

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PJP

Support person present: No

1. My name is PJP. My surname as a child was PJP. My date of birth is 1973. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My parents' names are and . My mum's maiden name was also , but she's no relation to my dad. I was born in Baillieston. I have three brothers and three sisters. I was the second child in the family. My sister, , is just over a year older than me. We're all quite close together in age. My brother, , is just over a year younger than me. Then there's , , and .
3. I grew up with my parents, my brothers and my sisters. My grandfather stayed with us as well until I was about twelve. We were jam-packed. We lived in a three bedroomed house. My brother shared with my grandfather and the rest of us were crammed into the other room. It was quite cool when I went into care and got my own room.
4. I went to Taylor High School, which is in New Stevenston, Motherwell. I was wild. I was strong-willed. I like to think I just didn't get the right nurturing. I was grounded all the time. My parents would call the police if I didn't come home. I didn't run away, but I'd go out when I was grounded. I didn't have a lot to do with the police and I wasn't getting into trouble with them. It was just a few times when I didn't go home. Looking

back, I think my parents just had too many children and I was too strong-willed for them. I was the only child who was taken into care.

5. My dad used to fight with me. The more he beat me, the stronger I got. I would not cry, even though I was dying to. I wouldn't back down. I would go into that mind-set, where he was not going to win against me. Thinking back, it was absolutely terrible. My mum actually went to the social work because she thought my dad was going to end up killing me. I had no involvement with the social worker prior to that point.
6. The social worker involved was Sheila Harris. She was from the Motherwell social work office. She was my social worker for around a year. She was alright. My mum didn't like what the social worker was saying because my parents were hitting me. My parents closed ranks on the social work department. My mum had gone to tell them that she was really frightened for my safety because of my dad. Suddenly, that changed and she said it wasn't as bad as I was making out and that I was talking nonsense. That was what my mum continued to do.
7. My mum put me in a home and then a week later she went off to America for three weeks, which wasn't the caring mum. She never really was. I think my parents were embarrassed by their own actions, so it was better to blame me for everything that happened. I was a child. It should never have become that bad with my dad. My mum should have intervened. I used to give her a bit of cheek if I was in trouble. My mum would then phone the pub to get my dad home. She knew that meant that I would get a doing. He leathered me with belts and his hands. She didn't care.
8. My mum and dad constantly threatened me that I was going to go into a home. On one occasion, I was grounded, but it was a roasting hot day. I went out and my mum sent the police out to get me. The emergency social workers came to get me from the police station. They were really horrible, scary and intimidating. They were threatening to put me into care then, but it never happened. The emergency social workers then came again for a second time.

9. I think it was only about a week after the first time, but I can't remember what had happened. The people that came the second time were really nice. There was no Children's Panel or anything. I think it was just agreed with my parents that I would go. I think I was asked too because I remember saying that I wanted to go. As soon as they asked me, I went into the cupboard to get my nightie. I just went and packed my bags. It was absolutely horrible at home. I annoyed everybody and they annoyed me.

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

10. I went into care in [REDACTED] 1988, so it was during the school holidays. I was fourteen years old. Bellshill was a local authority home. There were houses all round about it. It was built on two storeys and had a flat roof. The windows had wood panelling beneath them. There was a big garden at the back. There were nothing in the garden to play on, which was quite strange given that it was a children's home. It was just grass.
11. There were three groups in the home. I was in group three, which was based at the bottom of the home. Each group had a sitting room, a kitchen and bedrooms. The groups weren't really separated from each other, they were just in different parts of the house. There were two main offices. One had a safe in it and the other was the main office for anybody coming in. The officer in charge would sit in the main office and deal with any phone calls and such like. Each group also had a wee cupboard with phones and paperwork in it.
12. There were usually two staff on duty for each group, plus a manager. Two staff would be on duty during the night. Jean Richmond was the house parent for my group. [REDACTED] [PVX] was [REDACTED] [SNR]. He was really good. The staff I can remember are [REDACTED] [RBP], John Blair, Margaret Ramsay, Margaret Ritchie, [REDACTED] [MVN], Kathleen Irvine, Kate Steele, [REDACTED] [RFG], Cathy Mulgrew, George Graham, Jess Weir, [REDACTED] [INH], Heather Hunter and Claire Flannery. Those staff were there during the day. I think the shifts were six in the morning until two in the afternoon and two in the afternoon until ten at night.

13. There were two sets of nightshift staff, PWR [REDACTED] and Margaret Kerr, who worked together, and Celia Carter and Bridie Gallagher, who also worked together. There were two cooks and two cleaners who came in.
14. Ed Stanton had been the officer in charge of the home before I arrived. He was no longer a member of staff when I was there. He had left his job, but he still stayed in a flat annexed to the home. He stayed there for quite a while. He's now in jail. RBP [REDACTED] also stayed over sometimes.
15. We used to get students coming into work in the summer. They were covering staff holidays. They didn't have any qualifications to work in the home. It used to crack me up because they could read our files.
16. There were about thirty children altogether. The groups were mixed, boys and girls. The children were mainly teenagers. There were younger children in the home, but they weren't there a lot. They tried to place the younger children in foster care. They might only have been in the home if there was an emergency. Group one had less young people. It was for older children, preparing for independent living. You could cook your own food and things there. I moved to that group when I got older.

### **Routine at Bellshill Children's Home**

#### *First day*

17. I was taken to Bellshill by two social workers. They took me in and just left me there. I remember the smell of the place when I arrived. I hated the smell of homes. It smelled dirty. They had cleaners, but it was never clean. Kevin Murphy was the manager in charge of the home when I got there. Jean Richmond was also there when I arrived. She was a house parent. She also ended up being my key worker. Kevin and Jean took me into my room and showed me where I was going to be staying.

*Mornings and bedtime*

18. I shared a room for the first while that I was there. I shared with [REDACTED]. She's married now and I don't know what her second name is. She's about the same age as me. The bedroom was alright, but it didn't look that clean or painted. The floor was carpeted. The room was a good size. It had two single beds and we each had our own wardrobe.
19. I wasn't sharing for long before I moved into a single room. I was quite happy to get my own room. The staff on duty would wake us up in the morning for school. I would get up as late as I could get away with. I would go and get washed.
20. After 10:00 pm we weren't supposed to go into any of the other groups so the staff could keep us contained. We could usually go to bed when we wanted, but it really depended who was on duty. If it was Bridie and Celia, we used to torment them all night. My friend [REDACTED] and I used to play hide and seek with them so they'd have to come and find us. We used to sit on the top shelf of a cupboard. We used to hear Celia opening up the cupboard, talking to herself, trying to find us. We came out ourselves. We did it with Margaret and [PWR] as well, but [PWR] was a witch. She was really horrible to everybody.
21. [PWR] came into work drunk one night. I didn't see what happened, but I heard about it in the morning. The boys said that she was being vulgar towards them and inappropriate. That night was the only time she had ever been nice to me. She came into my room and was talking to me. She was off sick for about a year after that.

*Mealtimes / Food*

22. I didn't really have breakfast, but that was my choice. It was probably cereal. When I got in from school, I got my dinner. The staff also made us a supper before bed, like tea and toast. We were allowed to make our own stuff as well. Although there was a kitchen in each group, the cooks made the dinner in the main kitchen. They would then

take it to the group. The meals were fine. I didn't see any child have a problem with the food.

23. There was a cupboard full of all the goodies. We used to try and steal the keys so we could get in. It contained sweets, biscuits and cans of juice. You could open the door from the inside, but they had taken the handle off the outside. We would plot to go in and steal stuff from it. We used to all go into the kitchen, try and leave it open and swipe the keys. The cupboard keys were gold so we used to call it the gold cupboard.

*Washing / bathing*

24. There was one shower for all three groups, which was crazy. There was a bathroom on each floor. I used to wait till [REDACTED] ran her bath and then jump into it in the morning. I'd hear the bath filling and [REDACTED] pottering about in the room. That was time for me to get up. I don't know how she never got wise to it. I'd then hear her greeting to the staff that I'd nicked her bath again.

*Clothing / uniform*

25. I wore my own clothes in the home. If I needed new clothes, I got money to buy new clothes. The staff would come with us to do that. There weren't rules about clothing.

*School*

26. When I first went into the home, everyone was dogging school and keeping the lunch money. That seemed like a good idea until they started giving us a packed lunch. I didn't want to stoat about in the rain so I decided to go to school. I carried on attending Taylor High School, which I had been attending at home. I was the only child from Bellshill Children's Home who went to Taylor High. Sometimes, I had to get two buses there. On the way home, I had to get two buses so it could take about an hour.
27. School was okay. Staff from the school had to attend meetings about me, so they knew I was in the home. My school friends knew I was in the home. It was a small

town and everybody knew my business. I didn't really care though. It didn't bother me. I left school when I was sixteen and went to Coatbridge College.

*Leisure time*

28. Sometimes, the staff would take us out places during the week after dinner. If the weather was nice, they might take us to a park. They took us to loads of places. Every Friday night, we used to go roller-skating in Falkirk. We'd go driving in the big mini-bus. It wasn't cool, going in those buses. Not everybody would want to go out. We were given a choice. I went quite a lot. If we chose to stay, we would hang about in the place because there were loads of people there anyway. The different groups would all mingle with each other. There were TVs we could watch. There was a pool table, shared by all the groups.
29. The social work department arranged for me to go to a girls' group at Viewpark. Nobody else went from the home went to the group. Children from other areas went there, but they weren't all in care. I don't know why I got into that group, but it was good. I went there every week. They took me out and did things as well. I went on residential trips to Aviemore with them.

*Trips / Holidays*

30. During the school holidays, the staff used to take us on day trips. John Blair used to drive the mini-bus and take us places. We used to call him "Doubler" because he did a lot of overtime.
31. We went on holidays at Bellshill. We went to caravans in Scarborough and Port Seton. We also went to France. We went to these places in the mini-bus, including the south of France. Sometimes, we went on holiday twice a year. We might get to go away for a weekend or a Monday to Friday as well. I went on all the holidays. I remember [REDACTED] being the only girl in group two when I was there. I got to go on their holiday as well, just to keep her company.

32. PVX SNR was really nice. He was all for making kids feel better about themselves and helping them to lead as normal a life as possible. He tried his hardest for everybody in there. We asked him if we could go to Spain. He compromised and took us to France. France was a good laugh. Someone from the civic centre, Gus McIntosh, tagged along as well. There weren't that many kids, when I think about it. The adults got the better deal. There were five adults and about eight kids. We camped in a tent. It was roasting.

#### *Chores*

33. We had to do the dishes. There was a rota. They then moved the meals into the main dining room and we started to eat altogether in there. I think the cook did the dishes after that. We had to keep our rooms tidy. My room was always tidy, so I was alright.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

34. I remember getting money for my birthday. We got a card and some of the staff would buy us presents as well, from their own money. There were decorations and a tree at Christmas time. We got a special meal. Your key worker would buy you a present. One Christmas, we all got stereos. Everybody was playing them. We all played the song, "Cecilia." We played it constantly when Celia was on nightshift. We'd all get in the corridor, waiting with the stereos ready for when she came in. Every time she came in, we'd press the play button

#### *Pocket money*

35. As well as being given money to buy clothes, we got pocket money. We also got money to go out to the cinema and things like that. I can't remember how much pocket money we got. Pocket money used to be taken off us for swearing. If you had a rough day, you lost it all. That only happened for a while and then I think PVX put a stop to it. I was lucky. I got more money than a lot of the people in the home. The way PVX looked at it was that he was rewarding me for going to school. Some of the staff were a bit bitchy towards me because I did get on with PVX. I would ask them for money for

something and they would say no. I hadn't done anything wrong. They were just trying to be smart. I would just go and ask [PVX] and he would give me it.

#### *Visits / Inspections*

36. I was allowed to go home whenever I wanted, but I didn't want to go home because my sister was horrible to me. I always ended up arguing with her. My mum kept making excuses about coming to visit, but that meant I wasn't getting to see her. [PVX] sorted it out. He arranged for my mum to get picked up and brought down to me. [PVX] arranged a taxi for her to come to the home and a taxi back, so she had no excuse. She came every couple of weeks and sometimes my dad and aunty came as well. I saw them on my own and I was allowed to go out with them if I wanted, although I never did.
37. Sheila Harris was my social worker throughout my time at Bellshill. She was really nice. The frequency of her visits depended upon how naughty I was. I went to a social work review four times a year. I can't remember inspections at Bellshill, although they did have meetings in the home. Janice Ballantyne and Susan were high up in the social work department, based at the Civic Centre in Motherwell. They would come in for meetings and they would speak to the children. We knew who they were, although they didn't really ask us how we were getting on.

#### *Children's Panel*

38. I attended a Children's Panel about once a year. I was able to speak. My key worker at the home was Jean Richmond. When I went into the home, I pushed the boundaries. I decided that wasn't for me so I just got on with my life. Jean Richmond was off, so I got a new key worker. She was then off and Jean Richmond prepared a report for the Children's Panel. It was terrible, despite the fact that she had been telling me I was doing really well. I had been getting glowing reports from everywhere else, apart from the one that was prepared in the home. I went to a girls' group at View Park through the social work department. I went every week. I got a good report from there. The

only good thing that was in my report from the home was that my hygiene was impeccable and my room was immaculate. Everything else was terrible.

39. I was absolutely fuming. It didn't reflect who I had been. I went nuts at the Panel and walked out of it. It just made the home look daft. After that happened to me, PVX [REDACTED] said it wouldn't happen to anybody again. He made sure that any reports being submitted to the Panel went through him first so that he could read them.

#### *Who Cares?*

40. I was quite involved in *Who Cares?* Scotland when I was fifteen. In those days, it was for kids in care. Now, it also helps kids leaving care. PVX [REDACTED] offered me twenty cigarettes to go so I said I'd go. I bet he wished he'd never done that because then I fought for everybody's rights. We used to have our own group meetings in the home. I'd go to meetings with other groups in Glasgow as well. I also attended conferences. I went up to Napier University in Edinburgh for three days. It was giving a voice to children in care, which was good. I used to go with a member of staff, Claire Flannery. There was a girl from Carlisle, [REDACTED], who went as well.
41. We'd run meetings in the home and discuss what we wanted to do. Everybody in the home could attend. We'd discuss what we wanted to change and what was annoying us. We could then go to the staff and tell them what we wanted to change. Through *Who Cares?* I stopped the students who came in the summer from being able to access our records. We also wanted locks on our bedroom doors, so they brought that in as well.

#### *Healthcare*

42. After I was admitted to the home, I was taken for a medical. It was at the local GP. I think it was to check for bruises, but I didn't have any at that time. I didn't get any other health checks, but we could go to the doctor if we weren't well.

43. John Blair accidentally reversed over me in the mini-bus one time, when he was picking me up. I wasn't hurt or anything, but somebody saw it and reported it to the police. They were looking for me in all the hospitals, in case I'd been kidnapped. The police ended up coming to the home.

*Running away*

44. I think running away is when you're actually going somewhere. In the home, they classed not coming back in time as running away. I wouldn't say that's the case. I stayed out a lot. It was mainly [REDACTED] and I staying out late. How late we stayed out depended upon how cold it was. In the summer, we would come in with the birds. I wasn't running away, I just wasn't going back. They would send the police out to look for me but they never caught me. The police would just go to my mum's. That was the last place I was going to go. Eventually, they just stopped sending the police to my mum's because they realised I was never going to be there.

*Discipline*

45. At the start, when I wasn't going to school, I didn't really think the staff at the home could do anything. At home, if I got into trouble I was getting leathered. They couldn't really top that so I pushed the boundaries.
46. Initially, pocket money was withheld if you swore but PVX [REDACTED] stopped that. PVX [REDACTED] would get me into trouble and tell me if I was wrong. At the same time, if I was doing well he would reward me for it. If I was in trouble, I wouldn't be given money. That was generally how discipline was carried out. Sometimes, just giving you into trouble was enough. PVX [REDACTED] was always fair with me so I didn't have any issues with him. I'm grateful to the staff who guided me and gave me in to trouble when I needed it. I'm still in touch with those staff members.
47. We did get restrained if we were acting out. Some of the staff were more heavy-handed than others. They would sit on top of us. Some of them were a bit rough, but at that time it was accepted. I think the staff were meant to be trained, but some of them were

just getting their own back. That didn't happen to me a lot, but [REDACTED] and I used to come alive at night and annoy the life out of everybody. It depended who was there and if they thought they were hard men. One of them used to scratch. The staff also used to try and keep us in our rooms. There were no locks on the doors, except upstairs in group one.

### **Abuse at Bellshill**

48. I don't know if what happened was physical abuse, but some staff members would lose control in the heat of the moment. I didn't think it was directed at anybody. I got restrained and sometimes I felt it was over the top, but I don't think the staff member went out with the intention of hurting anybody. One member of staff in particular actually cut my arm when he restrained me. I wanted out of my room and he wouldn't let me out. I got bravado and he had to stop it. He held me and jagged his nails into me. I just thought that was him losing control and being unable to regain control. I would say that I provoked it, but he lost control. I didn't see any unprovoked physical attacks on anybody else.
49. The sexual abuse is just a story to me now. When I think back, it probably started when I went into the home. Eddie Docherty, a staff member stayed in Holytown and he knew my aunty. He was well into his forties. I don't know if he was divorced, but he was separated for a long time. He had told me that he was pally with my mum and they would talk and talk, but that wasn't true. He also said that his wife was friendly with my aunt, but they just knew each other from the village where they lived. He told me those things to groom me.
50. He never seemed like an alright guy, but you could talk to him and he would give you cigarettes. He was obviously trying to gain my trust. He didn't give you into trouble the same way as the other staff. When you're young, you think that the staff like that are alright. When you're older, you realise it wasn't them that were alright, it was the staff who actually put the foot down. I don't know how he managed to stay in a job like that because he had a potty mouth.

51. It only happened once when I was fifteen. I was doing my exams at school. I was on study leave. I was bored. [REDACTED] never went to school so she had been placed in secure at Kerelaw. Eddie asked me if I wanted to go for a drink. It was a nice day so I thought, "Why not?" My gut instinct was that something bad was going to happen, but I still went. I even said to him, "No funny business." I think my body told me that because of how he used to speak. He was a creep. At that time, I hadn't been aware of him doing anything to anybody else.
52. I sensed it myself and I still put myself into that position. That was a big thing for me to deal with, the fact that I had a feeling something bad was going to happen but I still went and done it. I thought we were going to go to a pub, but we got a carry out and we went down by the River Clyde. When we got down there, he just pounced on me and raped me. His hands were everywhere. He entered me, but managed to get him off and away from me. I think he heard something or somebody's voice and I told him that I'd come back another time. I'd no intention of doing that, I just needed to get away. It happened and I can't change it.
53. After it happened, I was upset. He handed me £20 at the train station, which was even worse. I remember getting the train back to the home. He was off work at the time, so I got off the train at Bellshill and he stayed on it until Motherwell. I couldn't get on a train for ages after it. I hated going to Glasgow. I'd feel sick and everything when I got to Uddingston. He had taken me out of the road where nobody would know him, because I think he lived in Motherwell at this time.
54. I was upset when I got back to the home. When I did get to see my file, there was nothing in my file about it. The pages had been taken out. If there had been, I would've known exactly when it happened because I knew it had happened in May. Other members of staff would have seen that I was upset and it would have been logged. I didn't tell anybody why I was upset. I didn't tell anybody for a long time. I knew within myself and I had put myself into that position. My whole body had told me not to go and I had gone. For me, that was hard. I was too ashamed to tell anybody what happened. I blamed myself.

55. I must've come off differently after it happened. A few of the staff did ask me what was wrong with me. Kathleen asked [REDACTED] as well. She said that I didn't seem myself and asked if anything was up with me. [REDACTED] didn't know at that point. After it happened, Eddie Docherty came back to his work as if nothing had happened. Nothing like that ever happened to me again. I never put myself into a situation where it could happen. Sometimes, he had to take us for a food shop. He used to have a Visa card. He would ask us to give him our money and he would buy us extra.

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

56. I told [REDACTED] what had happened with Eddie Docherty, but it was a long time afterwards. I think it was about a year after it had happened. We were sitting in my room having a drink and I told her. [REDACTED] then told me that she had been in a situation with Eddie Docherty as well. The next night, [REDACTED] pulled Eddie Docherty up about it. She said, "I know what you did to PJP and you're not getting away with it." That was the last time he was ever in the home. Seemingly, he got a phone call, saying that he had to leave because he had something on his file. They said he had a previous conviction for reset or something like that. He had been temporary staff and then he was made permanent, so I could never understand how that could have happened if he had something on his record. I think he got the full-time position after he had raped me. He had been there for years so I don't know why his record hadn't been known before.
57. I also reported what happened with Edward Docherty whilst I was still at Bellshill. I was talking to Muriel the cleaner and I told her what had happened. I told her a few months after I'd spoken to [REDACTED]. She said that she'd need to tell somebody and she told Kevin Murphy. Kevin Murphy came and spoke to me. He said he couldn't leave it at that. It was at that point that it came out that [REDACTED] had also been in a position with him. I think Kevin Murphy might have spoken to everybody in the home and that's when it came out about all three of us, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and me. It did affect [REDACTED], but it wasn't the same as what had happened to me so she felt like a fraud. She felt as if she shouldn't be feeling like she did. Abuse is hard.

58. RBP, who was a senior, told us that nobody would believe us because we were from the home. He did it in a way that he was actually doing us a favour. We then said that we didn't want the police because we didn't want to make a big hullabaloo and then get called liars. Now, I don't know whether I wanted to report it to the police. I just remember thinking that he was doing us a favour. RBP is also up for charges, but I never had any problems with him. I used to feel that he thought he was something, but never in a sexual way. Looking back, I can't decide. I can't see it. I was up at his house for dinner with and nothing happened. The staff dropped us off and picked us up. I never felt threatened by him.
59. Maybe RBP was looking out for us. At that point, the police had no time for some of the older laddies that had been in the home before us. Maybe his experience was that the police would just laugh at us. It could have been genuine advice on his part. Either way, it shouldn't have mattered if we were screaming that we didn't want the police involved, the police should have been called. It's procedure that should have happened.
60. Nobody from out with the home spoke to us about what had happened, but they knew about it. I know that they had meetings about it involving Janice Ballantyne and Bernadette Docherty from the civic centre. I wasn't present at those meetings, but I was told about them. It suited them if we didn't want to get the police involved because it meant less publicity. Janice Ballantyne and Bernadette Docherty didn't do anything. They never bothered. PVX had become SNR when he was thirty, so he was quite young to be in that position. I totally believe that the police should have been phoned. That decision should have been taken out of our hands. It was as if it had been covered up so as not to attract any negative attention.
61. Afterwards, I could see how convenient it was for the home and the social work that we didn't speak up. I didn't see that at the time. We were offered counselling, so it wasn't as if they just did nothing. I went to Kirknowe social work centre up in Cambusnethan for counselling. I saw a female counsellor, although she wasn't based there. I spoke about the abuse. It was supposed to help me cope.

**Leaving Bellshill**

62. When I was sixteen, nearly seventeen, I fell out with a lassie and I hit her. I wouldn't apologise, so I left Bellshill and went to Carluke. I'd been at Bellshill for almost two years.

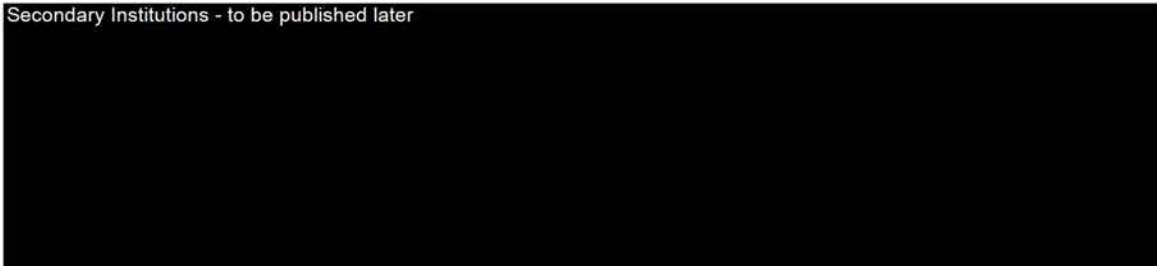
**Carluk Children's Home, Carluk**

63. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

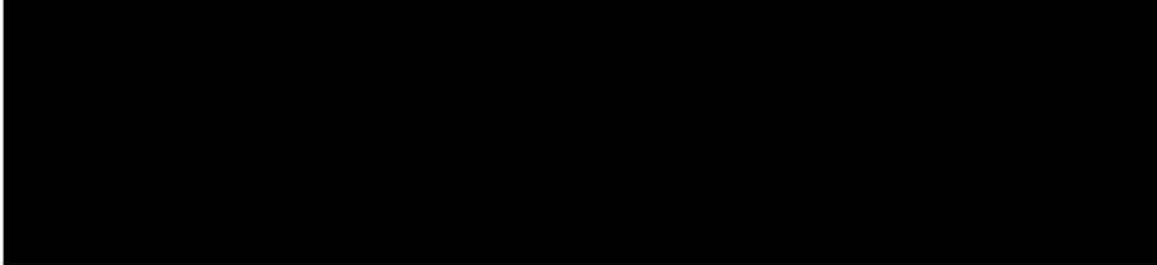


64. RBP had advised me not to come off my section 44(1)(b) when I turned sixteen. He had told me that if I came off it, the first thing that would happen when I turned sixteen would be that I was out the door. I stayed on my section, so it meant I was still under social work supervision at Carluk.


65. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



- 66.

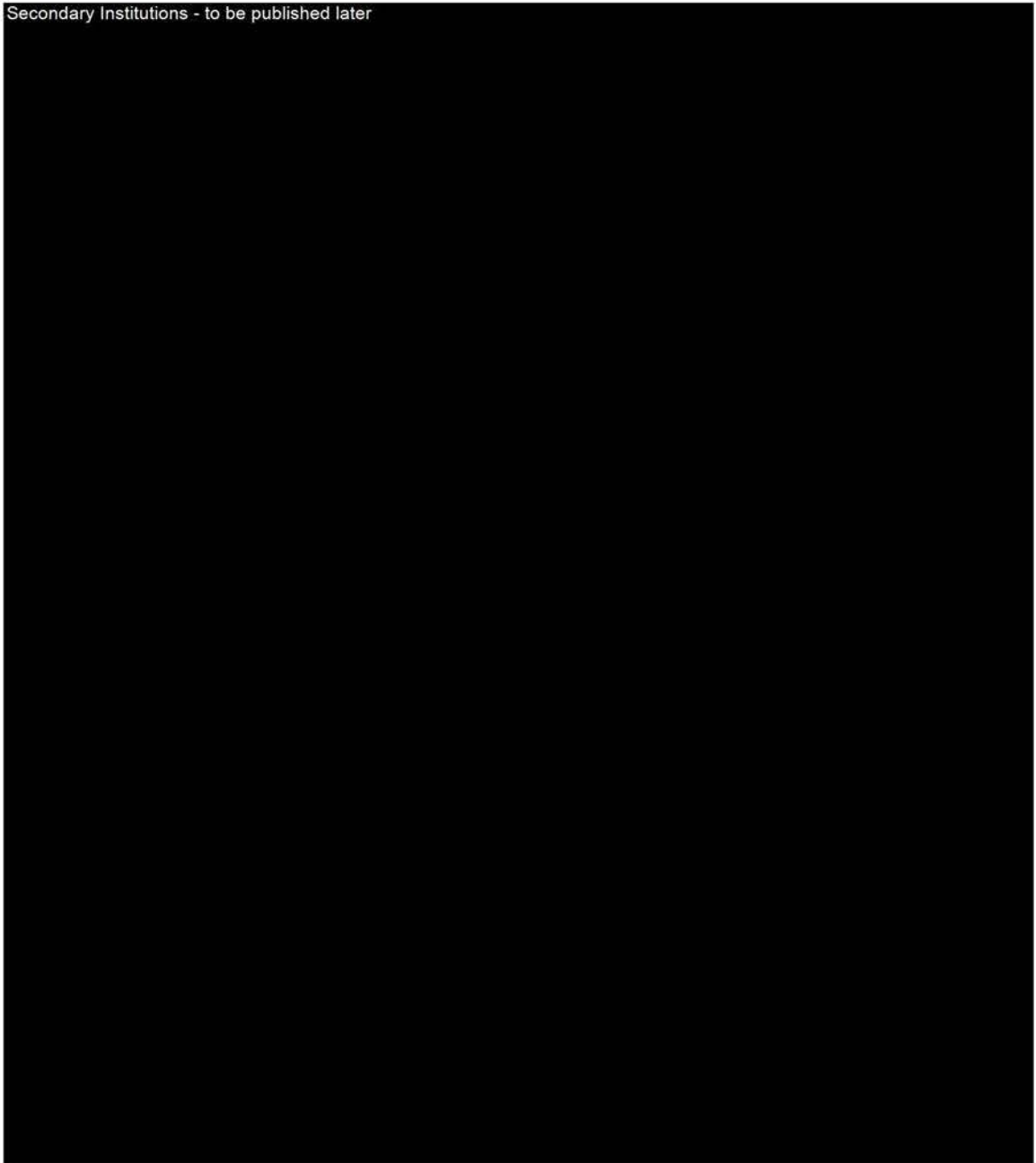


Secondary Institutions - to be published later



67. I was taken to Carluke by the staff from Bellshill. I had already been chucked up to Carluke for a night when I had been arguing with the staff at Bellshill. I also knew some of the people there through Who Cares? Scotland. The two homes met up sometimes.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



68.

69.

70.

71.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

72.

73.

74.

75.

*Preparation for leaving*

76. Prior to leaving Carluke, I attended a group at Kirknowe House. It was called the Go Getters. I would go there once a week. The group was for everybody and continued after I left the home. The last Children's Panel I went to was terrible. I was pregnant. I was eighteen. One of the Panel members said to me that they hoped they never saw my child in front of the Panel. I couldn't believe they were coming out with that.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

77.

78.

79.

### Leaving Carluke

80. I was at Carluke for about a year. I left in [REDACTED] 1992 after my eighteenth birthday. Officially, I left after I went into labour with [REDACTED]. I had my son just after I left. I could have gone back to stay in the home if I'd wanted to. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was on my section and I wasn't coming off that until I was ready to leave. I was getting a house and until then, I didn't have a place to go. I think I got the keys for my house about a week before I went into labour. My house was in Carluke. It was nice and I had nice neighbours.
81. Sheila Harris, my social worker, continued to work with me for a wee while after I left Carluke, but I didn't really need her. When I had [REDACTED], another three girls from care had babies, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We all had babies within months of each other. We would meet up and Joyce would take the group. We would maybe go and cook something. It was to help us. Joyce was my support worker for leaving. Her surname was also Joyce. She worked for Throughcare. She was there to help me with

the transition when I left the home. That was really helpful. Joyce would make sure that we never fell pregnant again. She used to drum into us, "Do you want a baby? Can you cope with another baby? Can you afford another baby?" I'm still in contact with Joyce. Throughcare used to organise activities for folk who had left care or were just leaving.

82. I coped fine when I first left the home. I had been cooking for myself since I was fifteen anyway. Joyce helped me with budgeting. I worked with her for a good while. I always paid all my bills first.

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

83. I stayed in the house in Carluke for twelve years. I've been married for sixteen years. I'm very close to my son, [REDACTED]. I wasn't able to work when [REDACTED] was small. I went into home improvements and I've worked there ever since. I got into that because it was easy hours for [REDACTED] to start with. I design kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms. I've had my own company for eleven years, which I run with my husband. I do marketing and design and my husband does the sales. It's been quite successful and is getting better every year. I enjoy it. I'm very blessed.
84. When they shut Bellshill children's home down, they never even told us. For all of us who had stayed there for a long time, we were never even given a last opportunity to say goodbye. They just did it quietly and didn't even tell anybody. I thought that was terrible.
85. My dad's dead now. I speak to my mum on and off, but I don't really have a relationship with my family. They closed ranks on me as if I was telling lies about my dad. My mum played it down, as if I was exaggerating. I didn't need to exaggerate. We both knew what happened. It was as if we watched the same programme but the two of us came out with something different. I never really had the best relationship with my mum anyway.

86. My mum was alright with [REDACTED] and she helped me out with him. I don't let myself get close to my mum because I don't want to get hurt. I see my brothers and sisters now and again, but I haven't maintained it. My older sister was an idiot the last time that I saw her. I used to bite and lose the plot with her, but now I just walk away. I think too much of myself to put myself through that. My mum allowed her to bully me all of the time. I would mouth off and then I would be the bad one. She's not changed so now I just don't go near her. I've got my own wee family and that's good enough for me.

### **Impact**

87. Going into care was the best thing that ever happened to me. I think it was one of the best decisions that was made for me. Despite everything that happened, I can take something out of it and think that it's a positive thing. I didn't at the time. I'm even able to take a positive out of the abuse now. The abuse made sure that I was always prepared. I never let my guard down. Lots of people are very promiscuous, but I never went down that road.
88. If I had stayed with my mum and dad, I would have been a complete and utter waste of space because that's how they looked at me. When I went into Bellshill, PVX [REDACTED], Claire Flannery, Margaret Ramsay, Kevin Murphy and Kathleen Irvine looked at me and said I was actually alright. They encouraged me to do things. If I got into trouble, they still encouraged me. I had good role models to help me. I'm not ashamed that I was in a home. I don't care. It's part of who I am and it's moulded me.
89. In general, I had a good experience of being in care. It helped to shape me into who I was. I don't know why I got on with PVX [REDACTED] so well. I heard some people say that there was malice in it, but there wasn't. I'm still in contact with some of the staff. I totally appreciate what they did for me. If it hadn't been for them guiding me, I don't know what would have happened to me. A lot of the staff were just childish. They should never have worked in places like that. I'm grateful to the staff who got me into trouble when it was needed. Those are the ones that I'm still in contact with.

90. After I had my son, my hormones were all over the place. Before I had [REDACTED], I pushed the abuse out of my mind and didn't think about it. I knew it had happened, but I didn't go into it. After I had [REDACTED], I kept getting flashbacks and I couldn't sleep at night. I felt like I needed to protect my baby. I'd become more aware of things like that when I had [REDACTED]. That's when it really affected me. Because I went with Eddie Docherty when I knew I shouldn't have, I just felt so dirty. It was a horrible time when I should have been enjoying my baby. I couldn't talk to anybody about it because I knew I shouldn't have gone. It was really hard when that's what I was telling myself, that it was my own fault.
91. I reported the abuse to the police after I had [REDACTED] because I felt like I needed to protect my baby. I hoped that reporting it to the police would be it, but it lasted. Sometimes I was suicidal. Sometimes, I felt so bad. I felt like I was a terrible mum to [REDACTED] because I wasn't giving it my all. I was on Valium and anti-depressants. I had panic attacks. After the court case in 1996, I did get counselling through my GP. I didn't find it helpful because you just relive it. I could talk about it and talk about it and talk about it, but unless I had it in a good place I was never going to get over it.
92. Medication didn't help me. The best thing I ever did was go to see a life coach, James McCourt. I found him on Facebook just over three years ago. By the time I went to see him, I was starting to get better and it wasn't as bad. After seeing him, I felt like I was able to put what happened to bed. I'm now able to talk about it without shedding one tear. I see James once a month. He also does seminars and groups so I go to a lot of mindful things as well. I'm lucky that I was able to afford to do that because a couple of years ago I'd have been bawling my eyes out, giving my statement to the Inquiry. I haven't even come close to welling up.
93. The abuse impacted upon my relationship. I had to get help having sex because I felt that it was dirty. I had to put myself and my husband through some therapy. I felt it was really hard to enjoy sex. That wasn't easy.
94. I'm into angels as well because I feel like somebody protected me when I was growing up. I've come out the other side and I don't have a drug or alcohol problem. I feel so

blessed and I am so grateful. I have become more spiritual and I do Reiki. I go to a group and I do it on my husband. I try to go to the gym four times a week if I can. I like to go in the morning so that I feel better. It sets me up for the whole day. I've found other ways of coping. I know that I do need to work on my well-being. If I didn't work to keep myself up, I would slip down into it. I want to be the best possible person that I can be. I have to do that myself. I have to put in the work. If I don't do that, then I'm not going to get better.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

95. I stayed in contact with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] after I left care. After I had [REDACTED], I started to think about the abuse more and was getting flashbacks. I felt like I had to protect my baby. [REDACTED] had had a baby as well and she felt the same. We started to question why the home hadn't called the police. They phoned the police if we came in late, so why not phone the police for something like this? The three of us decided to contact the police. We contacted Motherwell Police Station in about 1995. CID took statements from us. After our allegations came out, it came out about Ed Stanton as well. There was a big investigation and I had to go and speak to the police again.
96. Eddie Docherty didn't get charged with anything serious, but the fact that he went to court was good enough. He went to court for lewd and libidinous behaviour. It was a trial and I had to give evidence at the end of 1996. The court case was really hard. I had to give evidence in front of him. There were no screens or anything. Some of the charges were not proven, but he was found guilty of other charges. He didn't get a jail sentence. I felt like I did the best that I could, but I was quite gutted that he didn't get the jail. There wasn't a lot that I could do.
97. I know other allegations have been made about abuse at Bellshill. I never saw anything, other than what happened to me with Eddie Docherty. I know there have been allegations made against John Blair. I just can't believe it. I thought he was a good guy. He didn't swear at anybody or anything. You get a feel for who's alright and

who's not alright. He was fair with the kids. He did spend a lot of time doing the extras, but he was the only one who would take us anywhere. Anybody who was in the home with me at that time agrees with me. I honestly don't believe he would have done anything like that.

### **Records**

98. I don't have my records, but I did get to see my file just after I left care. My social worker brought them to me, but it was all photocopies. I wasn't allowed to keep them. I found it strange that there was no mention of the abuse at Bellshill. Lots of things were missing, like all the reports of abuse that they had done at the time.

### **Lessons to be Learned**


99. Nowadays, staff will be sent on courses for restraining so that they do it properly. I would also imagine that staff would be checked out properly. At that time, anybody could work in the home. Some of them had no qualifications or anything. Students used to come in the summer for summer jobs. They could read our files. I don't even think they were studying social work. That happened every summer.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

100. There are loads of people out there who just don't know their way. Things will have happened to them. I wanted to give them a voice. There will be abusers out there just now. These people always get into the care system. Children in care are vulnerable and they're attacked at their most vulnerable. I came forward to give them a voice and to try and change it for other people. When this is in the papers and it starts to get bigger, they'll hear snippets of it. I hope it'll maybe make them realise that abuse isn't right. It might give them a voice to speak out and say, "This happened to me."

101. Abusers are clever, so I don't know what can be done to stop them. I think that kids should have life coaches in the homes. They should all be taken to seminars and things like that, so that they are hearing a different voice. They need to learn that it's all about them being strong and that only they can fix it. If children were hearing that when they were in care, they would have the confidence to say that something isn't right for them and therefore not do it. It could help with the staff as well, to have more open minds and be the best that they can be.

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

Signed...  PJP .....

Dated... 21/8/17 .....