

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PVY

Support person present: No

1. My name is PVY. My date of birth is 1972. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. My mum's name is . I think she had alcohol problems and I'm sure she basically sold herself. I have no full siblings but I have three brothers. was two years younger than me, is about eighteen months older than me and is slightly older than . All the brothers were sons of . I don't know who the fathers were. I've never met my dad, I don't know who he is. I don't really know where we lived before care. I was mainly with while I was growing up. I didn't meet until I was about 35 years old.
3. I am led to believe that I was in care homes from when I was about two years old until I was nine or ten. Along with , I was thereafter fostered then adopted by Mr and Mrs and stayed with them until I was sixteen.
4. The first children's home I was in was Avril. I have no memory of this, I just read about it.

Glenallan Children's Home, Glenallan Drive, Edinburgh

5. My first recollection of anything was while I was at Glenallan Children's Home. It was in The Inch, in Edinburgh. I remember a lot about Glenallan, the schooling and

how the children's home was set up. I was at least four years old when I went but I can't remember being taken there.

6. It was like an oversized council house. It was a white stonecast building with a small garden. It had a fence round it and sat at the edge of a park. It had an estate next to it. There were pensioners' houses over the back. Over the Inch Park was Inch Primary School. I think it was actually called Liberton Primary School. I went to school there.
7. The home was on two floors. As you went in the front door there was a sitting area on the left and on the right was a kitchen. Off the kitchen was a garage, built into the house. They kept gerbils in the garage, apart from that I'm not sure what was in there. There was also a dining room on the ground floor.
8. Upstairs was mainly bedrooms. We were moved from room to room over the time I was there. I remember being in different rooms. I couldn't tell you how many bedrooms were in the place. There were two or three of us in each room. It was mixed, with boys and girls but the bedrooms weren't mixed. They had bunk beds in them. I don't know how many children were in Glenallan in total. I can't remember where the bathrooms were.
9. Somebody called Gordon Knott ran the home. There was a cook there and various members of staff, who came and went. We sometimes got Mormons, I think from America, who would visit and do bits and bobs around the place. The cook was female, I think her name was Agnes. She didn't stay at night but she was there throughout my whole time there. Gordon Knott stayed within the home. I don't know which members of staff, if any, stayed there apart from him.
10. Gordon Knott got married while I was there, to a member of staff. I think her name was Lorna. I was at the wedding. I think there was a high turnover of staff at Glenallan. Jimmy Liddle, who was a staff member there, wrote to me when he left. I got a lot of letters from him while I was still at Glenallan.

Routine

Mornings and bedtime

11. I remember getting up in the morning, brushing my teeth and walking over the Inch Park to the school and back to the home. We got Weetabix or cereal for breakfast.
12. I can't recall much about bedtime. I didn't have any problems with bedwetting. I remember my brother [REDACTED] and I got paired up in the same room for a while but not always. I wouldn't say we were close.

Food

13. I never, ever liked chicken and I was always forced to eat it. On a Sunday I had to sit until I ate it. I'd sit for hours and hours and eventually it would go into the bin. That happened to me regularly. I remember the cook always left a biscuit in a pot for me, so I'd go through at night to see if there was a biscuit for me. The children all ate together at mealtimes. I can't remember how many of us just that it was a big table.

School

14. I can't remember my first day at school. I remember making things like chocolate crispies there. I also remember being badly bitten by a dog in the playground at school when I was about six or seven. I liked school but apart from that I don't have much memory of it. I can't remember getting homework while at school in Edinburgh.
15. I was always the youngest at Glenallan, so no-one from the home was in my class. Gordon Knott would sometimes take me to school on the back of his big motor bike and we got a lift along Glenallan Drive on it.

Holidays & Trips

16. There was normally a holiday once a year to Fort William or Haggerston, just down from where I stay now. Not everyone would go. We were split up. I can't remember who took us. I presume it was staff.
17. I got taken away at weekends by a family called the [REDACTED] who stayed at Liberton. [REDACTED] didn't go, I went myself. They had a daughter who wasn't in the house at the time. They ran the Sunday School at church. I liked going to their house. I was in their garden all the time. I don't know how this came about but I went there a lot of weekends. Mr [REDACTED] wasn't always there, he worked in a lighthouse. This happened throughout my time at Glenallan.

Birthdays and Christmas

18. At Christmas time, you'd come down and there were bikes and things lying around. There was always a lot presents lying about on Christmas morning. The place was decorated with a tree and the round decorations and things. I can't remember if we celebrated birthdays.

Leisure Time/Weekends

19. At the weekend we would often go to the ice rink at Murrayfield. We would go on our own by the bus with other kids from the home. I remember when I was about seven I fell asleep on a bus and woke up in Silverknowes. I remember it was dark. Everyone from the home had got off and left me. The bus went back around in a loop and took me back.
20. We would play on bikes or play with a golf club in the Inch Park. There used to be a small golf course type thing. We had one golf club that we'd hit balls with. We'd walk up to the shops that were about half a mile away. We could leave the grounds if we wanted.

21. There was a television in the sitting room. I think we used to get to watch it. I done a bit of swimming with the school. I was in the Boys Brigade. It was in a hall but I'm not exactly sure where that was.
22. Bath time was on a Sunday. I don't know if that was for everyone. I can't remember a lot about it, just that it was once a week, on a Sunday. I knew there were bundles of clothes downstairs with colours stitched in to them. We all had our own colour. We didn't pick our clothes.
23. While at the home we had to clean, dusting and stuff and we got pocket money for it. I had a post office account and put twenty five to fifty pence into it a week.

Visits/Inspections

24. Once or twice my mum turned up at the home drunk, demanding to come in, but nothing ever came of it. I knew she was there. I was never encouraged to write to my mum or call her. Once we got a visit from [REDACTED] my brother and his adopted parents. That's the only time we ever met [REDACTED] until a few years ago.
25. People would come around to the home, mainly from the church and mainly in the summer. I had a social worker but I'm not sure who it was or when they came.

Medical care

26. From what I was told, I was in plaster from the hip when I was young. I don't know why that was. I can't remember visiting a doctor. This was before going to Glenallan. I have a big hole at the bottom of my spine. I don't know how that came about. I remember being pinned down in the hospital to get the needle in my back. I have asked about medical records while in Eyemouth but they're a bit vague.

Abuse

27. I remember being taken out of my bed at night by Gordon Knott the man who ran the home. I was very tired and not wanting to go. I got taken through to his room. I must have been a bit older as it was when I was at the end of the home above the garage. I don't know if that side was for older kids. It felt at the time that it was quite often. I remember being so tired and being lifted out of my bed. I remember falling asleep and being wakened and falling asleep again.
28. I don't remember how long this lasted or if anyone else was abused. I was sexually abused by Gordon Knott. I didn't speak to anyone about it. That's all I'd like to say about this.

Reporting of abuse

29. About eighteen years ago, two detectives turned up at my door and told me that someone, who was dying of cancer, who had been at Glenallan wanted to get things off his chest to the police. They asked me for a statement there and then.
30. As I said, I hadn't spoken to anyone about being abused by Gordon Knott. I had to explain to my ex-wife [REDACTED]. She didn't know. We were still together at the time. I had bought an ex-council house in [REDACTED] in Eyemouth. I went down and told my adopted parents, the [REDACTED], as well and it was the first time they were angry about something. I gave the police a statement. I didn't get any feedback and found out in the news that Gordon Knott had been charged, went to court and was jailed. I don't know if it was partly from what I'd said to the police because I was told nothing after that.
31. When everything came out my adopted parents always wondered why we were in there for such a long time. My partner [REDACTED] knows everything. She is good with it. She questioned whether I should come here today. She is very supportive.

Leaving the institution

32. I left Glenallan when I was nine or ten years old. There were kids there who were older than me but I always knew, while I was there, that [REDACTED] and I were there the longest. I saw a lot of kids come and go.
33. I only ever remember speaking to social workers when eventually we had to. We put together, not a CV as such, but a thing about ourselves to help us get adopted. [REDACTED] and I done it together. They took photos for it; it was like a big scrap book. We put in hobbies, interests and things. We got adopted shortly after, so I'd be about eight when we did it. This happened in Hanover Street.
34. We met the adopted family a couple of times before we were fostered. There was a social worker present. It was in the same place as we done the books, in Hanover Street.

Foster care/Adoption – Mr & Mrs [REDACTED], Eyemouth

35. When I was nine, going on ten, I was adopted by the [REDACTED]. It was great to be leaving. I was happy when we left. I don't remember who took me from Glenallan to Eyemouth. I remember going to Eyemouth Primary School for the first time. Primary five had already started and I was taken into the class and introduced to my classmates.
36. The [REDACTED], [REDACTED], stayed at [REDACTED], Eyemouth. They had a daughter, who was also called [REDACTED], who was a bit older than us. I imagine she'll be fifty this year. They stayed in a three bedroom detached house. I stayed in a bedroom with [REDACTED] in bunk beds. Things were fine. I had lots of friends but I my relationship with [REDACTED] was getting worse.
37. School at Eyemouth was fine. I wasn't top or bottom of the class. It was fine until we moved to [REDACTED] for a few years, two and a half miles up the road. I still went

- to Eyemouth School. I was in primary seven when we moved to [REDACTED]. The address was [REDACTED].
38. We never got on with the [REDACTED] daughter [REDACTED]. It was shockingly bad. She never spoke to us. She wouldn't be in the same room as us. Mrs [REDACTED] was a teacher at [REDACTED], then at [REDACTED]. She was then the [REDACTED] at [REDACTED], then back to [REDACTED] then back to [REDACTED] again.
39. Mr [REDACTED] was an electrician. He started in a prawn factory then moved on to a pea factory, where he was an electrician. He then went to work where I work now in a papermill. He was an electrician there too. He then had a heart attack and took a PHI scheme where he basically took his wages but he was finished, sort of thing.
40. As I got older I didn't mix a lot with [REDACTED]. When we went to Eyemouth he didn't mix with his own age group and came out with me a lot. I remember having to sneak out of the house to keep away from him. [REDACTED] would threaten me that he would tell people about what happened to me if I went out the house myself. So obviously [REDACTED] knew, but it was never spoken about.
41. When I was in Eyemouth, I was sent out of the house to play at weekends. I'd play football with friends. I wasn't allowed to hang around the house, I had to be out. There were things to play with, roller skates and bits and bobs. When we moved to [REDACTED] I worked in a local garage at weekends.
42. Christmases were never big like you see your kids getting now. We got bits and bobs. Birthdays were celebrated, but not over the top. I think the children's home was still putting money towards presents.
43. We were fostered first and then adopted. They were getting paid when fostering us but not when we got adopted and we were made aware of that by the [REDACTED]. There was never, ever holidays with them.

44. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were big bowlers so a lot of weekends they'd be away bowling. When I was still quite young they would go out for the day in the summer, from ten in the morning until about seven at night and leave cooked meals for us to put in the microwave. As time went on they would stay away overnight.
45. I dreaded the school holidays as we'd go to Loanhead in Midlothian and spend weeks at a time with [REDACTED]'s mum. We called her Gran. We would spend weeks up there. We would weed the garden. I didn't enjoy it. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had brothers that stayed in Loanhead. We would go and visit them but didn't call them uncle.
46. We would call the [REDACTED] mum and dad sometimes, or at times we would call them [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It varied. I would always reference them as mum and dad.
47. I was in secondary school until fourth year. I got four 'O' Grades and a couple of GCSE's. I left as early as I could, when I was sixteen. High school was fine. I enjoyed maths, arithmetic, history, accounts, craft and design. I always went to school. I never skived.
48. I played football for the school and a boy's club. The [REDACTED] didn't take me to any of my activities. I was at cadets and scouts, but they never attended any of the awards ceremonies at all. I played a lot of pool in [REDACTED].
49. I was twelve when I worked in the garage and I got fifty pence for working on the Saturday. There was a woman who lived next door to the garage and she gave me five pound for hoovering her car. She moved about half a mile out of [REDACTED]. I then started cutting her grass and washing the car and she paid me more and more, really well.
50. I used to put all my money into gambling machines. I don't think the [REDACTED] were that aware of this extra money. When they became aware of me doing these odd jobs they weren't overly happy.

51. The [REDACTED] were quite strict. I could not go into the fridge and help myself to food. My room had to be immaculate. I had chores to do, I had to Hoover and do their garden in [REDACTED].
52. My mum was writing to me but I felt loyal to the [REDACTED]. I didn't read the letters at all. I didn't contact her until seven or eight years after not speaking to the [REDACTED]. Even when I left the [REDACTED] house I would rather have spoken to them than my mum [REDACTED].
53. I visited the [REDACTED] once when I was at Eyemouth, at Christmas time. This was at the start of my stay there. The [REDACTED] took us. They weren't religious at all. [REDACTED] was a nice person. [REDACTED] was fine. They were strict but nothing physical, just groundings and things. Eleanor [REDACTED] encouraged me to do homework myself.
54. They'd had a son before they adopted us and he'd died. They took us to the cemetery, to his grave a couple of times in Loanhead. He was thirteen or fourteen when he died. We didn't want to go to the grave so after a while they left us in the car. I don't think it had happened that long before we arrived and I think that may have been why their daughter resented us. They didn't show us any affection.

Life after leaving the [REDACTED]

55. I left school when I was sixteen. [REDACTED] always said that when I was of age I was out of the house. She stuck by her word. When I left school I worked in a prawn factory in Eyemouth. I got the bus from [REDACTED].
56. We moved back to Eyemouth when I worked there and not long after moving, the [REDACTED] did my references and I got a flat there. I moved in and I struggled to pay for the flat or do anything with my friends because I didn't have much money.
57. I ended up moving in with my friend [REDACTED] mum and dad. The [REDACTED] were furious. They quickly got me another house, a three bedroom ex-council

house. It was furnished but really smelly and stale. I was sixteen and didn't see the [REDACTED] for weeks on end. I didn't have much contact with them at all. I then met my wife and eventually I bought a house in Eyemouth. I was about nineteen when I met [REDACTED].

58. [REDACTED] my brother had left school eighteen months to two years before me and had started working in the prawn factory. The [REDACTED] were in Edinburgh on the weekend, we were in [REDACTED] at this time and their daughter [REDACTED] wasn't living in the house by then. She got pregnant at the age of sixteen and ended up keeping the house at [REDACTED] in Eyemouth.
59. [REDACTED] fell out with his boss and was sacked from his job, so he ended up running away. I would have been about fourteen. He threatened to tie me up because he thought I'd call the [REDACTED] and tell them. He didn't tie me up and I was glad to see him go. I did call the [REDACTED] and they tried to meet him getting off the bus in Edinburgh but I was told he must have got off the bus before that. That was [REDACTED] away after that. He came down to [REDACTED] a couple of times. I didn't have anything to do with him. I was working at the garage.
60. They paid a lot of people off at the prawn factory and left a skeleton staff. I stayed a while; it was just myself and a few others. I then moved to a couple of other prawn factories until I was 23 or 24 years old.
61. I got married in 2001. I have two girls. [REDACTED] is fourteen and [REDACTED] is twenty. My wife and I split up about ten years ago. I am now with my partner [REDACTED].
62. [REDACTED] is at Dundee University. I am close with her. When she was here she Face Timed me about six times a day. My ex cheated on me when [REDACTED] would have been about three or four. The person she cheated on me with had a massive grudge against me. I knew of him but didn't know him and I feel he turned [REDACTED] against me. It got harder and harder with [REDACTED]. She didn't want to be with me, he was taking her on holidays, going over the top sort of thing.

63. After the prawn factory I went to work for [REDACTED], a papermill, who took people on temporarily to start with. [REDACTED] worked there and it was the type of place that you needed to have family there to get taken on. I was taken on, let go then brought back and it was no good for me. I left for a year and worked in a fish factory but managed to get back in the papermill. It's called [REDACTED] now. I am a supervisor on a shift basis. I have been there 21 years now.
64. [REDACTED] is fourteen and I miss her not coming to the house. I spoke to [REDACTED] and she told me that [REDACTED] is missing it too, so I want to get back together. I do miss her.
65. I can please myself with what I do now. I know it's selfish but I lacked that years ago. Now I have enough money that I can please myself in what I do.
66. When [REDACTED] was three I stopped talking to the [REDACTED]. I always got on better with [REDACTED]. I'd often go down at lunch time with [REDACTED] as I was off with working shifts. I went down a couple of days after Mother's Day and [REDACTED] asked where the Mother's Day card was. I asked where my birthday card was. He said it was on the mantelpiece, so I said the Mother's Day card was on my mantelpiece. He said, "Oh that's how it is." I said "It is", and we have never spoken again. They never made the effort to visit me. They didn't give me any other support apart from getting the house.
67. I am originally from Edinburgh. I think my mum stayed in [REDACTED] past the jail. I contacted her about seven years after I stopped speaking to the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had been contacting her, he was in Edinburgh. I left it that long because I hoped the [REDACTED] would be back in touch. I met her in the hotel next to the Waverley train station. It was uneasy. She tried to explain her side of the story. She's very straight to the point.
68. I know she's still making money through sex. We've been on and off, speaking and not speaking, for maybe ten or so years. I went through spells when I would see her. I don't think she realises what it was to give up her children. She doesn't speak to [REDACTED] now. She didn't speak to [REDACTED]. She doesn't speak to [REDACTED] either. She

fell out with him on a regular basis. She's asked for the girls to stay with her a few times but I never allowed it. I never would.

69. I met [REDACTED] about ten years ago. He died about seven years ago in a motor bike accident. He was a decent guy. [REDACTED] had been trying to get in touch with him for years. He was the only one she hadn't been in touch with. She eventually got in touch with him and I met him and we got on well. I took [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] down to his house a few times. He was doing well in life. When I split up with my wife, me and the girls went down to see him a couple of times.
70. [REDACTED] was pushing me about wills and money and things and pushed me not to speak to [REDACTED]. I stopped speaking to him for a year or so and then spoke to him again. [REDACTED] found out and wasn't happy. He died a short time after that. After the funeral, [REDACTED]'s partner told [REDACTED] that he had died and [REDACTED] told me. I can see why she didn't want [REDACTED] at the funeral. She'd never been there for him. She can be nasty.
71. I met my brother [REDACTED] shortly after I met [REDACTED]. She said [REDACTED] had issues and he had tried to rape her. I don't know how much was true. I met him once, for a short time one afternoon. I never tried to contact him again.
72. I spoke to [REDACTED] once on the phone as he tried to get in touch with [REDACTED] through Facebook. I got his number from [REDACTED] and called him and told him not to try to contact [REDACTED]. This was about four years ago. He was very abusive. He and his partner are drug addicts. From what [REDACTED] told me he is a very talented painter.

Impact

73. I feel that I have always been envious of families who have parents there and who visit parents. I do make sure [REDACTED] is never uncomfortable about asking for anything. I always check that she has money and is happy.

74. I'm not sure if my time in care has had an impact on my relationships. I'd like to say I'm easy going. I hate being pinned down. I like to do what I want to do. I blame my brother [REDACTED] for that. When I was younger, he told me what I could and couldn't do. [REDACTED] tried to claim compensation according to [REDACTED], and she said I should too.
75. I have recently thought about my time in care. Years ago I drove past to see what the place looked like. I think I was better off in care, as bad as it sounds, than I was with my mother [REDACTED].
76. If I've had a drink I sometimes get myself down about my time in care. I've allowed friends to say to the boy they've fostered, "Look at [REDACTED] PVY, he was in a children's home", using me as a positive influence.
77. I have never had any counselling. Nobody's perfect at the end of the day. Are counsellors going to understand? I don't know. Are they going to have the same background?
78. I heard the advertisement on radio and television and decided to come to the Inquiry. I could do with closure as to not hearing from the police, the lack of feedback, in relation to what happened when I gave a statement. As well as this, if it stops what happened to me from happening again it would be priceless. People can't be allowed to get away with what they've done, but it's not just them. It's the people who have put them in their position. Hopefully the Inquiry will get something better put into place than what we've got.

Records

79. I have never tried to get my records from care. I remember trying to get my records from my doctor. I found the paperwork I have in my house last year when I was cleaning stuff out. The [REDACTED] gave us a lot of photographs near the end, just before I stopped speaking to them. I didn't ask for them.

Other information

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

Signed..... 

Dated..... 27-8-18