sugar under duvets and rubbing it into the mattress. Staff weren't interested. They told everyone to stop stealing the coffee, jam and sugar. They didn't care about the children this had happened to. One time I went back into my room and [REDACTED] was peeing on my bed. I couldn't do anything. I couldn't batter him, I was just a wee boy. He just laughed at me.
36. There were times when staff locked me in offices to stop me from running away. Other times if I was out my face on solvents they would have me pinned to the floor, spread out holding my arms and legs. They would do this for two hours, until I came off the solvent. This was all to stop me from running away. There was one time when I had some money so I bought alcohol for me and a few of the other boys. This was the first time I had drunk alcohol. I was steaming with the drink. I made my way back to the children's home and I was lying beside a six foot metal fence at the back of the home. I was too frightened to go in because I was drunk. A member of staff passed me and he told me to watch what I was doing and to sober up before I went in. He never tried to help me. I could hardly walk.
37. William McGovern was twelve, going on thirteen. He was just a wee boy but was about the same size as me. We both supported the same football team and we got on really well. He became a good friend of mine. I think he was there as a place of safety to protect him from his violent father. William had his own anger issues. William started getting bullied by the majority of other children in the home. He was getting teased and pushed and pulled about but it was mostly verbal. It was all done in front of staff. They didn't stop it.
38. William had a key worker [REDACTED], who had worked with him in a previous children's home. [REDACTED] used to take William McGovern out for the day. One time William came back from a day out with [REDACTED] and he had money in his pocket and a new 'Walkman' cassette player. As soon as the others saw this the bullying started. They teased him constantly that he was doing sexual things for [REDACTED] and getting special

treatment and gifts in return from him. They laid into him constantly about it. It was mostly the boys who did it. I saw William getting bullied and it happened in front of staff. Afterwards he was upset, angry and crying. William McGovern later hung himself and I think it was because of the bullying.

39. Less than a week after William McGovern died I was sitting in the TV room on my own. [REDACTED] came in and shut the door behind him. He asked me why my dad had been in the home looking for him. I told him I knew nothing about it, because I didn't. He told me my dad had been there looking to give him a 'doin'. The staff had told him but hadn't said anything to me. [REDACTED] picked up a great big heavy glass ashtray and tried to smash me over the head with it. It smashed into bits. He grabbed me and pinned me to the floor and he was battering me. I was wearing a football top and he started burning me on my back and chest with his cigarette. I managed to get away from him and ran to my room and I got a knife and stabbed him in the leg. I had burn marks on my back and chest. I ran away.
40. I didn't have a life when I was in Bellshill I was just surviving. You were wakening up in the morning and you were planning how you were going to survive that day without taking a beating, without somebody spitting in your face or whatever. I didn't eat my meals because people were spitting in my face, they could have been spitting in my dinner. That was just the way it was.

#### **Death of William McGovern**

41. I had been at Bellshill probably about four months when me and William McGovern ran away. We were walking about Bellshill. When we were ready to go back William phoned the police and told them a shop was getting broken into. We waited until the early hours to phone because we knew the home wouldn't send us to school the next day. The police arrived and caught us. We were taken back to the home.
42. The next morning the staff woke us up and told us we were going to school. We were virtually dragged out our beds and made to get ready. We were starving and

didn't get any breakfast. We were then put in a staff car. William was still at school but by that time I was at Craigneuk Etna Centre which is near Wishaw. Before we got dropped off I arranged to meet William McGovern at mid-day at a big advertising sign because we were going to run away again.

43. I went to the sign as arranged and waited but William didn't appear. I assumed he had changed his mind. I went to Motherwell, stole some nail varnish and went solvent abusing on my own. I went to my brother's bedsit and slept on a mattress on his floor. The next morning I heard on the radio that William McGovern had hung himself. I headed back to the children's home. When I got there 'Scotland Today' were recording and the police were there. As soon as I went in the building I was grabbed and taken into an office. I was interviewed and they accused me of being there when William hung himself. I denied it and I think the police believed me.
44. After William died all the staff and all the other children turned against me and blamed me for William dying. I was treated like a leper. I spent most of my time in my room because I wanted to be on my own. I went into the kitchen and I took a knife out of the drawer and I hid it in my curtains in my room. I just knew something bad was going to happen to me. That was the knife I used to stab [REDACTED].

#### **Reporting of abuse at Bellshill**

45. I was sometimes standing beside staff when [REDACTED] spat in my face. They did nothing about it. I told my key worker about some of the stuff that went on with [REDACTED]. She said she would have a word with him about it. I don't know if she did or not but things just got worse after that. I never told my key worker about the time [REDACTED] came in my room through the night and put the pillow on my head and battered me. I had lost all confidence in them by that point. The staff at Bellshill knew what was going on between me and [REDACTED] but they did nothing about it. I did the right thing and I told them and told them that the situation with [REDACTED] was getting out of order and I needed help. They said that I wasn't to worry and they would sort it out but they never did.

46. After the time I stabbed [REDACTED] in the leg I ran away and went to my brother's house. I was an emotional wreck and I was in tears. Everything had just built up. George from the children's home came to my brother's house. George was a good guy so I went back to the home with him. The police were there and I told them that I had stabbed [REDACTED]. They didn't know anything about the stabbing. They found [REDACTED] and he had a small cut on the outside of his right thigh. They asked me why I stabbed him in the leg. I told them it was because he was bullying me. The police weren't interested. The staff also knew and they let me down. It didn't matter who I told. No one helped me.
47. I told Campbell Duke my social worker most of what went on but again he didn't do anything to help me. He wasn't interested. He was just my social worker on paper. He only came to Bellshill when the staff asked him to. He would never come out of his way to help me or just to see how I was doing.
48. No one ever asked me why I was running away. The staff at Bellshill hated me. After William McGovern killed himself I became a bit of a recluse. I just wanted to be by myself. I didn't want any interaction with anybody. I didn't trust the staff.
49. Sometimes when I ran away I cut my arms [REDACTED]. I hid it from the staff. One time I ended up in hospital, but no one asked me why I had done it. The times when I was in hospital when I took the magic mushrooms and when I had had a fit after inhaling the fire extinguisher, you would think that this would have triggered something. The staff from the children's home weren't interested. They just went away and left me in the hospital. Nobody stayed with me and my parents were never told. The medical staff never asked me anything about what I had done. I was never offered any psychiatrist or psychologist. The staff at the home were phoned when I was getting discharged. They picked me up and it was never spoken about again. There was no follow up.
50. The home managers, I can't remember their names had an office. I may have spoken to them twice about being bullied. They said to me that they knew I was getting bullied. They knew but again they did nothing about it.

51. In Bellshill Children's Home the staff basically were not interested in what went on. The older children ran the home and got to do what they wanted. In my opinion the staff were just there for their wages and would do anything for an easy life. I was let down by the care system and William McGovern was let down by the care system.

### **Leaving Bellshill**

52. It was two days after the incident where I had stabbed [REDACTED] in the leg that I left. I was sitting in my room when the staff came in and told me to pack my clothes because I was leaving. I asked what was happening but they just told me to pack my bag. I packed my stuff then walked out the building and my social worker, Campbell Duke was sitting in the car outside. No-one said goodbye, wished me well, shook my hand or said anything. I didn't know where I was going. I was then driven on the motorway ending up at Newfield Assessment Centre in Linwood, Paisley.

### **Newfield Assessment Centre, Paisley**

53. As soon as I saw Newfield Assessment centre I decided that I didn't want to stay there. There was a bar outside the window which stopped you from opening it but I figured out how to get out. I ran away. I kept running away, got caught by the police and taken back again. They even took my trainers off me to try and stop me from running away. That didn't stop me. I kept running away until eventually they just took me to a different children's home, St Mary's Kenmure. I was still fifteen.

### **St Mary's Kenmure, Bishopbriggs**

54. St Mary's Kenmure was a secure unit. It was like a prison and I was in with children who were murderers, rapists and arsonists. There were boys in there acting like hard men and they were a lot bigger than me. I just kept out their way. I was still classed as needing a place of safety so that's why I was there. I couldn't run away because

there were bars on the windows. Nothing really happened in there compared to Bellshill. There was no mistreatment. I was there for six weeks and then there was another children's panel. I was taken there in handcuffs. At this panel I was told my supervision was continuing and I was sent to a place in Helensburgh called Cardross Assessment Centre.

### **Cardross Assessment Centre**

55. I spent five or six weeks at Cardross. It wasn't a secure unit but you couldn't open your window. I could have run away at any point if I wanted to but for some strange reason I didn't. It was a different environment there. The main thing was that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] wasn't there. I never gave staff there any hassle probably because they never gave me any. I was there for six weeks and there was another meeting. I was just about to turn sixteen. My parents had sorted out their drinking issues, and they said this at the meeting. The panel decided that I was doing well so I could go home with my parents.

### **Life back home with parents**

56. Within weeks of getting home to live with my parents it all went 'pear shaped'. I was getting into trouble and the police were at the door. I was getting the beatings again from my dad. I started stealing cars. I was hanging around with the wrong crowd and I was still abusing solvents. Two months after my sixteenth birthday I ended up in prison. The first prison I ever went to was Barlinnie. Because I had all the scars on my arms I was classed as suicidal so was in a special cell. I had a gownie and a rubber mattress.

**Life after being in care**

57. I was in Polmont Young Offenders Institution when Campbell Duke my social worker came and he told me that I was no longer under supervision. I was sixteen or seventeen at the time. I was in and out of prison until I was about 21. My involvement in stolen cars stopped and then it was more drinking in pubs, violence and fighting. If I was out for the night it wasn't a good night unless there was a fight at the end of it. I was a really nasty person with drink. I was in prison a couple of years after I was 21 but that was for unpaid fines. I was still abusing solvents until I was 24.
58. I have been a window cleaner more or less since I was seventeen, only broken up by the time I was in prison. I met my partner over nine years ago and she is the best thing that ever happened to me. I now have five children. I decided I didn't want them to grow up like I had. I didn't want them to see the arguments or see the result of alcohol. I wanted to give them a good start in life. The most important thing in my life was my children. It has only been in the last seven years that I have really got my life into some sort of proper order.

**Impact**

59. I have cut my wrists and self-harmed a number of times. I have about [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I did those with [REDACTED] when I was in Bellshill Children's Home. Sometimes I did it with [REDACTED].
60. When I was sixteen or seventeen I felt I had nothing to live for. I took overdoses of [REDACTED].
61. I have one [REDACTED]. That was [REDACTED]. I was seventeen or eighteen at the time I was intoxicated with alcohol. I wasn't in a happy place. I had just got out of prison. I was going to cut my throat but my pal grabbed [REDACTED] and I cut my arm. I nearly cut my arm off. [REDACTED]



stupid. I am at the stage in my life now that I just want to move on and put it all behind me.

66. Whenever I used to go out or at a party I had to sit somewhere that I could see the door. I had to be able to see an exit so I could get out quickly if something happened. I just needed an escape route. This stems back to when I was at Bellshill. I used to sit there and wonder how I would get out of there if something kicked off. I would have to consider every scenario. My idea of a good night out at the weekend would involve a good drink and a fight at the end of the night. If I am in a busy room and there are people there and I know nothing about them I feel uncomfortable because I can't trust them. I just think bad things are going to happen.
67. I can't handle getting taken out of my familiar environment. I can't take my family on holiday abroad because I can't travel by plane. I have to pay my mother in law to take my place. I don't function the way a normal person does. Whenever you take me out of my comfort zone I am constantly on edge.

### **Treatment / support**

68. Staff at Bellshill knew that I was addicted to solvents. They never offered me any help for my addiction
69. When William McGovern killed himself I was really upset and emotional. I needed some help then. It was never offered and the staff never spoke to me about it. All the staff were interested in was they wanted me to tell them I was there when Willie killed himself. Different staff came in and kept asking me. They kept making me cry. It was torture.
70. I suffer from anxiety and depression. I have been on various medications from the doctor. I have spoken to various psychiatrists but nobody could sort the problems out in my head. When I cut my arm with [REDACTED] they insisted that I see a

psychiatrist before I left the hospital. I was in there for a week. They couldn't help me because I couldn't open up to them and tell them. I didn't trust anybody.

71. I went to my GP at one point and I opened up to him to try and get help. He told me he had just suffered a recent bereavement and asked me to find another doctor. Yet again I was let down by another adult.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

72. Since I left Bellshill Children's Home I have never reported anything that went on to the police or anybody. I have never opened up and told anyone in authority what really happened in there. I didn't trust anyone. I hoped to have my say when I went to William McGovern's inquest when I was sixteen but I wasn't asked to give evidence.

### **Records**

73. I didn't know I could get my social work records. I can guarantee that a lot of the stuff I have told you, like the times I was in hospital, won't even be in my records. I know that the first time I got home after I had been in the hospital I told my mum but no one from the home had even told her.

### **Lessons to be learned**

74. Staff at Bellshill Children's Home and social workers knew that I was getting bullied. There is no doubt about that. They should have done more to help me. If staff know who is being bullied and who is doing the bullying they should be kept separate. I should have been moved away from [REDACTED] who was bullying me.

75. My biggest hope I have for the Inquiry is that William McGovern's family get a chance to read my statement and see what really happened to William. I just want them to get a bit closure about his death. I still visit his grave. I am still trying to find his family because I want them to know the truth. What came out the death inquest was not the truth.
76. Children in care homes have to be given some care and looked after. There was no care in Bellshill. I know there are a lot of staff who have a lot to answer for and they might think they have got away with it. I know deep down they haven't and I want them to answer some questions.

### **Other information**

77. If William McGovern hadn't hung himself I wouldn't have come forward to the Inquiry. I have not come forward for me. I have come forward for him. I want the real truth to come out about why he killed himself. People were saying it was because he was getting sexually abused. I am fairly certain he wasn't. I believe he did it because he was being bullied.
78. When I was sixteen I went to the Inquest into the death of William McGovern. I was there for five days. Despite the fact I was probably the last person to see and speak to him, and who knew him better than most, I never actually gave evidence. I didn't get the chance to go in and tell them what really happened. I don't think there was any sexual activity between him and his key worker. I think it was because of the bullying. I think they tried to brush it all under the carpet.
79. I met Campbell Duke who was my social worker in Monkland's Hospital last year. He is working there as a social worker.
80. I am still in contact with my dad and I love him. He is still my dad and nothing is going to change that. I have apologised to him for going into the social work office when I was fifteen and telling them he was battering me. I know I shouldn't have, but

in a way I think I was right to do it. My dad just said that the past was the past. I believe that my father was violent to me, and not to my brothers and sisters, because my mum was raped and it is possible that I am not his son.

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

PKC

Signed.



Dated

14/08/18