

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IQN [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is IQN [REDACTED]. I prefer to be known as IQN [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1979. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Dundee, but never lived there. I've got two brothers and two sisters. I've got a wee sister [REDACTED] and my wee brother [REDACTED], but he's dead now. I've got a big brother, [REDACTED] and a big sister [REDACTED]. She is known as [REDACTED]. I was born in the middle of the five. My mum's name is [REDACTED] and my dad was called [REDACTED]. My dad died when I was thirteen and that's how I ended up in care.
3. I grew up in Muirton in Perth, in what I describe as a Faganesque background. I say that because my dad was up in court and he was described as Fagan as he got us to go out stealing for him. It was quite bad growing up. He didn't have a job. I stayed in London for periods of time and went to school there. I stayed half my life in London and half in Perth. I moved to London when I was seven and came back when my dad died. We'd come back and forward. My mum and my dad's relationship was off and on and she'd take us to stay at my auntie's in London and she was constantly running about after my dad. We never stayed in one place too long.
4. I went to seventeen different schools before I went into care. They were in London and in Perth. I've been to two schools in Perth and the rest of them in London. The ones in Perth were St Columba's and St John's. I can remember some of the schools in London, but I was never in them for long before we moved on.

5. When I was at home my older brother [REDACTED] didn't live with us because he wasn't my dad's bairn. Neither was [REDACTED] and he accepted her, but he wouldn't accept [REDACTED]. My granny and grandad brought him up, but when they died he came to live with us. He was about thirteen or fourteen at that time. I felt sorry for [REDACTED], he got the raw end of the deal. He's four years older than me and I'm four years older than [REDACTED]. My sister [REDACTED] is two years older than me. I'm nine years older than [REDACTED].
6. When I was in primary school I wasn't always going. I wasn't in school for long periods of time. Sometimes my mum was working, but not much. She had a lot going on with five kids. I can't remember her working much. Her family would congregate together and her cousins or brother would come to stay with us. She'd always have someone hanging on to her. We all went to live with her mum in Perth at one stage. I don't know where we all slept.
7. My dad died when I was thirteen and he overdosed [REDACTED]. That happened in [REDACTED] in London. He stayed at a hospital in Kings Cross for five weeks and he was on life-support from when he first went in. He was kept alive for five weeks and then they brought him back to Bridge of Earn, just outside of Perth. When he was there they switched his life support machine off and he died. I can remember us standing around him when it happened a couple of minutes after they turned the machine off. It was hard. I still loved my dad.
8. It wasn't long after that we got put in care in Nimmo Place. I had a social worker before I went into Nimmo Place because I wasn't going to school. That was the main problem then. I can't remember who that person was. It was a woman at first. She would pick me up once a week and take me for a milk shake and have a chat with me about what was going on. It was just me she was talking to. It was a good thing and she started getting me involved in groups and I could take one of my pals with me.

#### **Nimmo Place children's home, Tulloch, Perth**

9. Nimmo Place children's home was a big white cottage with a conservatory at the back. It had a wee building on the side of it and the food was stored in it. It looked pleasant

from outside, but if you went inside it wasn't a nice place. There wasn't a garden you could play in and you never really went in the back garden.

10. I think Perth social work were in overall charge of the home. They were based at Roslin House. That was where some of social work was based and the bosses were based there. It's no longer a social work office.
11. There must have been a children's panel that decided we should be placed in Nimmo Place. We couldn't have gone there without a children's panel making a decision. My mum actually signed for us to go in there.
12. I think [REDACTED] was too old to be with us but I'm not sure. I know I was with my sister [REDACTED] and she was pregnant. She was fifteen and a half when we went into care. I was thirteen. I think [REDACTED] was nine or ten and [REDACTED] was five or six. There was four of us who went in together. Because our dad had just died, me and my wee brother would fight all the time with everything that was going on. My mum couldn't handle all five of us.
13. They eventually put my mum in the home with us to try to calm us down. She was drinking so it didn't really work and they put an end to that. Then [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] got put in foster care in Fife. They got moved from place to place and then ended up being put in Guardbridge. I was too old for foster care and no-one wanted to take a thirteen year old so I got kept in the care system. [REDACTED] turned sixteen and I was left in the home by myself.
14. Nimmo Place was the worst place I was in. It was just full of juvenile delinquents. There were teenagers in there. They should never have put my wee brother and sister in there. The teenagers were crazy and getting restrained. People were throwing things through the windows. It was a mad place. There were boys and girls in there. I think the oldest one was aged fifteen. He was called [REDACTED]. I still see him now. There were nine kids in there in total at one point and that included my family.

15. Sometimes through the day there was a manager and she was a wee woman who wore glasses. I can't remember her name. As well as her there could be four on at a time. Not all the time. I can remember some staff members. There was ITA, FJE and there was an older woman called RMM. She got involved in the restraining too. There was another guy who was called FIZ. He's quite high up in the social work department now. There was another female member of staff. She was called Julie Orange. She was young at the time and her mum was high up in social work and Julie got a job at sixteen or seventeen working with kids. I really liked her. Julie never restrained me once. She'd verify the things I experienced as she saw it happening. I still speak to her now.
16. There was just one manager there. The rest of them were just staff members. There was also one from Dundee, RLZ, a wee guy. Secondary Institutions - to be published later. Secondary Institutions - to be published later. He wasn't nasty in a bad way and I quite liked him, but he did restrain me a few times too because he was getting involved with ITA and FJE. They were the two worst ones for doing it. ITA was a really big guy and FJE was a hippy looking guy with black hair and black beard and specs.

### **Routine at Nimmo Place children's home**

#### *Mealtimes / Food*

17. They fed us and the food was ok. We sat down to have dinner together so they did try to get us into a routine.

#### *Washing / bathing*

18. There was one bathroom in the home with a bath and we all had to share that. That was ok and we got privacy to use it. I had my own bedroom in the home.

*Clothing / uniform*

19. The home provided us with clothes and toiletries. You got taken out and the staff would buy you these things.

*School*

20. I went to school sometimes. They'd take you in the mini-bus that the home owned. I was going to St Columba's school in Perth by this stage. That was my secondary school. None of the other kids in the home were at my school.

*Religion*

21. Religion didn't play a part in the children's home

*Work/chores*

22. Everybody had do a chore of some sort. There was a rota for doing the dishes.

*Trips / Holidays*

23. I remember we went to a staff member's house for new year. His name was RNF. He was one of the ones who used to restrain me. He was a psycho and he looked like a lunatic, but he could be really pleasant as well. He tried to teach me to play guitar, but when he got angry he went crazy. His mood would flip very quickly. He took me and all of the kids in the mini-bus to his house in Glenrothes at new year. There were another two members of staff there too. There were no problems on that trip. All the kids drank alcohol-free beer.

### *Leisure time*

24. We did activities in the home. They'd take you out to the cinema and things like that. There was a pool table and a tv inside. There wasn't facilities for a kid like [REDACTED] who was in there at five of six. She shouldn't have been in there.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

25. My cousins were shoplifters and I can remember Christmas in Nimmo and I had black bags full of stuff that my cousins had brought back from Oxford Street. They felt sorry for me because of my dad dying. I remember having an argument with a member of staff about the stuff they gave me.

### *Visits / Inspections*

26. I had a social worker when I was in Nimmo Place and he was called Donald. I can't remember his second name. He was really nice and I liked him. I saw him quite regularly. He used to give me fags. I remember he smoked Marlboro. He'd come into Nimmo Place to see me. There was a conservatory in the home and I'd speak to him in there. I got to have a chat with him by myself.
27. I think it was when my dad died that I started seeing him quite a lot. I don't think I told him about the restraints in Nimmo because I thought they were allowed to do them and there was no point in mentioning them. It happened to everybody.
28. I don't think anyone sat me down to speak about what I'd been through before I came into the home. Donald didn't do that. He never spent much time with me. He'd ask me how I was doing and give me some fags. I can't remember talking to him in great detail. He never took me out on an activity.
29. I'd see Donald if a panel was coming up and he'd maybe come once a week. I went quite a lot to panel hearings. I didn't speak at them. They were held in Muirton in Perth. There were other places in the town they could be held. I was never asked about

restraints in panel hearings, it never came up. I think a member of staff would come to the hearings with me. My social worker would be there. Sometimes, but not very often, my mum would be there.

30. I would see my mum in Nimmo Place sporadically. After my dad died she hit the drink badly. She was in the home with us for a week or maybe two weeks but they realised it was making things worse. She couldn't stop the arguing between me and my brother and my sister. Our dad had just died and we were living in a place we weren't happy in. After that I didn't see her much. I might bump into her if I ran away.

#### *Siblings/contact*

31. I think [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] only stayed a couple of weeks before they left the home and went into foster care. I can't remember how long they were in there for. We were all lost without each other. We'd not long lost our dad and we had a lot to deal with.

#### *Healthcare*

32. I didn't need to see a doctor. I don't remember getting a medical check-up before I went into care.

#### *Running away*

33. I ran away 129 times in eleven months. I know that figure because I was told it at a panel. I'd stay at my pal's houses. Their mums and dads would let me stay. Where I grew up there was a small close-knit community in Muirton and everyone knew everybody else. My best mate [REDACTED]'s mum would feed me and let me stay. She treated me like one of the family and kind of brought me up after my dad died.
34. I'd get caught by the police and chased every time I was seen. They knew my face by then. I'd be taken back and staff would take my trainers off me. [REDACTED] did that. Then I'd run away in my bare feet. When I got taken back to Nimmo Place I don't remember

getting any physical punishment. I hated the place so I was still going to run away when I got the opportunity. I hated the restraints and the environment in the place.

### *Discipline*

35. The staff member called ITA restrained me a lot. He nearly suffocated me, he was a huge guy. I was put in restraints pretty much from the day I went in because we were all fighting, me and my wee brother and sister. If you didn't do what they said they would sit on top of you. There could be four to six of them at a time. There was one on each leg and one holding each arm. When I was restrained I'd be put face down with my hands behind my back and in a starfish shape with my legs flat out. They'd put their knee on the back of your arm and they'd be kneeling on your arm. There was never a free leg or arm.
36. The only thing I could move was my head and that's why I used to bang my forehead on the floor. I didn't do it softly and one of the staff would put a pillow underneath my head. I'd be hitting my head on the floor for ages to try and get them off me. I couldn't breathe half the time. Someone would sit on me and I couldn't move an inch.
37. They were all big guys. ITA and a man called FJE was big as well. FIZ restrained me too. They were the three main ones who restrained me. There must have been at least five of them involved because someone would go to get a pillow for under my forehead. I'd feel helpless while this was happening. I can't really remember how I was feeling. I used to panic if I felt I couldn't breathe because someone was on top of me. I never broke any bones during a restraint.
38. I could be anywhere in the room or the home when the restraint started. Usually it would happen in the hall for some reason. It was driving me insane. There was never any concrete floor or laminate floor I was put down onto. There was always a carpet.
39. The restraint could happen if I just didn't do what they wanted me to do. For example they might have been telling me to go to bed. They never talked to me about why I

didn't want to go to bed. It was straight to restraint if you didn't listen to them. If you were standing and they wanted to get you in a restraint they'd just rush at you and overpower you. They were big men and I was short and skinny so it was easy to do.

40. I think the longest I've been down on the floor was twenty minutes. For them to end the restraint I'd have to agree with what they wanted me to do in the first place. If I didn't want to go to bed I'd have to say I agreed to go to bed. You'd usually just do it after they were lying on you for twenty minutes.
41. I saw restraints like this happen to someone else. There was a wee guy called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who used to get them quite regularly. He was a year or two younger than me. I think he was about twelve the first time I saw him getting restrained. I think a restraint happened to somebody every day. If it wasn't me it was someone else.
42. Restraints didn't happen to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as they were there just a couple of weeks.
43. I can't think of any discipline they used other than restraints.

#### **Abuse at Nimmo Place children's home, Perth**

44. They had an office with bars on the windows and they locked me in there for two weeks. I was kept in the room because there wasn't any beds in the secure unit. This was because I'd been caught after my pal had picked me up in a stolen car and there was a high speed chase and he was driving. There was only one bed in the secure unit and because he was driving he got put in it.
45. They wouldn't let me out of the room. They didn't let me get a shower. I could only leave the room to use the toilet. I wasn't allowed to watch tv. They wouldn't let me smoke. There was a member of staff sitting with me for fourteen days and fourteen nights and sleeping in the room with me. They brought two camp beds into the room. I couldn't sleep anyway. I fought with them eight or nine times a day to try to get out of the room.

46. They locked me in that office for two weeks and I was fighting them constantly until I had no breath left in me. I was getting restrained eight to ten times a day in those two weeks. After the two weeks I was locked in the office I got put in a secure unit.
47. After the two week period, this member of staff took me away with him. It was so I couldn't run away. I realised afterwards he suggested he'd take me away because he was cheating on his wife. His name was ITA [REDACTED]. I can't remember his second name. He was a big guy, like a rugby player. I actually liked him. He took me up to Inverness and he'd been up there before to see this woman. He took me to her house and he was drinking. He was half-steaming. I went to bed. I could hear him having sex with this woman all night. I heard her saying 'ION [REDACTED]'s in the other room'. He just burst out laughing.
48. The other boy I knew in the home, [REDACTED], must have done the same thing to him and ITA [REDACTED] took him to Inverness. [REDACTED] knew about it. [REDACTED] bumped into ITA [REDACTED] in the town six months afterwards and he was with the woman. He must have left his wife for her.
49. My sister [REDACTED] got restrained. That FJE [REDACTED] pulled my sister's nightie up when she was six months pregnant. I remember he grabbed her and her nightie got lifted up past her waist. I told him what he was doing wasn't right. He was trying to restrain her. I told him to get his hands off her. She didn't get put down on the ground and I charged at him to get him off her. It turned out I got restrained but at least I got him off her.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Nimmo Place children's home, Perth**

50. I never reported the staff behaviour or the restraints to anyone. I didn't think I could do anything. I thought it must be legal and they were allowed to do it. I was never violent to anybody. The environment in Nimmo Place meant that restraints happened and no-one stopped it.

### Leaving Nimmo Place children's home

51. I was at Nimmo Place for eleven months. After I came back from Inverness with [redacted] I got out of Nimmo Place. It's possible I was then put into another children's home but I don't know for certain.

### Woodside children's home, Craigie, Perth

52. Woodside is a children's home. It's just like a normal semi-detached house in Craigie in Perth. [redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

[redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

53.

54. It was just me from my family who went to Woodside. When I went there [redacted] stayed at Nimmo Place and then got her own flat because she had a baby. [redacted] Secondary Institutions

[redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

55. [redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later In Nimmo they were nuts. [redacted] Secondary Institutions

[redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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## **Balnacraig residential school, Perth**

67. I went to Balnacraig when I was fourteen. It was a residential school over the river in Perth. I was there for a short time, maybe three weeks. There would have to be a children's panel that made a decision to put me there. You couldn't just get put somewhere without a panel. I can't remember the panel that put me there. I think I was there so I had to go to school as they had one in their grounds. I wasn't getting any education in the children's homes.
68. The staff in there were brilliant and I liked them. There was both male and female staff in there. There were kids there who were older than me and younger than me. There was a quite a lot of kids. It was mixed and I got on with everybody. I knew some kids from other places.

### **Routine in Balnacraig**

#### *Food/mealtimes*

69. The food in there was amazing.

#### *Schooling*

70. I went to their school for the three weeks I was there. It was alright there. I'd missed a lot of school before that.

#### *Leisure time*

71. There were things to do in there like a table tennis table and pool table. They had a shed full of mountain bikes and kayaks. They used to do outdoor activities all the time. I did kayaking with them.

### *Visits*

72. I can't remember having any dealings with social workers when I was in there. I used to see Donald when I was in Nimmo Place and he left, but whoever was my social worker after that didn't come to see me.

### *Running away*

73. I probably wouldn't have run away, but when my mum came to visit me she brought my cousin [REDACTED]. Everybody was out, they were kayaking or something and there was hardly any staff on. When my mum and [REDACTED] left the building I went over the bridge behind them. I went to my cousin's boyfriend's house. The police went there to try to find me.
74. I was so skinny I hid behind the drawers in the bottom of a bed. When the police came to the door, they pulled the drawer out of the bed and I lay at the back of the drawer and they shut the drawers as they couldn't see me. We went to London the next day, me, my cousin [REDACTED] and my mum. That's how I ended up in London for six weeks. I think I was in Balnacraig before I ran away to London.
75. I'd had six weeks in London and had a crack and heroin habit when I came back. My auntie [REDACTED] was babysitting for these crack and heroin dealers and got paid in rocks and heroin bags. I was taking that every day for six weeks with her.
76. Then Julie Orange came to London and took me back to Perth and to Woodside children's home. I remember her commenting on how much weight I'd lost. She was only three or four years older than me. I was then in Woodside for a couple of days before being taken to Rossie Farm.

### *Discipline*

77. I didn't have a problem in Balnacraig. There was no restraints. There was a nice environment.

### **Rossie Farm, Montrose**

78. Rossie Farm is in Montrose and in the middle of nowhere. I went there because a children's panel had placed me because I'd run away from Balnacraig. I spent six months there at first, then I did a year after that. A couple of members of staff must have driven me there.
79. It was like a jail for under-sixteens. There was a governor in charge but I can't remember their name. He had an office on the ground floor. I didn't have any dealings with him as I was never in trouble in Rossie.
80. There were bars on the windows. Every door was locked behind you. Your door to your bedroom was locked from nine at night to eight in the morning. If you wanted to use the toilet you had to press your bell to get out. The youngest person I met in there was my second cousin [REDACTED], who'd got four years at the age of eleven. The oldest boys would be aged fifteen or sixteen. There were girls in Rossie too.

### **Routine at Rossie Farm**

81. We had a set routine every day. We'd get up and shower, get breakfast then go to school and then come back to the unit and play snooker or table tennis. I'd go to different units as well and I had pals from Perth in there as well. There was my pal [REDACTED] who I used to stay with when I was on the run from Nimmo. He was in Lune unit and I was in Dalhousie. The units were named after rivers. I was in Tay at first for six months and got out and then came back for a year's order.

### *Clothing/uniform*

82. We wore our own clothes and didn't wear a uniform. They took you out shopping as well. I had a key worker who used to take all the Perth boys. His name was Tam and he was from Perth himself. He took me shopping for clothes once a while.

### *Healthcare*

83. I was taking a lot of drugs after my dad died, but I was as healthy in Rossie as I ever was as a teenager. I put on loads of weight in there. There was probably a matron there. I never had to see anyone.

### *Schooling*

84. You went to school every day there. They had their own school in the grounds. I learned painting and decorating there. I'm good at wallpapering and I've done up my mum's house. I learned those skills in Rossie. The guy who taught me painting and decorating was known as PH and his name was Peter Houston. He taught us rugby as well. I made my auntie a table in woodwork class at Rossie and she still has it now. They tried to set you up with skills for work outside. They had home economics class and they'd teach you how to cook. They taught me life skills that helped me later on in life. They also taught me how to use a sewing machine and an iron.
85. Any education I ever had, I did it in Rossie Farm. It was the only time I had a period of time going every day to school. I missed my exams there because I got let out once and I didn't go back. I ran away for five weeks. Then I went back and did Scot-Techs and passed them. They're the only qualifications I've got. I got them in home economics, joinery, maths, geography, painting and decorating, PT and social and vocational skills.

### *Visits/Inspections*

86. I did get visits. My big brother [REDACTED] would come sometimes. My mum never came much. Near to the end of my stay my uncle [REDACTED], his name was [REDACTED], started to come to visit me with his wife.
87. I was seeing my younger brother and sister twice a year at the ten-pin bowling in Dundee. I'd see them on their birthdays. They were living in Fife and still in foster care.

88. When I was in Rossie I never saw any social workers. Once you're on an order there's not much reason for social work coming to see you. I can't remember anyone coming round to inspect the place.

*Leisure*

89. They had a place called the Playbarn. After three months in there you could earn your swims. They had their own pool. It was outside of the main building so you had to walk with just your night gown on to the pool. It took you three months to earn that. You had to earn other things too as a reward. After six months you earned your walks and you could go out on a walk out in the countryside with a member of staff. You could get out to play touch rugby. There was a member of staff who coached us and he played rugby for Hawick.
90. I didn't go on trips until I was in the open unit. The open unit is just outside of the main building and you go in there before you're getting released. I was in there for a few weeks before I got out. There was a guy in there who was a talented guitarist. We went to a guitar open mic night in Montrose and he played at the event. He was only fourteen and came from a musical family. That was the only time I went out from Rossie.

*Running away*

91. When I was in the open unit they let me out on weekend leave. I was allowed to go to my uncle [REDACTED]'s for weekend leave. I think I got asked if I wanted to stay with him. I think I started staying with him two months before I was getting released. He's my mum's brother. I didn't go back one time and I stayed on the run for five weeks. I missed my exams and I probably would have passed them. Then Rossie let me do Scot-Techs in every subject. I passed the Scot-Techs they let me do. They wouldn't let me sit exams for some reason because I wasn't there on the right day.
92. There wasn't any punishment for not coming back from weekend leave. I was just about to turn sixteen and I got brought back and I was released not long after that.

### *Discipline*

93. I liked Rossie. I wasn't getting restrained all the time. I got in a fight once and I got dragged to my room and that was the only hands on contact I had from a member of staff. It was just one member of staff who did that and he was an ex-bouncer called ROA [REDACTED]. His surname was ROA [REDACTED], but we called him ROA [REDACTED]. I liked him. He was a good guy.
94. There was never any issues with discipline in Rossie Farm. Everybody was chilled in there. There would be fights, at football and that and we'd get in arguments that could be physical. I never saw the things like I saw at Nimmo Place happening in Rossie. I never saw six members of staff sitting on one guy. I saw two boys fighting and getting dragged apart and taken to their rooms, but nothing on the restraining level.

### **Leaving Rossie Farm**

95. I was in Rossie until I turned sixteen. I knew when I was getting out. The first time I was there it was for six months and the second time I was on an order for twelve months. I thought Rossie was a good place that helped people.
96. When I got released I moved in with my uncle [REDACTED]. My uncle [REDACTED] knew I was in Rossie and he was just thinking of the money because of the social work department and he should have left me alone. I was just getting ready to leave Rossie and I had an apprenticeship in panel beating and spraying waiting for me in Montrose, and a flat. He started visiting me every week near to the end of my time in Rossie. He'd never been to see me before for the eighteen months before I got out.
97. All he was thinking about was getting money from the social work department. I didn't realise that at the time. It was the biggest mistake I ever made when I went to stay with him. The first night I stayed with him I broke into a shop across from his house. It was a big mistake I made going to his house. Uncle [REDACTED] was a criminal and had been in prison. He knew that my dad used to send me and my brother out at night to break into cars.

## Life after being in care

98. I got out at sixteen in 1995. I wasn't in care again after that. When I went to stay with uncle [REDACTED] he would have taken any welfare benefits I received. A few months after starting living with him I was in Perth jail. I was sixteen and in there with lifers. There was a few of us there at sixteen. I then got out on probation and was given community service. I think it was to give me a fright. When I came out I ended up living at my sister's home.
99. After I left care social work weren't really involved with me anymore. They had put me in this place called independent living. This was around the time I was in Woodside. They put me in a room that had a cooker and a fridge to teach you how to shop, budget and look after yourself. They did that for two weeks.
100. My mate was dying of cystic fibrosis and I passed him a parcel into Perth jail. The seal burst and his mum was with me so I had to admit to it. I was expecting a long time in the jail so I went off to Milton Keynes. I worked the whole time I was there and changed my life and came back to Perth three years later with my wage slips. I went to a court hearing and I said to the judge I've changed my life and he gave me probation.
101. My family was all living in Milton Keynes. My mum was there and my auntie was there and we all followed her after. It was the best period of my life. I worked in kitchens with my big brother [REDACTED]. I did landscape gardening and warehouse work. My younger brother [REDACTED] ran away at fourteen from his foster care in Guardbridge, Fife and came to Milton Keynes to be with us. [REDACTED] was too scared to run away and she stayed in Fife.
102. My sister [REDACTED] got her own house when she left Nimmo Place. She was still living in Perth when I was in Rossie and bringing up her kids. I've stayed quite close with her and still am.

103. I travelled back and forward between Perth and Milton Keynes for years. I still do it a lot and my brother [REDACTED] lives in Milton Keynes and he has a family there. We're in touch on-line.
104. I'm not able to work now as I started taking seizures in my twenties and I'd be a liability in the kitchen. I'm heavily medicated because of the seizures and that can make me sleepy. It took ten years to get diagnosed. The medics didn't believe I was getting seizures until they scanned my brain and they could see scars on my frontal lobes. They can't pinpoint the cause. It's classed as brain damage. Now it has to be managed with medication.

### **Impact**

105. Being in care has messed me up. A lifetime of addiction is probably the result. I don't know if I can blame it on being in care or if it would have happened anyway if I didn't spend all that time in care. I can't be sure because I can't go back and live differently. It had an impact on my education and maybe if I'd gone to Balnacraig earlier and had a school on the grounds I would have had a better education. Instead I was in Nimmo Place for nearly a year and not going to school. I'll never know.
106. Being abused in Nimmo Place affected me and that's how I ended up running away to London and developing a drug habit and then a lifetime of addiction ever since.
107. I see my big sister [REDACTED] regularly and I speak on-line with my wee sister in Fife quite a lot. She's got kids and she comes to stay at my mum's house for a couple of weeks every year. We didn't see her for years when we lived in Milton Keynes, but since we've come back up to Perth we've been in more contact. She's quite shy and she doesn't like speaking on phones so we just message.
108. When we were still kids we had the two or three times a year we'd meet up and that helped us keep a bond between us. When we grew up we were a close family even though we argued and bickered amongst ourselves as kids. We still loved each other

to bits. My younger brother [REDACTED] died in 2017 and he was the one I was closest to. He had a seizure. That was the worst thing I've ever been through.

109. I do think about my experience in care. I don't sit and stew over it every day, but something will jog my memory and it'll come back. Now I live in Perth I walk past Nimmo Place sometimes as I've got pals who live in that area and that makes me think about it. I still see members of staff about in Perth.
110. I'm not in any survivor groups for people who've been in care. I see a drug's counsellor and they ask how I'm doing or if I've used in any drugs recently. They don't ask questions about things that happened to me in the past. They have done that through the years, but not now I'm older.

### **Records**

111. I don't have any of my records from care. I'm aware there is an organisation that can help me with that.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

112. It's not right putting a family like ours in a home with juvenile delinquents like happened to us in Nimmo Place. They could have found us another solution. Even if they put my wee brother and sister somewhere else at the start. I can understand they wanted to keep us all together, but if they wanted to keep us together don't put us in a mental children's home where everyone else has severe issues like self-harming. They were all teenagers. I felt for my wee brother and sister who had already been through trauma when our dad died. They were total innocents and they'd never seen stuff like the fighting and the restraining and the shouting. The teenagers were self-harming. It shouldn't have happened and I hope it doesn't happen again.
113. Don't split families up either. If there's a chance of keeping them together do everything you can. That messed me up more than anything. Shifting kids about from foster home

to foster home from what my wee brother and sister told me really messed them up. They would have gone to many different schools as well. Stability is important for kids.

114. Speak to young people before you start restraining them. I'd been through a lot and if they'd have spoken to me in Nimmo they might not have had to restrain me. There's other ways of dealing with issues. They did that in other places and I never had to be restrained.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

115. I hope no other young family gets put in a children's home like Nimmo Place. We hadn't been in an environment like that before and we'd just lost our dad and they should think of the bigger picture before they do that again.

**Other information**

116. 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.

IQN

Signed...  .....

Dated... 1/11/23 .....