

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PGM

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is PGM. I've always been known as PGM. My date of birth is 1964. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. My mum's name was and my dad's name was. My sister is thirteen years older than me, then there's, who is seven years older, and then my brother, who is four years older than me. I was brought up in Govan. My earliest memories are of living in, but I was born in.
3. I can't remember much about my mum. I only have a couple of memories of her, but she was always ill. She was in hospital a lot. I remember the last time that I saw her, but not much more than that. My mum had TB, which she got from a friend she was nursing. She was in and out of hospital with it. When she went in, they automatically treated her for TB but she actually had stomach cancer. If they had checked her properly instead of putting everything down to TB, they might have been able to treat it. She died when I was four years old.
4. I've learned from my older siblings that my mum wore the trousers in the marriage. My dad worked at the shipbuilders. As far as I know, it was a good relationship. From what I gather, my dad couldn't cope when my mum went into hospital. He couldn't cope with anything when my mum wasn't at home.

5. Not long after my mum died, my brother and I were put into care for the first time. I think it was a children's home in Lenzie. I don't know who ran it. It was fine there and I didn't have any problems. I remember when I first went there, I was upset. I remember there was a dormitory for girls. I'd never slept on my own so they pushed the beds together. They were fantastic with me. That's the only memory that I have, but I don't have any bad memories. I did interact with my brother while I was there, but not very much. We were there on a temporary basis for my dad to get a grip of himself. I don't think we were there for very long, maybe a couple of months.

6. We went back home to Govan after being in Lenzie. My dad became an alcoholic. He would hit the bottle when my mum went into hospital. At first, he would go to the pub but then he started bringing it into the house all the time as well. Things weren't good after my mum died. I remember a social worker being involved, who was either a brown or a green lady because of the colour of her clothing. I remember her taking me and my brother out to the circus and things. She would give us wee treats. She was also quite stern, but she wasn't nasty in any way.

7. After my mum died, my sister [REDACTED] left and got married. [REDACTED] kind of checked out from the family. She was around, but she wasn't around. She would stay with her friends or anywhere just not to stay in the house. Home wasn't a happy place to be. When my mum first died, we were fed okay but eventually I suffered from severe malnutrition. My older sister fostered my brother when he was thirteen and I was left alone with my dad. By that time, things were really bad.

8. I went to Harmony Row Primary School in Govan. When I went into primary 3 I moved to Hills Trust Primary School. I didn't have any issues at Harmony Row, but things weren't good at Hills Trust. Kids were getting older and the differences between me and other kids were becoming more noticeable. I was the trampy wean of the school.

9. Before we moved away from [REDACTED] my brother and I were sent to residential school. My brother went to a place called Castle Toward residential school. He absolutely loved it there, but I don't know where it was. I went to Fornethy. We both went to residential school for six weeks. My dad told me that I was going on a wee

holiday, to get a break. The first time I went to Fornethy I was excited because I thought I was going on a holiday.

10. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to Fornethy before my mum died. They only went once and they never went back. They don't have good memories of Fornethy. Recently, I've been speaking to my sisters about giving evidence to the Inquiry. They've told me that they saw lassies sitting on men's knees in the games room. I think they came home and told my mum that Fornethy was horrible and they didn't want to go again. She wouldn't have sent them back there. We didn't speak about Fornethy before I went as a child. I don't think my sisters even realised that was where I was going.

Fornethy House, Residential School, Kilry, Angus

11. The first time I went to Fornethy I was six or seven years old. I went there quite a few times, but I don't know exactly how many. Sometimes, I went more than once in the same year. I think I went about five times between the ages of six or seven and ten. Each time, I went there for six weeks. The routines and the staff stayed the same each time I went back. I think I might have been known as PGM [REDACTED] when I was in Fornethy. Going by the walks, I think there were maybe about twenty to thirty girls there at a time. It was for primary school age girls.
12. Fornethy is at Kilry, which is near Perth. It was a big, white mansion. We went in through a side door rather than the main doors. There was a little cloakroom with a row of pegs in the middle. We kept our jackets and shoes in the cloakroom. The showers were along a corridor off the cloakroom. There was a set of stairs after you went through the cloakroom. As you came to the stairs, there was also a corridor leading round to the games room. We used to go there to get our cup of milk and biscuit before going to bed. I think the dining room was downstairs, but I can't remember. The kitchen was just behind the dining room counter.
13. When you went up the stairs, the dorms were at the top. The toilets were quite close to the dorms. There was a small staircase leading to the next floor up, where the

classrooms were. The grounds had a swing park in them. Other than that, there was just loads of grass.

14. Fornethy was run by Glasgow City Council. SNR [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED], but I can't remember her name. I remember she had a cane. She had grey, shoulder length hair and she seemed old to me. She kept herself in pristine condition. There was also a member of staff called Robertson. I think she was Miss Robertson. I'm not sure, but I think she was probably in her late twenties, early thirties. She had a really bad perm, which made her look a lot older. I remember her because she was one of the nasty ones. I can't remember any other staff, but I don't think there were very many of them. There were dining staff who came in solely to make the meals. I only remember female staff, apart from one man who would be creeping about when we got up for our breakfast. I don't know whether he was a gardener or something. I'd had a bad childhood so I knew how to avoid things. I learned that early on.

Routine at Fornethy

First Day

15. My dad took me to Bothwell Street in the city centre. I was put on a minibus. I was fine with leaving my dad behind. I had a wee bag with me, but you weren't allowed to take too much. It was just a change of clothes. There were other girls on the bus, all going to Fornethy. The journey seemed to take forever back then. I know now it wasn't very long, probably about two hours. I remember driving up to Fornethy and the pine trees on either side of the long driveway. I looked at the building in awe. It looked lovely. It looked amazing and I was excited that I was going to stay there the first time I went. The second time, it was just dread and absolute fear but I didn't have any option. As soon as I saw those pine trees, it was just sheer dread.
16. The first thing that happened after we arrived was the baths. We were taken up to the shared baths and rubbed red raw with a scrubbing brush. It was like a big, wooden brush you would use to scrub floors. I think it was Robertson who scrubbed us, but I

don't know whether I've just fixated on her because she's the one I have bad memories of. They then gave us pinnies to wear. Everyone wore the same dress. They were blue with wee pink flowers on them. The first time I went, they gave us aprons to wear across the dress as well, which is why I used to call it my *Little House on the Prairie* dress. They stopped giving us the apron in later years. After we were given our dresses, we went to eat. I don't remember what happened after that.

Mornings and Bedtime

17. I think there were about four or five dormitories, but I can't be sure. There were eight girls in my dorm, in single beds. There was a rug in the middle of the floor. We had a wardrobe to hang our clothes up and keep our toiletries in.
18. I remember waking up in the morning before the blue light went off and the big light came on. I would look out of the window and see the deer. That was one of the best things I took from Fornethy, waking up and seeing the deer and not getting caught out of my bed. If I got caught, I'd get slapped by whichever staff member caught me.
19. I think we were woken in the morning by a bell or the big light being put on. There was a blue, low light on during the night. We got up in our underwear. My memory is that we went down for breakfast in our underwear, our vest and pants, but I don't know if I'm remembering that right. We then went back up to get washed and ready.
20. At bedtime, we drank our milk and ate our biscuits. We sat in the games room for an hour or so, singing or watching the TV, and then we were put up to bed. I don't know what time we went to bed, but it was quite early. The staff didn't help us at bedtime. They never helped us. There would be someone there, making sure we all went into bed. When we were all in bed, they switched the lights off and the blue light came on.

Bed wetting

21. We were able to get up to use the toilet in the middle of the night. A lot of lassies were scared to get up. I wasn't normally a bed wetter, but I wet the bed once. I think it was

just fear. I didn't want to get out of bed because of the fear that had been instilled in me. It wasn't nice. I was a bit older when I wet the bed, maybe nine or ten. It was one of the last times that I went to Fornethy. It wasn't noticed until the morning. We had to make our beds in the morning and they'd come in and check the beds. That was when it was discovered that I'd wet the bed. I got a skelp on the legs, but I don't know which member of staff did that. My privileges were taken away from me. I wasn't allowed my milk and biscuits or a drink with my dinner. A rubber sheet was put on my bed after that.

22. Sometimes, the staff discovered that girls had wet the bed during the night. I don't know how it was discovered. Those children were taken away at night and punished. They had to sit in a corridor for hours. I saw the girls being taken away. I asked them where they had been and they told me they had been sitting in a corridor all night.

Mealtimes/food

23. I didn't get fed at home, so any food was a bonus for me. It wasn't the best food, but it was edible. The only problem I had was with the cheese. The food was prepared by dining staff. It was brought to us at a table of five or six girls. We didn't get a choice of food. There were a lot of girls who didn't want to eat certain things. It was common for the staff to make girls eat things they didn't like. They were basically told, "Eat what's given to you and be grateful for it." If you were lucky, you got a cup of milk and a biscuit before going to bed. If you wet the bed, you didn't get anything.

Washing and bathing

24. We had a sink wash in the morning. We were given carbolic soap to wash our hands and face. We had a bath once a week. There were two big baths and we would queue to go in. We shared the bath with one other girl and the staff would wash us. They didn't always use the scrubbing brush, but it was definitely used when we first arrived. I think Wednesday was the bath night. Towards the end of my time at Fornethy, we started getting showers instead of baths. That was the only thing about the routine that changed. I think we showered on a Thursday night.

Clothing

25. Apart from the pinnie dress, we didn't get any other clothes to wear. We got it changed once a week. We had our bath on a Wednesday night and on the Thursday morning, we went to get clean clothes and underwear. I think we went upstairs from the dormitory, out to a wee corridor. There was a room where they kept all the laundered clothes and underwear. We got our own underwear back. I think everything we brought from home had to be labelled with our names. Underwear was the only thing from the outside that we were allowed to wear, unless they were taking us out.

Chores

26. I've got one memory of doing the dishes in the canteen. I think that was seen as a treat. They were very particular about how we made our beds. The bottom sheet had to be folded in with hospital corners. We had to do the same with the top sheet. A certain length of the top sheet had to be over the top cover. Everything had to be meticulously tucked in. If it wasn't, it got stripped and we were told to do it again. We were also made to scrub the floors, but that was as a punishment rather than a regular thing.

School

27. We went to classes in the morning. The teachers were the staff who worked there. I remember writing letters home. The staff told us what to write. In the first one, we wrote that we had arrived safely and we were having a super duper time. If we wrote something different, we were punished and made to do it again. I quickly learned to do what I was told, but other girls were taken out the classroom and hit. Sometimes, they didn't even take them out of the classroom. They would get in the girls' faces and say, "You write what you are told, or you won't be seeing your mum and dad again."

Leisure time

28. After lunch, we went on long walks. All the girls had to go on the walks. One or two members of staff would come with us. We walked for about ten miles. The longest walk was when we went to the dam. I hated that walk. I liked seeing the dam when we got there, but it was a really long walk. I'm sure they used to take us there for punishment. We were out walking for so long that by the time we got back, it was teatime.
29. There was one teacher who showed me kindness the first time I went to Fornethy. She took a shine to me. I don't know whether she knew about my history, but she took me under her wing. When we went on walks, I would stay beside her and she looked after me. The next time I went to Fornethy, I was looking for that teacher. I can't remember her name, but she was never there again.
30. In the evening, we went into the games room and sang songs. Some girls have memories of playing games, but I don't. I do remember watching a film or a TV programme on occasion. I can't remember any toys or board games. It was party time when the teachers had a wee glass of sherry. It was all for them and they would have someone in, like the local minister. I never got involved. I learned to blend in and nobody noticed me. I picked that up quite quickly. I think the party nights were usually on a Saturday. They'd play records and some of the girls would dance or sing.
31. We weren't allowed to talk to each other. We were only allowed to speak when we were spoken to. We didn't make friends. We weren't allowed to speak in the dormitory. It was as if the staff were always listening. When we did manage to speak to each other, there was a lot of talk about running away. If we did speak, we were told to shut up and we did because we were scared.
32. We didn't have school on a Saturday or a Sunday. I think the weekend was when we did get to socialise. We were allowed to speak, but there was always somebody around listening, making sure we didn't speak out of turn. There was a set of swings on the grounds and we were allowed to play on that.

Trips and Holidays

33. In the last week of our visit, the staff would do good things with us. I think it was so we had something good to tell our families. I remember going swimming. I've never been a church going person, but we also went to church the week before we went home. That was supposed to be a treat. They took us in a minibus to the church. The church wasn't very far away. I think going in the minibus was all for show. Apart from that last week, we didn't go on any other trips.

Pocket money

34. We didn't get pocket money from the home. I just got whatever my dad had given me to take. The staff would take that from you when you arrived and give you so much back. I think I got a penny every day to go to the tuck shop. The tuck shop was a cupboard with a desk in it, full of sweeties. Most of the time, I think it was Robertson in the tuck shop.

Birthdays and Christmas

35. I don't remember being at Fornethy for my birthday. I can't remember anybody's birthday being celebrated. I was never there over Christmas.

Religious instruction

36. The week before we were due to go home, we were taken to church in the minibus as a treat. There was no religion at any other times. I don't remember saying prayers.

Visits/Inspections

37. I didn't have any visitors when I was at Fornethy. The last time I went, my eldest sister had moved to Dundee. She didn't know that I was in Fornethy, but I told the staff that my sister lived in Dundee, just up the road, and she was going to come and visit me. After I told them that, I was treated better than I had ever been treated in my whole

life. My sister didn't come and visit me. She didn't even know that I was there, but the staff didn't know that. I was made monitor and captain that year.

Family contact

38. We wrote letters home once a week on a Tuesday. The letters were always read by staff before they were sent. I didn't get any letters while I was there, but some girls did. It was like the jail. They read everything. They opened the letters and read them before the girls got them. Some girls received parcels from home. The staff would open them and keep them. If the girl had been bad, she wouldn't get her parcel.

Healthcare

39. Everybody was checked for nits shortly after they arrived. The nit nurse used a bone comb that was metal and it had very long teeth, not like the one your mum would use. It was really painful when she dragged it through your hair. If you got hurt, the nit nurse was the one who cleaned you up. You didn't want to go to her if she was cleaning you up because she was not gentle. She was nasty. I had a couple of scrapes from the walks we used to go on, so I had to go to her. There came a point when she left and somebody else was doing that job, so she wasn't there every time I went to Fornethy. I didn't see a dentist or a doctor when I was at Fornethy.

Running away

40. When girls managed to speak to each other, some spoke about running away. We talked about it quietly, but nobody did run away while I was at Fornethy.

Discipline

41. We would have to get down on our knees and scrub the floors. It was just whenever the staff deemed that we needed to do it. There wasn't a rota or anything. The staff picked someone to scrub the floors as a punishment. It happened to me, but I can't remember what I'd done.

42. If you were a monitor, people didn't like you. You were supposed to monitor other girls' food and make sure they were eating. You only interacted with the people in your dorm if you interacted at all. You had to try and encourage the other people in your dorm to eat so they didn't get punished. It was horrible. I think I was selected because I had been to Fornethy so many times and I knew how the place worked. I was fine with doing it because I didn't want anybody to get hurt.
43. I was also made captain the last time I was there. That meant that if I wanted, I could be a bully. I took it because it kept the staff off my back, but I hate bullies. Some captains would be the ones telling other girls what to do at the dinner table and in the dormitory. If another girl did something wrong, you were supposed to grass her up. Some of the girls took it to extremes and became real bullies. It was just kids being kids.

Abuse at Fornethy

44. There was physical abuse at Fornethy. If the staff didn't like the way you looked, they'd just slap you across the face or the back of the head. They would pull girls' hair back and push their faces into the girls' faces. I know that was acceptable at the time, but it shouldn't have been. Girls were taken out of the classroom if they didn't write what they were told to write in letters home. Sometimes, they weren't even taken out of the classroom. They would be hit across the head or have their hair pulled back. They were never hit more than once or twice at a time. The teachers would go right up to their faces and shout at them. That didn't happen to me.
45. SNR [REDACTED] would hit girls with her cane all the time. The cane was like a walking stick. If a girl tripped up while she was walking past, she would hit her on the back of their legs and tell her to watch where they were going. She would hit girls on the legs for silly things like that. It depended on her mood. She would hit girls once or more than once, but it was always on the legs. It left red welts that went away. She mostly hit us in the games room because she would be there drinking sherry all the time.

46. Everybody was checked over by the nit nurse when they arrived. I went to her the day after I arrived. I was a trampy kid so I always had nits. The bone comb was metal and it had very long teeth, not like the one your mum would use. The nit nurse would drag it, right into your head. If you said, "Ouch," she would pull your hair back and slap you across the head a few times. She was evil and nasty and I dreaded going to her. That happened a couple of times. Because I did have nits, I had to go and see her regularly, at least once a week. I don't know if it's an image I've put into my head, but my memory of the nit nurse is that she was witch-like. Her hair was tied back in a tight bun. I would say she was in her forties.

47. I've never eaten cheese. I've always been sick when I eat it. I told the staff that cheese made me sick, but they still made me eat macaroni cheese. I told them I couldn't eat it and I wouldn't eat it. It was one of the few times that I said I wouldn't do what they told me to do. One of the staff grabbed me by the back of the hair and started shovelling it into my mouth with a fork. I think it was Robertson, but the dining staff would have seen her doing it. She thought I was just being an awkward child. Of course, I was then promptly sick. The girls who were sitting at the table with me had to sit and watch it while they were eating their own tea. I got punished for being sick. I was made to clear up the sick and then I was taken out of the dining room. I was slapped a few times and I didn't get anything else to eat for the rest of the night.

48. I was force fed whenever we were given something to do with cheese. I don't know how many times it happened, but I know it definitely happened at least once. I think it happened once on each occasion I went to Fornethy, but I'm not sure. I didn't see anybody else being force fed, which I was glad of. As an adult, I became involved in the Fornethy [REDACTED] [REDACTED] group. I learned on the group that force feeding did go on quite a lot.

49. Robertson seemed to be on duty all the time. She is the member of staff I remember the most. She was also the most vicious. She was really butch. That's my memory of her. She just looked scary and she was very intimidating. We didn't cry, not in front of the staff. One teacher showed me kindness the first time I went to Fornethy. She

wasn't there the next time I went. Apart from her, none of the staff were kind to the girls or helped them when they were upset.

50. They taught us a song at Fornethy:

"I once had a dear old mother who was very kind to me.

When I was in trouble, she sat me on her knee.

Nights that I was sleeping on a feather bed,

An angel came from heaven and told me mum was dead."

I felt that the staff used that song against us. It didn't matter to me because I'd already lost my mum. We had to do as we were told. We were made to feel that our parents didn't care and that we didn't matter. I've lived my whole life feeling like I don't matter and what happens to me doesn't matter, so I kept my trap shut.

Reporting of abuse at Fornethy

51. There was nobody I could talk to at Fornethy. When I got home, I told everybody that I hated it. My dad just didn't care. It had got so bad that my dad just didn't care anymore. Basically, I lost both my parents when my mum died.

Leaving Fornethy

52. My dad would tell me to ask for a form for the residential school and the next thing, I'd be away again. Fornethy didn't change when I went back, but I did. I became very detached from people. I learned how to blend in. I had no confidence whatsoever. I learned that my life didn't matter. Nothing mattered. I didn't matter. Children didn't matter. Their opinions don't matter. I acted accordingly. I regressed.
53. When I left Fornethy, they would take us on a bus back to Bothwell Street. My dad or my brother would meet me off the bus, but it was normally my dad. Every time my dad wanted rid of me for a wee while, he would tell me to get a form for the residential school. I would get it from school. The last time I went to Fornethy I was ten years old.

My dad tried to get me to go again when I was eleven. He told me to get the form from the school, but I lied to him. I just couldn't go back to Fornethy again. I told my dad that I was too old and he believed me. Fornethy filled me with sheer dread. Bearing in mind how my childhood was at home, you would have thought I'd be glad to get away. I think there might be things about Fornethy that I'm choosing not to remember. I hated the place. It's always been at the back of my mind.

Life after leaving care

54. Life was bad at home. We didn't get Christmas presents. The social work department just stopped caring. After we moved, we never saw a social worker apart from one year when they brought us Christmas presents. It was a board game and a book. My dad then gave me 25p and my brother 50p for our Christmas. That was the end of it for my brother. He moved to Dundee. Things went downhill and became even worse for me.
55. Everything was bad at home. My dad was an alcoholic. He spent every ha'penny on alcohol. The only time I got fed was when I went to my best friend's house or my sister [REDACTED]'s house. I'd go days and days without getting fed to the point where I was collapsing. I was fainting on a regular basis. I got fed at school. I was at Greenfield Primary School. I was okay in school, until I got to secondary school.
56. My dad was an alcoholic and he had a girlfriend who was also an alcoholic. The two of them would just sit there, drinking. Every Friday night, the local gang would come into our house. The door was never locked so they just walked in. They would go into the living room after I had gone to bed. My dad didn't want them there, but he was frail by that time. He was only in his forties, but he looked about seventy. They would terrorise my dad and take his money off him. One of them would come into my room. He raped me. It happened on a weekly basis for a couple of months. I even started staying at my sister's on a Friday night, but then he just changed his night to a Thursday. That was a school night so I couldn't stay out.

57. I think I was in primary 6 when he started raping me. I was ten or eleven years old and he was in his early twenties. He was the brother of a girl in my class. I think that was the excuse that he made, to come into my room and make sure that I was alright because I was his sister's pal. I don't know if my dad knew what was happening. I didn't tell anybody about what he was doing to me. I told everybody that would listen about what he was doing to my dad, apart from the police. I told my sister and my brother-in-law. I never told them what he was doing to me. Eventually, my brother-in-law got it stopped. He didn't know what had been happening to me, but he knew what was happening to my dad on a regular basis. There was a fight between my brother-in-law and his brothers and uncles and the person who had been coming to the house and his friends. It stopped after that.
58. Just before I left primary school, my dad sent me to the Post Office for his money. I tripped over a cat. I walked into the Post Office and I fainted three times in a row. My sister lived down the road from the Post Office. She came and took me to the doctor. The doctor said that I had severe malnutrition. He gave me a bottle of vitamins, but that was all that was done. There was no follow-up treatment.
59. I had suicidal thoughts from the age of eleven. It's only in the last while that I've actually admitted it to the doctor. I thought it was normal and everybody had suicidal thoughts. I just didn't want to be alive. Life was too hard.
60. I went to Govan High School at first. Nobody wore a uniform back then. I didn't have my own clothes. They were all hand-me-downs. I was bullied because of that. When I was thirteen, I went to stay with my sister, [REDACTED], for a holiday. She lived in Dundee. I told her how bad things were at home and that I didn't want to go back. [REDACTED] got in touch with the social work department and it was arranged for her to foster me. My dad was okay with it. There were meetings with me, my sister and social workers. After I moved to Dundee, I went to Morgan Academy.
61. Life was a lot better in Dundee, but my sister's husband was abusive towards her. I lived with them for a year and then I went back to Glasgow. I went back to Govan High School now and again, but I was always dogging it. I lived with my dad, but I stayed

with my sister, [REDACTED], quite a lot. My dad got worse. He ended up with a form of dementia caused by alcohol abuse. He had to live with my sister as well.

62. I moved back to Dundee when I was fifteen. I went back to Morgan Academy, but I didn't sit any exams or get any qualifications. I left school as soon as I turned sixteen and went to work in Tesco. My dad was really ill so I had to leave my job and go back to Glasgow. They were expecting my dad to die so I went to help my sister. My dad died around my son's first birthday in 1989.
63. A lot of my jobs have been cleaning jobs. Before I moved to Dundee again, I was working in a pizza factory. I was responsible for the orders coming in. It was a heavy job. I did that job for nine years. I've been living in Dundee for eight or nine years now. I've been working on the checkout in Tesco for seven years.
64. My children were born Glasgow. I have a son who's 32 and a daughter who's 28. I've never been married, but I was in a relationship with my kids' father for 27 years. My kids are amazing. I've got a really good relationship with them.

Impact

65. We were sent to Fornethy for an escape, in the guise of a holiday. I was supposed to be getting a break from my traumatic life at home. They just made it worse, a hundred times worse than it needed to be. They turned me into a coward with no self-worth whatsoever.
66. The way I reacted to what happened to me had everything to do with Fornethy. I told everybody who would listen what was happening to my dad, but I didn't tell anybody that I was being raped. That was because of what they instilled in me at Fornethy. I thought that I didn't matter. I've recently had counselling so I'm able to talk about what happened. That's what Fornethy did to me. They made me think that it didn't matter and nobody would care that it happened to me. They made me think that people would care about what they were doing to my dad.

67. There was something on the news about Fornethy last year. I was actually working at the time. I came home from work and my sister told me that Fornethy had been on the news. She said it was about all the abuse that had gone on. It came at a time when everything felt very overwhelming. It started a set of events and brought back a lot of the self-loathing. That's what prompted me to get counselling for the rapes. I went to my doctor because I started taking panic attacks. My doctor referred me for counselling and I went to RASAC (Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre). I talked about Fornethy as well as the sexual abuse. I started having flashbacks to the sexual abuse. It's been really overwhelming.
68. I was able to come out of counselling early, after six sessions. The counsellor said that I had the tools and the mind set to cope. I'm not having flashbacks anymore. The counselling was really helpful. If I do get flashbacks, I busy myself to take my mind off it. I find myself thinking back to Fornethy quite a lot. It's always been on my mind over the years. The smell of macaroni cheese triggers thoughts of Fornethy all the time. I can't even look at it now. Fornethy is half an hour away from where I live. I haven't had the courage to go up there yet. I don't know whether it would be wise to go there or not.
69. I've suffered from an essential tremor for most of my life. It started when I was eighteen. I had a job in a café, but my hand would shake when I was holding a cup and saucer. I had to go to a psychiatrist to keep my job. I went twice but then I didn't go back. Now I understand that it's caused by anxiety. Until about six years ago, I didn't realise that I could get medication for it. I'm now prescribed beta blockers. I also take Mirtazapine for depression. I'm on the lowest dose because I felt like a space cadet when the dose was higher. I didn't like not feeling in control of myself, but I think I'm going to have to go up to a higher dose soon.
70. I've tried to bring up my own children differently because of Fornethy. I think I'm a better parent for it. I've got two grown up kids who are not afraid to show their emotions. If you're annoying them, they'll tell you to get out of their faces. They're strong, especially my daughter. I'm not saying I was perfect, but I do know that I've done a good job. I made a point of always telling my children how much I loved them

because it was something I was never told. I was just an annoyance in the background. I made sure that my kids felt that love. My daughter knows a lot more about my childhood than she maybe should. My son doesn't know so much. He's a strong man, but he's a bit softer than my daughter. She's able to help me with her experience in social care. She helps me out a lot and helps me to understand that certain things aren't my fault. She's my rock.

Reporting of abuse

71. About a year ago, I heard about the Fornethy [REDACTED] Group. The group [REDACTED] I got in touch with [REDACTED]. To be involved in the group, you had to have two memories to prove that you'd been to Fornethy. The group was fine, but I like to take my time with things. For some of the members of the group, it's their whole life. I can understand that with [REDACTED] because she had some really bad experiences that have affected her whole life. I just couldn't get so involved as it was getting too much. I had to take a step back.
72. The [REDACTED] group was advising people to apply to give evidence to the Inquiry, contact Thompsons Solicitors and go to the police. I did report it to Thompsons Solicitors because I thought I had to. I didn't actually know why lawyers were involved. I received a letter from Thompsons about six weeks ago, requesting that I sign my statement and return it. Somebody phoned me to take my statement. It was just one person on the phone. I don't know whether she heard me correctly because I need to change a lot of things in it. I've not sent it back yet. I think the statement is for compensation, but I don't really know. Thompsons now want to access my medical records. I'm so angry about Fornethy now so I want to do it. I've never reported what happened at Fornethy to the police.
73. I've thought about reporting the man who raped me to the police. It's going back to having to tell everybody about my childhood again. I'm just done with it. I've had enough. I've told my sisters about what happened. They don't know how bad it was, but they know that he did something. I told my oldest sister when I was nineteen. Apart

from that, I've kept it to myself for years. If I reported the man who raped me, I'd be opening a can of worms and putting myself up for a lot of abuse. The person is well liked. I just can't do it again.

Records

74. I've never applied to obtain my records from Fornethy, but I have thought about doing it.

Hopes for the Inquiry

75. I think there should be unplanned visits to places where children are looked after. The staff shouldn't be told before the visit because they can then sort things out. Inspectors should show up randomly, unannounced. Fornethy turned me into a coward with no self-worth whatsoever. It's not nice, going through life like that. It shouldn't be happening nowadays, but it probably is.
76. What I hoped to get out of coming forward to the Inquiry is to know that I mattered. What happened was wrong. What they instilled in me at Fornethy is the reason that I didn't go to the police when I was being raped. I told everybody what the gang were doing to my dad. No amount of money is going to sort my head out. Only I can do that. What I do need is for somebody to say that it was wrong, that it shouldn't have happened and that it will never happen again. More than anything else, I need somebody to say that I do matter, that my life did matter when I was a child and it matters now.

77. 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..... PGM [Redacted Signature]

Dated..... 05 August 2021