

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MTG

Support person present: No

1. My name is MTG. My date of birth is 1982. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My family life wasn't good. It was dysfunctional. I stayed at my grandad's house with my two sisters and brother. We lived at in Glasgow. My mum stayed there too until she died. After my mum died in 1994, my life got worse. She was only 32 and I had just turned twelve.
3. I'm the second oldest out of my siblings. My sister is the oldest. She is two years older than me. She was in care before my mum died because she kept running away. She was in Alva Children's Home.
4. After my mum died, my younger brother and sister, and , went to stay with their dad. I didn't know my own dad so I stayed with my grandad for about a month after my mum died. I think everything was too much for him. My grandad was called .
5. There was some social work involvement with my family before my mum died. I don't know if it was because it was too much for my mum, having four kids at 32. I had a befriender called Liz Allan and a social worker. The social work decided to put me into

care. I can't remember any meetings but I think it was probably the right decision at the time.

6. I was in numerous foster places and children's homes. I started off at Craig Dhu then I moved to Urrdale. I was also in Cleveden, Blackthorn Street and Park Lodge. I was moved to Fairfield, Cardross and Wallacewell for a very short time too. I was moved when I complained about the way some of the staff treated me. I was moved a lot because I was battling against the staff. It was a combination of factors. I don't know why I was moved to Cardross at all because it was a different type of residential setting.

Craig Dhu, Pollokshields, Glasgow

7. I was put into Craig Dhu in Pollokshields after I left my grandad's house. I was there for about two months. Craig Dhu comprised of two buildings each with a long corridor. There were two other children's homes nearby called Glen Rosa and Fairfield.

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16. [Redacted]
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18. [Redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [Redacted] I can't remember being told why I was leaving. [Redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [Redacted] I left there and went to Urrdale. I can't remember being involved in the decision to send me there. It was just a case of packing your stuff and leaving. A lot of the decisions were made behind closed doors. Young people didn't have a voice.

19. I had a key worker who would be the communication between the social worker and the staff member in the homes. We would have 'review meetings' very year. However, people come and go, staff move on so that affects relationships and it makes it difficult to implement anything.

Urrdale, Dumbrek, Glasgow

20. Urrdale is in Drumbrek which is ten minutes away. It's next to Bellahouston Park. All of the big houses are in close proximity to each other. [Redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [Redacted] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [Redacted] I was there for just under two years.

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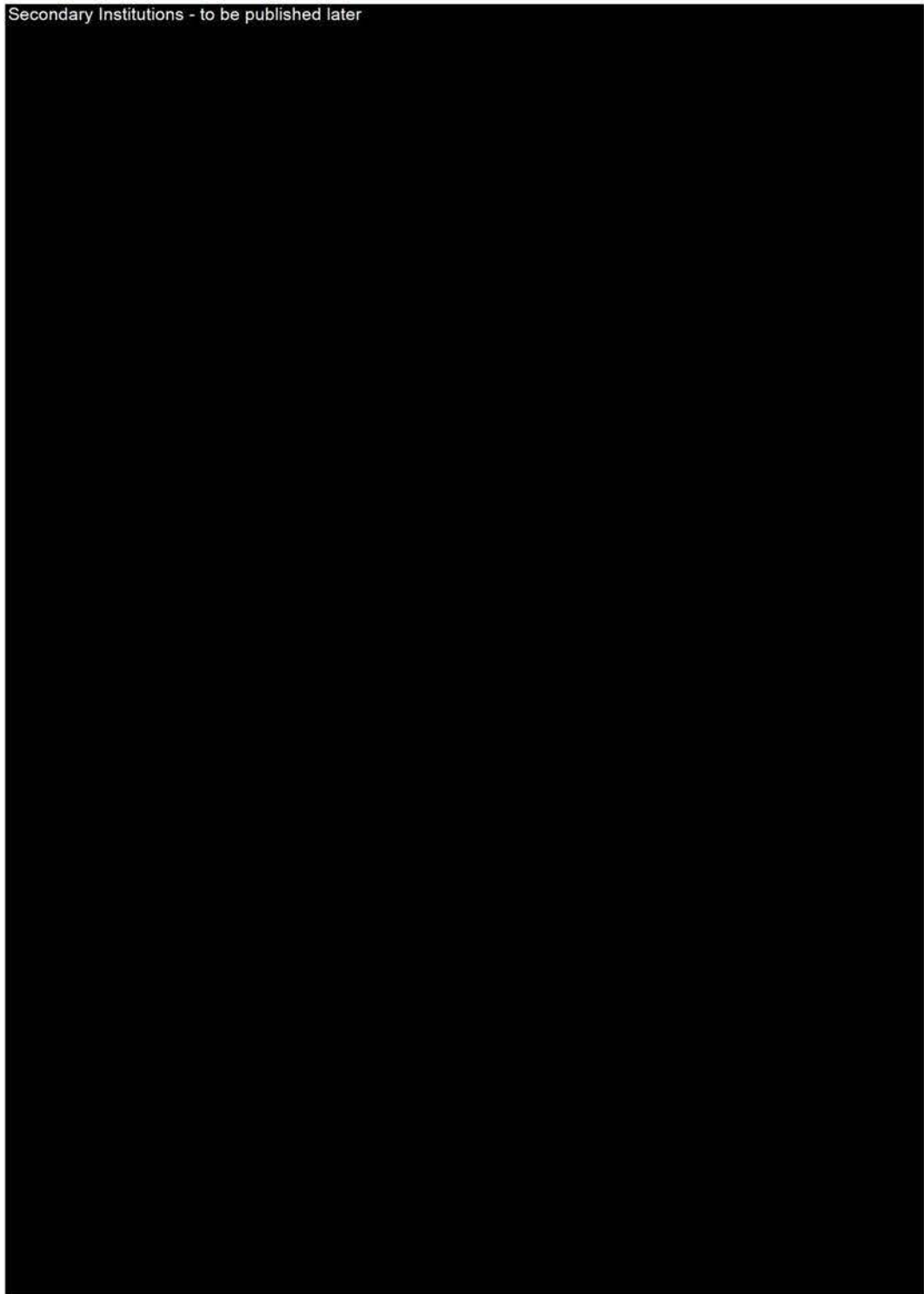
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Leaving Urrdale

62. I left Urrdale when I was fourteen. I think I tried to take my own life **Secondary Institution** **Secondary Institutions - to be published** I was moved into foster care. I tried to do this four or five times while in care.
63. There were two short term foster placements. They were in Hillington and Pollok. I went to a family in Hillington for emergency respite. It happened quickly. You weren't always participating in the meetings. I think they were called **██████** and **██████**. I can't remember their surname. They were in their forties. I lived with them for a couple of weeks before being moved to another family. I can't remember their name. They lived in Pollok. I think the man was called **██████**.
64. The first couple wanted me to stay but the social work refused because it was a temporary placement. I was happy enough there. I would have liked to stay there. They didn't have any other kids or foster kids. There are different categories of foster care.
65. The next couple I stayed with were far too old. They were in their seventies, they were older than my grandad. They were supposed to be permanent. They had a caravan in Saltcoats or Irvine. They took me there at the weekends. It didn't work out because I ran away to my grandad's. I was only there for a couple of months. It could have worked if I'd had the right family.
66. The social work picked me up from my grandad's and took me to Park Lodge. It happened fairly quickly. The social work had a pool of bedrooms. I think the social worker would phone up to find out if a room was available for you. I think they would then inform the young person. The befriender drove me around of these different places. I can't remember who came to get me from my grandad's but it was often the befriender.

Park Lodge, Newlands, Glasgow

67. I was taken to Park Lodge in Glasgow. I was fourteen. A woman called Hilda was in charge there but I can't remember her surname. There was a couple of people coming and going in that short space of time. Park Lodge also had a bungalow on the side which housed other young people. I have no idea what the bungalow was used for. The main building was a mansion. It was similar to Urrdale and the other homes. It was the same kind of kitchen with deliveries of food and a dining room
68. I went to Fern Towers more by the time I was at Park Lodge. Fern Towers was psychological services for young people. I think I might have gone weekly. None of the young people went to school. There might have been the odd one. I had some friends but most of the others were shipped off to secure units when I was there. They were taken to places like St John's.
69. I was given more money when I was there. Petty cash was no object. The access to petty cash was no issue so that was a big contributor to the drink and drugs in the home. I think the staff used the petty cash for a quieter shift. The less young people who were in causing havoc. They also used taxis on account in Park Lodge.
70. We were given pocket money and a clothing allowance. There was a scale for what you were entitled to which depended on age. It was something like, for example, ten to twelve year olds got eight pounds and the older ones got more. I didn't have any visitors. I didn't visit my grandad as much by this time. I just hung about the house with the rest of them.
71. I didn't have regular meetings with Liz or Sarah Agnew. My key worker was David Hays. I had meetings with my key worker. I think they were more regular, maybe once every month. It was probably to cover old ground. It was more like a 'pat on the back' and not a set agenda. I can't remember if there were any notes taken.

Abuse at Park Lodge

72. A worker called MTL physically abused me. Secondary Institutions - to be published
Secondary Institutions - to be published later It was the same pattern of behaviour such as grabbing me, throwing me down, choking me and sitting on top of me. He would overstep the mark all the time. The incidents happened frequently.
73. There were another couple of members of staff there too. I just can't remember their names. Secondary Institutions - to be published la It was chaotic and riotous. If they were short staffed, they would bring staff in from other children's homes. Different staff would work in different areas. There was a high turnover of staff in Park Lodge.
74. Some staff would physically assault the young people, jump all over them and put them in headlocks. There were more people being restrained in Park Lodge. I saw people being thrown all over the place. The staff were just as bad as the police restraining someone in the street. I can remember large women sitting on top of smaller, petite females. I saw those things happening frequently.
75. The staff phoned the police a lot and reported the young people. They told the police they had assaulted them or had done something to them. The police would come and ask what the staff wanted them to do with them. The young people were always taken off to residential establishments and secure units. The police came a lot to take young people away. The staff used the police as their back up in enforcing their position. They abused their power. Some of the people didn't deserve to go to secure units. There was no complaints procedure.
76. When I raised concerns about the staff to senior management and the marks on my body, I was moved to other places. They called it 'respite' in secure places. I was moved to Fairfield around the corner for a week and I was in Cardross for a week. I shouldn't have been there because it was more secure. I should have been put with a family to diffuse the situation. However, it felt like a punishment. If young people complained or the staff didn't like them, they would be shipped off.

Reporting of abuse in Park Lodge

77. I reported the abuse there to head office but again, no action was taken. **Secondary Ins**
Secondary Institutions if anyone made an allegation of inappropriate conduct by the staff, they were moved to places like Cardross and Kibble. The young people were not believed when they reported anything at the time.
78. I still had support from a worker from Who Cares.
79. While I was there, we were visited by a woman from the Care Commission in 1997. She came to see how things were in the home. I flagged up issues to her. I can't remember her name. I told her what had happened to me. I think she just happened to be in my room so I spoke to her. I never heard anything more about it. She possibly pointed me in the direction of someone else. The staff got away with murder because the young people were sent to secure units.
80. I possibly tried suicide again when I was there. I hadn't done that since I had left care.

Leaving Park Lodge

81. I left Park Lodge after about a year. They were winding down the children's home in Park Lodge for older kids. They wanted to use it for younger kids. I was one of the last to leave. They told me it was closing down.
82. The social worker gave me two or three options and asked me if I wanted to go to Wallacewell, Cleveden or another place. **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**
Secondary Institutions - to be published later I don't think they cared where I was going. They were just trying to get the unit cleared. I can't remember if Sarah Agnew was still my social worker or if it was someone else. The social work would have phoned up a centralised place and came up with a place. There was no meeting to discuss it.

Cleveden, Glasgow

83. I was given a place in a home called Cleveden. It was in Cleveden Drive in the west end of Glasgow, behind the Botanic Gardens. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later I was at Cleveden for a couple of months.

Blackthorn Street, Glasgow

85. I then moved to Blackthorn Street in Springburn. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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I was there for a couple of months. Secondary Institut While I was there I was moved to Cleveden and Wallacewell for short time. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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88. **Secondary Institutions - to be** I wasn't allowed to go back. I had just turned sixteen. I had no safeguards in place. It was easy for them to kick me out. I was made homeless. I had to stay with an ex-resident until I got myself sorted.
89. After some time, I had to go to court in Glasgow. I was admonished. I was convicted in 2000 when I had turned eighteen. I think this has caused me more problems. I have a criminal conviction for assault. It is on my record.
90. I have written to Disclosure Scotland and the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, about it because I don't think it is acceptable that I have the conviction in the circumstances. I feel that there are other people affected by staff in these homes contacting the police.
Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Young people should be looked after and not prosecuted. The First Minister wrote back to me.

Life after being in care

91. I went to a hostel in Haghill, in the East End of Glasgow. It was a big hostel for young people. It was just more of the same. There were about fifty young people aged sixteen to 25. They were all care leavers with the same issues as me. They had all been kicked out on the street. I think the social work paid Glasgow City Council to take these young people off their hands.
92. I moved around about six different hostels. After that, I was put into supported living families' homes. It was for homeless people. I went into about four homes. They were all temporary.
93. I moved in with my cousin when I was eighteen. I got a job in an office and worked through the week. I drank at the weekends. I got my own flat when I was twenty in 2002. After I moved into my flat, I broke off all forms of communication with the social work department, charities and other organisations. I got rid of all my paperwork because I wanted to move on with my life.

94. I studied for various SVQs and got a diploma. I'm now studying Quantity Surveying. I've had my flat for seventeen years. I have worked in jobs with the Department of Work and Pensions, NHS and Water Board. I worked in the public sector for years. I currently work [REDACTED] at Glasgow University. I have worked there for five years. I work in the office. I deal with over a thousand [REDACTED] on a daily basis. I've got the experience of going through the same issues they're going through. I manage the [REDACTED].
95. I carried on with the complaints procedure after I had left care until I received compensation for the property that had been stolen. I think it was between 1998 and 2002. I was given one thousand pounds in compensation.

Impact

96. I don't think it has really affected me because I don't dwell on the past. I managed to get four public sector jobs with no education. However, my family relationship broke down. I drifted apart from my sister when she went into care. You lose everything including your friends and family. I haven't spoken to some family members for a long time. I don't think I'll ever speak to my sister again. I haven't seen her for years. She'd had three kids who have been taken into care. I used to visit my grandad until he died three years ago.
97. I had no education and got a criminal conviction as a result of four years in care. It's a lot for such a short period of time.
98. I've had spells of Depression on many occasions but I try to lead a positive life.

Reporting of Abuse

99. I haven't reported any of the abuse to any outside organisation.

Records

100. I contacted a lawyer from Martin Langan and Co in Glasgow. It was between 1994 and 1998. I got some of my records but as I said, I destroyed them. I had also kept notes of meetings, which would have been helpful for the Inquiry.
101. I had everything noted down in terms of staff and the things that went on. However, the records that the social work department handed over didn't contain any information about the restraining practices. There was a lot of information missing from them.

Lessons to be Learned

102. There was a lack of staff training and lack of resources. In my opinion, big units and institutions don't work. There were far too many young people. There is too much of a mixture of young people, for example, those who had been in trouble and those who don't have any family. They had different needs.
103. There also weren't enough staff. The use of restraining techniques has to be reviewed. The amount of moving around has to change and foster placements have to be used more as they provide more stability for children.
104. There has to be a proper complaints procedure. I think that's very important. There needs to be an acknowledgment of complaints made by young people in care and an outcome.
105. I think it's important that more encouragement is given to children in terms of their education. There should be a stricter regime.

106. The staff shouldn't be using physical abuse to get people to school. The police shouldn't be allowed to target the young person when the staff phoned them. I think this type of behaviour still happens. There are a lot of different things that people have to answer for. Everybody has a story to tell about their time in care.

Other information

107. 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. MTG

Dated. 17/4/19.