

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

RJZ

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is RJZ. My date of birth is 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Edinburgh. My mother is and my father is. I refer to my mother as because I can't bear to call her 'mother' and I have no contact with her. I don't even have any curiosity about her. My dad died about ten years ago and I kept in contact with him until then, but we didn't have a close relationship.
3. I have a big brother, or, who stays in Durham. He's a year older than me and I am still in touch with him. I also have a younger brother, or, who is about three years younger than me, but we have no contact. I'm not even sure what his surname is. It's a strange one because and I were put into care, but kept him.
4. There are other younger half-brothers and sisters who are's children. They stay in East Kilbride, but I've no idea where or even who they are and I have no contact with them. I also have a half-sister, who is the daughter of my dad and his second wife, . I still keep in contact with and.
5. We lived in Prestonpans, or 'The Pans' as it is known, but I have no memories of living there. Apparently my parents split up over money, or something like that, when I was

still very young and [REDACTED] moved to East Kilbride where she had family. I believe that dad couldn't cope and so [REDACTED] and I were put into care at Tenterfield Children's Home in Haddington.

6. All I can really recall of my early childhood is having a heavy foot all the time because I had been born with a club foot. Instead of getting my foot pinned as happens now, I had to wear a 'stookie', a plaster cast, on my leg after it had been straightened out and then clamped in.

### **Tenterfield Children's Home, Haddington**

7. I must have been about three years old at the time I went to Tenterfield Children's Home in Haddington, so it would have been around 1972.

8. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



9. My timelines are a bit blurred, but I would say [REDACTED] and I were in Tenterfield for about a year. I don't know for sure why we left, but I think [REDACTED] got married again to a guy called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I went to live with them in East Kilbride.

### **Leaving Tenterfield Children's Home**

10. I can't remember mum's partner [REDACTED]'s second name, but he was actually alright. He worked at Ravenscraig metalworks. I think he was possibly a bit overwhelmed by suddenly having these kids in his life because by that time [REDACTED] had been born and [REDACTED] and I weren't the best of kids, to be fair.

11. When I was still about four, around 1973, I was put into foster care in East Kilbride. It was only me that went, [REDACTED] wasn't there and I don't know where he went. I also don't know why I was put in foster care, whether there was something going on that I wasn't aware of. I certainly don't remember anyone telling me why.

### **Foster care in East Kilbride**

12. The house that the foster carers lived in was big and was an upstairs, downstairs, with a couple of bedrooms. I don't know the address, just that it was in East Kilbride somewhere.
13. I also can't remember the name of the couple who looked after me, but as well as them, there was a boy, who was about two years older than me, and a younger girl of about two. I don't know if they were the couple's own kids or if they were also fostered. The man was actually a very nice chap and used to make us toy guns out of copper pipes and bits of wood. I shared a room with the boy, but I didn't get on with the boy at all.
14. I remember being dropped off at the foster carer's house in a car by someone, but I don't know who they would have been. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] didn't drive, so perhaps it was a social worker, although I'm not aware of any social work involvement with the family at that time.
15. I was told when I was dropped off that I was only going to be there for a couple of weeks, but I ended up being there for about six months. Nothing was explained to me about what was happening, I was just dumped there and left to get on with it.
16. The food wasn't bad and I was never hungry. I actually recall going shopping with the family and being allowed to pick my own food. It was nice to be included because I don't remember that from before. I think they tried to treat me the same as they treated the other kids.

17. I can remember going to Greenhills Primary School, which was in East Kilbride, while I was in foster care. I still had the limp so I couldn't run about with the other kids, but I did make a couple of pals there. However, I also got in a bit of trouble at school. I suppose I was kicking back against the discipline that was starting to be introduced at school. I would go in the huff and scream and shout a bit. The teacher would sit me down and ask me what was wrong and I would tell them it was just because I didn't like school.
18. I do think I was settled in foster care, though. I don't recall feeling stressed with the situation in the house at all, although it was strange with my brother [REDACTED] not being there. The family were kind enough, they fed me and they watered me, they made sure I was washed and they made sure I had clothes. I think now that the reason the foster carers looked after me was because it was some extra money for them, but I don't have any bad memories of staying there. I don't think I was mistreated in anyway.
19. I was in foster care for such a short time that I never saw a social worker in all the time I was there. I also never saw my brother [REDACTED] or any of my family and, although I was only there for a few months, when your that age it feels like a lifetime.

### **Leaving foster care**

20. I don't know why I was taken out of foster care, but I went back to live with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in East Kilbride. [REDACTED] was there and I was settled for a wee while, but [REDACTED] was never in the house. Instead, she was always out and about and [REDACTED] and I were left to get on with it. If there was food in the house we would eat it, but it was just things like sandwiches.
21. East Kilbride at that time was still a new town and was being built from the centre out. I carried on at Greenhills Primary School and I remember how new the building seemed. You could actually still smell the paint.

22. I think [REDACTED] and I would have stayed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for a couple of years and in all that time, we hardly saw [REDACTED] at all, although I don't think she ever worked. We would actually see more of [REDACTED], because he'd come home from his work after a couple of pints and crash out on the settee. [REDACTED] must have looked after our clothing, but I don't really remember. I do recall being grubby a lot of the time.
23. After a couple of years, when I would probably have been about five or six, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] started to have issues with each other. Eventually, presumably because of those issues, [REDACTED] and I were put into another children's home. I think that must have been around 1975. [REDACTED] was still just a bairn and [REDACTED] kept him.
24. I don't know what the home [REDACTED] and I were put in was called, or why we were put there. I just remember it was somewhere in the countryside outside Edinburgh.

#### Unknown children's home near Edinburgh

25. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Secondary Instit We were taken there in a big car and I remember being driven there up a long country road. I don't know who took us, it may have been a social worker, although in all the time we were living with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], I never saw one.
26. All we were told was that we were going to be there for a couple of weeks and then we could go home again. I don't remember having any clothes with me when I was put in care before, but we did actually have suitcases of clothes with us that time.
27. We were only there for a short time and it is such a fleeting memory, [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
28. My dad by then had married [REDACTED] and they lived in Sighthill in Edinburgh and so, after we had been in that home for just a couple of weeks, [REDACTED] and I went to live with them.

### **Leaving unknown children's home near Edinburgh**

29. Life with my dad and [REDACTED] in Sighthill was quite settled for a couple of years. I went to Murrayburn Primary School and I made friends there. [REDACTED] looked after us well and I was living a normal childhood.
30. Dad had trained as a chef and we used to go to school with things like hummus on pitta breads. One time a Japanese guy came to the house and made sushi and sashimi. I can also remember family coming for Christmas dinner, which we'd never had before. It was a nice, happy, settled time and [REDACTED] and I thought we were sorted.
31. However, when I was about nine years old, dad had an affair with somebody at his work and, quite rightly, [REDACTED] left. She sat down and told [REDACTED] and I that she was going back to her family in Nairn and that she and my dad were splitting up.
32. Dad was working full time as a chef and he couldn't cope so [REDACTED] and I were taken away and put into Red House Children's Home in Musselburgh. I think I was still nine years old when that happened, so it would have been 1978.

### **Red House Children's Home, Musselburgh**

33. Red House was a detached building at 95 Mill Hill in the middle of Musselburgh and on the banks of the river there. It used to be a workhouse for children before it became a boys' home.
34. A drive led up to it and around the building was what we used to call the yard, which was just like a concrete school playground with a couple of sheds against the back wall. I think the building itself was Georgian and was very square with a pitched roof and a wee extension on the side, which we called the schoolroom, although it was used as a playroom for us.
35. We accessed the main building from the side door, which opened onto a long corridor with a laundry room to the side. The laundry room had several big Belfast sinks in it

and was where the staff did all the washing. After the laundry room were the toilets and as you went further up that corridor, you came to the living room and then the kitchen and the dining room at the far end. The office was opposite the living room, next to the main door to the front. The office door was always locked.

36. There were four floors in total and the boys' bedrooms were on the first floor upstairs, above the living area. Above that was a floor of staff rooms and the floor at the very top was empty at first until they started taking in girls, which was when I was about thirteen.
37. The boys' bedrooms were different sizes. One was known as the 'main room' and had between nine and twelve beds in it and was for the younger boys. We slept in single beds, not bunk beds and they would move beds in and out of that room, depending how many boys there were. Each boy had a wardrobe next to their bed, where you kept your clothes and any personal things you might have.
38. As you got older, you moved into smaller bedrooms, so the one after the main room had three or four beds in it and there were others with just two beds in them. By the time I was approaching sixteen, Red House was being shut down and boys were being moved to other places, so I ended up having a room on my own for about six months.
39. When [REDACTED] and I first went to Red House there were twenty-three boys there of varying ages, from four or five up to sixteen. I was aware that boys were there for all different reasons, but a few years ago, a few of us connected over [REDACTED] and I heard some of the other boys' stories. Some of their stories were terrible. Some boys had been beaten by their folks, others had been neglected, one guy's parents were drug abusers.
40. Red House was [REDACTED] SNR Mrs [REDACTED] EWD, or [REDACTED] EWD as we referred to her, and her husband [REDACTED] EWC. They were probably in their mid-forties. [REDACTED] EWC was a big man and he was actually a nice, affable chap, but [REDACTED] EWC did what he was told by [REDACTED] EWD, who was a very strong woman. [REDACTED] EWD was the [REDACTED] before there even was such a character. She was involved in everything and all the staff [REDACTED]. They

knew not to go against her and, even if she wasn't there, she instilled such a fear in them that they would do what she expected.

41. Usually, there would be a couple of staff on at a time, perhaps four, including Mr and Mrs **EWC-EWD**, if they were about. Mrs **EWD** spent most of her time in the office, but Mr **EWC** did come out and play football with us in the yard or he would have a game of pool with us. I later found out that a lot of the other staff were related in one way or another to Mr and Mrs **EWC-EWD**. Their daughter **EWV**, who was in her mid-twenties, also worked in Red House.
42. The cook was a lady called Mrs Cook, strangely enough, and there was **Archie** as well. He was more a sort of handyman and was always bustling about with tools. He was a bit of a socially awkward person. He never really spoke to anyone and he actually left after I'd been there for about a year.
43. Thinking back now, Red House was very short staffed. Even though all the boys were able-bodied, there were still twenty-three of us and I know how much work that should require. The young boys just used to sit with us in the TV room and we would kind of look after them. However, because the kitchen was just across the corridor, if there was a noise Mrs Cook would stick her head in the door to check everything was okay, even though she was on the domestic staff, not the care staff. She came across as being quite stern, but as I got older, I came to realise what a nice person she was.
44. There were two domestics who did the laundry and the cleaning, who were called Mrs **RGA** and Mrs **RCU**. When I was about twelve or thirteen, they became care staff and their lack of training showed. They had no idea what they were doing. They would sit and smoke in the TV room with us and we could never understand how they got the job. They didn't interact with us at all and were actually more like wardens.

## Routine at Red House

### *First day*

45. Another car came to take [REDACTED] and I to Red House and I can remember that the man who came for us had a Dutch-sounding surname, although he was Scottish. He introduced himself as Van Der something and I think he was a social worker. Dad wasn't there when we were picked up, I can't even remember him saying "Cheerio". He was a very self-centred man.
46. We never took anything with us, no clothes, not even our toys, we were just told to get our coats on because we were being taken somewhere nice down by a river. By that time, this had become normal for us.
47. I remember arriving very well. We went in the back gate and as soon as we got inside, we were stripped and washed by a female member of the staff. I think her name was [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] and she was some sort of relative of Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] who [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I remember being put in one of the big Belfast sinks in the laundry and washed. I wasn't happy, but thinking back now, I suppose they were making sure we weren't bringing anything into the home that could be passed onto the other boys. I can see the rationale of it now, but at the time, I felt very uncomfortable.
48. Afterwards, [REDACTED] and I had to get into pyjamas and we were told to go into the TV room. I'd never seen such a big television before, it was massive. A couple of guys came in and introduced themselves and then one of the older boys, a lad called [REDACTED], took [REDACTED] and I upstairs and showed us where our beds were in the main bedroom.
49. There were lots of rules in Red House, but nobody sat us down when we arrived and told us what they were. Instead, we just kind of picked them up from other boys over time.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

50. The staff would come and wake us up in the morning at 7:30am. You'd hear the room door creak open and then you'd be told to go and have a wash. Once we'd washed, we'd go back to our rooms and get dressed and then go down for breakfast. After breakfast, we'd head to school if it was a weekday. We wanted a lie in at the weekend, but that wasn't allowed and instead we had to be down for breakfast at 8:00am just like on a weekday.
51. In the evening, the younger guys had to be upstairs for 9:30pm and the older guys had to be up for 10:00pm. If it was the holidays, we were allowed to stay up until about 10:30pm. The staff were quite happy if we were just lounging about, watching telly. They never really had to tell us it was time to go to bed, we just knew when and we did.
52. I don't remember who put the lights out, I presume it must have been a member of staff. I don't know how many staff might have been on during the night either. I don't recall seeing anyone, we just assumed there must have been a member of staff sleeping in one of the bedrooms on the floor above us, but I don't know. Once you were in your bed, you never knew what was happening in the rest of the home.

### *Bed Wetting*

53. One of the rules was that once we were in our beds, we never got out, even if we needed the toilet. If you did get up, you did so very quietly because you had to go through three fire doors to get to the toilet and those doors creaked.
54. I became a bed wetter when I went to Red House pretty soon after I arrived. I hadn't wet my bed before and I remember being quite surprised when I woke up and realised what had happened.
55. A couple of other guys wet their beds as well and the staff used to come into the room in the morning and stick their hands under your bedding to check the bed wetters first. If you had wet your bed, whichever member of staff was on duty would make you strip

it yourself and take the bedding downstairs to the laundry. You'd leave the wet bedding in the laundry and then you had to get clean stuff, take it back up to your room and make your bed up again.

56. It was a walk of shame, because everybody knew. The other lads would ridicule us, but it was just what you would expect. I did it too when other kids had wet their beds. The staff were actually okay and didn't really say anything to us, but you would get disapproving stares from Mrs EWD as you walked all the way through the house.
57. I now know it wasn't a physical thing, it was a mental thing, but they did different things for boys who wet their beds, such as sending us to our beds early. I don't know what the thinking was, whether it was some sort of punishment. Our mattresses were also covered in what we called 'Kylies', which was a plastic sheet covered in a cloth fabric. One time, they tried giving us some sort of tablet, but it didn't work. It was also decided that the bed wetters weren't allowed a drink after 6:00pm, which was not good in the summertime.

#### *Washing/bathing*

58. In the morning, everybody had what was called a 'strip wash'. Five or six boys at a time would be standing at the sinks, stripped naked and washing their faces, hands and bodies. Everything would be laid out for us, including soap, towels and our toothbrushes. We were each given a number, I was number [REDACTED], and our toothbrushes had our numbers melted into them. Toothpaste was even already squeezed onto our brushes.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

59. The food was adequate, but it wasn't the best. I was used to fancy stuff cooked by my dad, but there was nothing like that at Red House. Breakfast was cereal and that sort of thing, which the staff poured out for you. A jug of milk would be on the table. There was also a big urn of tea, which the staff would slop out into cups for us.

60. We had to use plastic plates and cups that were all in primary colours. A number was written underneath the plates and, randomly, if you had a higher number than the guy next to you, you were allowed to punch him. It was supposed to be a fun punch, but if one boy didn't like another, it was an excuse to give him a wallop, because you weren't allowed to punch back.
61. There were about three main meals through the week, one being a steak pie that you had to chew forever. One of the puddings was this pink stuff, that was like some sort of 'Blancmange' but wasn't even the proper stuff. I remember tapioca as well, which we thought was like frog spawn.
62. You had to eat all your food and if you didn't, you weren't allowed to leave the table. Instead, you had to sit there until you did eat it. I saw boys sitting gagging, trying to eat what they'd been given because you were not allowed to get up from the table until you'd finished.
63. One time we'd been given stew and I could not eat that, so I had to sit at the table until I'd finished. I was there for three hours until 8:00pm when I'd managed to force it all down.
64. I don't know what would have happened if a boy just couldn't eat what he'd been given. I can't remember anybody ever failing, you just persevered. That was the thing, you knew there would be repercussions, but you weren't sure what they were going to be. There was always a fear of what might happen, rather than what actually did happen. You just knew that you did not want to get on the wrong side of EWD.
65. She was always there at mealtimes and although she wouldn't get you physically, for some reason she got in your head. It's hard to describe what she would do, but she would come up beside you or behind you, wag her finger and give you disapproving ticks and she would tell you to eat whatever it was. She didn't actually do anything physically, but she had this disapproving, intimidating manner. Some of the staff were the same as EWD, but some tried to be a bit kinder and would try and persuade us to try a wee bit at a time.

### *Clothing/uniform*

66. We basically all dressed the same in the clothes that we were given by the staff. We all had 'Adidas' tee shirts that were in various colours, flared jeans and jerseys. It was all new, but it was like they had bought all the clothes in bulk and just spread them out amongst everyone.
67. We each had a pigeonhole and after our clothes had been washed, we would get them from our pigeonholes. The pigeonhole had your number on it and all our clothes did too, so that we could tell what belonged to each boy. That number was on everything, even our socks and our underpants. We asked if we could just put our names on our clothes because it was embarrassing at school when the other lads saw your number, but we weren't allowed.

### *Leisure time*

68. The schoolroom on the side of the main building that we used as our playroom had a trampoline and table football in it and there was a pool table as well. The pool table was very popular. It was a big room, so big that we used to put everything against the wall so that we could play football inside. At first, there was also a dart board, but that didn't last long. I suppose it wasn't the best idea having boys throwing sharp pointy things around. There was also a 'Monopoly' board, but that was taken away as well because the games turned into carnage.
69. We weren't big readers and I don't remember there being many books, but I did have some books in my room. We were allowed to go to our rooms if we wanted and I'd read in there. We also had radios in our rooms and we could listen to them when we wanted.
70. If the staff wanted a cigarette they would come and have one in the TV room, however the staff weren't present a lot of the time. If you were in the TV room and one of the younger boys was there and needed the toilet, you'd be expected to take him.

71. We weren't allowed to sit about inside, though. One of the staff would often be telling us to go outside and we'd be out all day. We'd have our breakfast then we'd head out until lunch and then we'd be back outside in the afternoon. We'd play football in the yard, but there was nobody supervising us and there were no checks on us, although sometimes EWC would come out and play football with us.
72. The younger ones were only allowed outside in the yard, but when you were older you could muck about away from the home with your pals. I'm not sure what age you had to be before you could leave the yard. I was old enough when I got to Red House so I was allowed to leave as soon as I arrived. I made a few pals at school and I would go and meet them somewhere in Musselburgh.
73. We could come and go as we pleased through the back door during the day, but it was shut at 8:00pm so if you were out later, you had to come back in the front door. You had to ring the bell and one of the staff would come and let you in, so that they knew you were back, although I don't remember there being a headcount as such.
74. At the weekend we'd get our pocket money on a Saturday and then we could do our own thing in town. I used to vanish with my pals and try and spend my pocket money as quick as I could. Some of us had pedal bikes and we could go out on them as well, if we wanted.
75. You never had to tell any of the staff where you were going, you would just say "I'm away out" and that would be you. Basically we were feral, although we'd be told to be back for dinner and we would make sure we were back because of the control that EWD had over us. I've seen guys running back with sweat pouring off them to make it in time. A couple of older guys were late back once and they were kept in for the rest of the day, even though it was a beautiful summer's day.
76. My mates from school were allowed to come and play football in the yard as long as they behaved, although I would have to go and ask if it was okay. I would kind of play the system a bit and it would be Mr EWC I would ask, because he would approve it more easily.

## *Schooling*

77. I went to Burgh Primary School when I first arrived at Red House, which was about a ten minute walk away. At that time there weren't any pedestrian crossings and we had to make our own way across the main road that goes through Musselburgh.
78. Primary school was alright. I made friends and played lots of football. It was a normal education, but then I went to Musselburgh Grammar for secondary, where we boys from Red House were treated differently by the other boys. We were known as 'Home boys' or 'Tag socks', because we had our numbers on them. After a while you just shrugged it off, though. They picked on me because I was at Red House, but they picked on somebody else because they might have had ginger hair, or whatever.
79. The teachers didn't treat us any differently, but that was maybe because it was such a big, busy school. They didn't really have time to single people out. One teacher did once acknowledge my surname and confirm I was from Red House, but that was just because he'd taught my brother the year before. He didn't make anything of it.
80. However, I got bored after second year and my education suffered badly. I would go into school in the morning and register and then would basically just walk out. There was a sort of hardcore of other lads who would do the same and we would all hang about together. We didn't do anything like smash the town up, we would be pretty low key and we would just wander about or play pitch and toss around the back of the school boiler room.
81. I was a young lad of twelve or thirteen and I needed somebody to tell me that I had to go to school, but nobody from Red House did and I hold them responsible. The school used to send what we used to call 'skip lines', which were notes to the home to tell the staff I had been absent. I think the notes would just go into my file in the office, but Mrs EWD never spoke to me about them. One of the staff might ask me why I didn't go to school and I would just reply that I didn't want to and that would be it. There would be no discussion or supervision and after a while the notes were just ignored.

82. One time we were caught by the police trespassing in a deserted old cotton mill and we were taken back to Red House. All that happened was that we were asked what we'd been doing and were kept in for a bit afterwards.
83. None of the staff at Red House would ask me about homework either. They wouldn't check whether I had been given any, or make sure I was doing it if I had been. There was no pressure whatsoever. It was as if it didn't matter to them because it didn't affect them whether I went to school or not, as long as I left the home in the morning with my school uniform on.
84. Ultimately, I left school with no qualifications at all and I don't even have any school photos.

#### *Healthcare*

85. I once fell and cut my leg quite badly. When **EWD** saw me limping a couple of days later, she asked me what I'd done and I told her that my knee had swollen up. It was obviously infected and she told me to go into one of the rooms and then she put a homemade poultice on it. I thought I should have been going to the doctor, but she just treated it herself.
86. If we did need to see a G.P., we went to see Doctor George at the local surgery, who was actually on the board of trustees for Red House. The staff would make the appointment for us and it was always with him, we were never allowed to see any other doctor.
87. Dr George was a very nice man, but again this was another example of **EWD**'s control over everything. She knew that if anything needed to be fed back to her about any of us boys, Dr George would do so.
88. It was the same thing with the dentist, who was a Dr Chamberlain. We always had to see him, again so that **EWD** would be told everything about our treatment. He was harsh though. You would think he was paying for the anaesthetic himself because you never seemed to be given enough.

*Religious instruction*

89. Religion wasn't a thing at all. I've never been a religious person and we never had to go to church at Red House if we didn't want to. A couple of younger guys did go, but that was their choice, we weren't made to go.

*Trips and holidays*

90. The home had a blue van that had benches on each side and we'd go on trips and holidays in it with EWC driving. We'd drive overnight in it all the way down to places like Minehead in Somerset. There would be twenty-three laddies in the back and not a seatbelt to be seen. There'd be lads sleeping on the floor and underneath the benches. When we got back to Red House, EWC would do 'doughnuts' in the yard, pulling the handbrake on and skidding round in circles. We'd all be in the back, getting thrown against the side, but we thought it was great.
91. We also went to Filey and to St Andrew's occasionally, where Mr and Mrs EWC-EWD came from originally and where the home had a caravan. On another holiday, we went to Butlins at Skegness. Again, we drove down in the blue van and when we got there, we were handed a chalet key and the staff told us they'd see us in a fortnight. There were four beds in each chalet and the staff had their own. We knew where the staff were if there was a problem, but over the whole holiday, we'd only occasionally see the staff in the entertainment building.
92. Basically, we just ran feral for the whole holiday, but those holidays were good. We could spend time with our mates and we'd get £5 a day to spend. I think that was supposed to be for us to buy food with, but if we went back to the chalets there would be a sandwich buffet for us to eat, so we could spend the money on other things.

### *Work*

93. There was a rota for us to wash the dishes and if you didn't do them right, EWD would make you do them again. If just one fork or one knife wasn't quite clean enough, all the dishes had to be washed again.
94. Mrs RGA and Mrs RCU did the laundry at first, but as you got older, you had to do your own washing and ironing yourself, including your school shirts. You also had to polish your shoes yourself ready for school the next day.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

95. There was a local toyshop in Musselburgh called Peterson's that we used to go to. When it was your birthday, you were given £5 and you were allowed to buy yourself a present from there yourself. In the home, everyone would mumble out the "Happy Birthday" tune and you got a birthday cake as well, but it was so small for twenty-three laddies that it was more symbolic.
96. At Christmas, decorations and a tree would be put up and every other year in November, Mr EWC would paint the living room. We knew Christmas must be coming with the smell of paint.
97. I tended to spend Christmas with my brother at my gran's in North Berwick. Dad would come and my gran would make Christmas dinner for us and we would stay for a couple of days.
98. I did spend one Christmas at Red House because my gran wasn't well and we just got a standard meal of turkey and trimmings. We got presents as well, which were given to us in a bin liner. I still get flashbacks to Red House when I smell a bin liner. The presents weren't wrapped or anything, they were just put in this plastic bag.
99. Folk would show up every so often with gifts for everyone, like a record player and that sort of thing. I don't know if they were perhaps people who were on the board of

trustees and these gifts had been purchased through donations. Things like that would go into the schoolroom for everybody to use.

### *Visitors*

100. My dad did come and visit [REDACTED] and me occasionally, but it was hit-and-miss whether he actually would. It depended what girl he was chasing at the time. If he was in-between a relationship, he might appear. [REDACTED] was sometimes there as well, but it depended. He didn't really get on with my dad and if we knew in advance that he was coming, [REDACTED] would often say he was heading out.
101. There was a visitors' room, which didn't have any windows and was private and that's where you would meet anyone who came. You were left alone with your visitors, the staff didn't come in, but you stayed in that room with your visitor, you weren't allowed to go out of the home with them.
102. Now and again a social worker from Shrubhill would come and pay a visit and I'd meet them in there. They'd maybe come once every six months, but it was a different social worker just about every time and I can't remember any of their names. One guy did come a few times and used to take [REDACTED] and me out for a meal. We never spoke about anything and I realised he was just doing it so that he would get a free dinner for himself.
103. When a social worker did come, they might ask "*Are you alright*", but there was no real interest in finding out whether we were or not. At that time, I think it was more the case that they thought we were the responsibility of the staff at Red House and we were safe there. They never asked what I might have been up to, if I had any troubles, or if there was anything I might want to speak about.

### *Health and safety*

104. In all the time I was at Red House, I can never remember the fire alarm being tested. You could also wander in and out of the kitchen as you pleased, even if everything was on, gas rings were blazing and pots were on the stoves. Knives would be lying

about, but there were no health and safety measures in place, which I wonder at now, especially given the fact that there were wee boys running about as well.

### *Inspections*

105. I'm not aware of any inspections in all the time I was at Red House. I certainly never saw anyone or spoke with anyone. I think it would have been very obvious if somebody was coming to inspect the place because everybody would have been talking about it.
106. Dr George, who was on the board of trustees, would come occasionally, but I just assumed he was there for a medical reason. I certainly never saw any of the other trustees at any time and I don't know who they were.

### *Family contact*

107. Occasionally, I would go to my dad's house. He had a flat in the town, but it was very rare that I would go because it was difficult getting into town from Musselburgh.
108. I used to go to my gran's in North Berwick quite a lot and she'd often give me £5 or something like that before I left. When I got back, one of the staff would ask me if I'd got any money and when at first I said that I had, it was taken off me and put in the safe in the office. I quickly learned to say that I never got any money because I never saw the money they had taken off me again. I did ask where it was, but I was told it was safe and that I would get it eventually, but I never did.

### *Sibling Contact*

109. There was nothing to prevent [REDACTED] and I from seeing each other. We started off in the same bedroom, but he moved up a room before me because he was a year older. However, when you're teenagers, you just do your own thing and over time we just kind of grew apart. He had his pals and I had mine.

110. When █████ got to the age of sixteen, he left and joined the RAF. I remember him telling me he'd had enough and he was leaving. We shook hands and I never saw him for about two years.

*Peer relations*

111. There was surprisingly little bullying between the boys. There was a lad called █████ who was the 'Top Dog' and you didn't mess with him, but that was it. Some lads didn't like each other, for instance █████ and a lad called █████ didn't get on and if they went near each other, punches would fly. Years later, we all met up and learned that █████ used to get beaten up for no reason by his dad at home. █████ and █████ ended up getting on and having a pint together.
112. However, if someone was getting bullied by someone from outside Red House, we all stood up for each other and it didn't last long.
113. I was fourteen when girls came to stay at Red House, which changed the dynamics considerably. EWD █████ would call meetings every now and again when something was to be discussed, although they weren't discussions really, it was more her dictating to us. By that time, I think just because of natural shrinkage, there were only about fourteen boys staying at Red House and EWD █████ told us that they were going to have to open up the upstairs floor to girls.
114. The girls arrived at different times and I think the most we had was about five. They were all teenagers of thirteen or fourteen and a couple of them were sisters. As teenage boys, we were delighted that the girls were coming, however, some of those girls were messed up and wild and it wasn't a good mix. There was always bickering between them. There would be relationships with guys, then they would dump them and go out with another guy.
115. There was a nice balance between the boys before the girls came, but after they arrived, it got a bit messy and I think it was at that time that things started to go downhill a bit, because EWD █████ was starting to lose control. She would tell the girls they were getting kept in for something or other and their response would be that they would just

climb out of the window. Whereas we boys were disciplined, particularly those of us who had been at Red House for a long time. We knew how EWD expected us to behave, but the girls did not and there was always chaos.

### *Support*

116. When I think back now, it was a bit like we boys were treated as farm animals at Red House. They took care of us, they fed us and they watered us, but that was it. They did the basics, but there was absolutely no care or empathy. There was nobody you could go to if you were upset about anything. If any of the staff saw you crying, you'd get a sarcastic comment, such as "*Go and blow your nose*".
117. I remember one young chap was a bit upset after he had been in a fight with one of the other guys. He was crying and when EWD, who must have heard the commotion, came out of the office and saw him, she asked him why he was crying. He replied that he was "*A wee bit upset*" and her response was "*Well you better get downset then*". That was it. This young lad was obviously in shock and her reaction was just casual cruelty.
118. Some of the younger boys particularly would get a bit homesick, but there was no empathy shown to them by EWD either. I think that's why we older boys were naturally protective towards them. The staff would give them a wee bit more attention and would make sure they were eating properly, but that was about it.
119. As time went on, when I was about fourteen, I noticed that the staff actually became more professional. Two ladies were employed, Mary Grahamson and another woman called Jill, and they were actually trained. They must have had some sort of training in social work and it showed because they would actually ask how we were and, if we said we were alright, they would ask again to confirm that we really were. They would actually engage you and if you did step out of line they would ask why, rather than just tell us not to do something.

120. I never would have felt that I could have told them if anything was wrong, though, because by that time I was so accustomed to not speaking to anyone. It was only later that I realised they were actually trying to help.

*Discipline*

121. Every week on a Saturday, we would be shouted into the office by Mrs EWD, who would be standing with a metal money box tin, giving out the £3.95 pocket money we got. However, we were fined if any of the staff wanted to discipline us and those fines were deducted from our pocket money.
122. There was a board on the wall of the dining room with each of our names on it and a column with '5 pence' written at the top. If you gave any of the staff cheek, they would tick the box next to your name and sometimes there could be a few 5p ticks. When we got our pocket money, we had to sign to say we'd received it, but EWD made you sign first and then she would see how many fines you'd had and you'd get whatever you were due after the fines were taken off.
123. I don't know where any of that money went, but it was quite an arbitrary punishment. If you were even perceived to have been cheeky, some of the staff would put a tick next to your name. They weren't all like that, but some of the staff were quite hardcore and would fine you for nothing. EWV, Mr and Mrs EWC-EWD's daughter, was very enthusiastic at fining you. Even if you walked past her and didn't wish her a good morning, she would class that as cheek and put a tick next to your name.
124. Another punishment was being kept in. They were very good at that, particularly if one of your mates was having a birthday party. That happened to me. I would have to ask EWD for permission to go, but I was often perceived to have misbehaved and I was kept in. I didn't think I had done anything wrong, but she made you feel as if you were guilty all the time and I thought that I must have been.
125. I remember one birthday party in particular, which was to be at the trampoline centre. I was absolutely buzzing about it and everybody knew about it as soon as I got the invitation. When it came time to go though, EWD said I couldn't because, she said,

I'd misbehaved somehow. She didn't give me any reason, she just told me, "*I'd not been behaving properly*" and that I was "*On a very sticky wicket*". Those were her favourite phrases. I don't remember being allowed to go to a lot of birthday parties.

### **Abuse at Red House**

126. I never saw **EWD** physically punish anybody, she didn't need to. Thinking back now, she was just a wee woman, but at that time she was a big personality and the fear that she put in you was pretty comprehensive.
127. **EWC**, her husband, was like her attack dog and it was he who would dish out the physical punishments at her instruction. You never went in the office unless you were in trouble and whenever we heard **EWD** shout "**EWC**", we knew someone was in trouble.
128. If somebody was acting up, being cheeky to **EWD** or something like that, Mr **EWC** would take you down. He had this technique where he would come up to you and talk to you and keep you looking at him and then suddenly he would grab your flared trousers and whip you off your feet and onto the floor. Once you were on the floor, he would sit on you and tell you to calm down.
129. That didn't happen to me, but I saw it happen to another boy. When Mr **EWC** took this boy down, the boy's head just missed the pool table. I can't remember what the boy's name was.
130. He would also grab lads by the collar, the scruff of their neck or by their hair and shove them out of the room or take them upstairs to their room. It was obviously just to get them out of the situation because they'd come back down five minutes later and say that **EWC** had told them to calm down and think about what they were doing.
131. I was quite a shy, quiet lad, and I never got that treatment from Mr **EWC**, but I did see him do it to other lads. One poor guy, who was one of the older ones and about

sixteen, was a 'Teddy Boy' with his hair swept back and Mr EWC grabbed him by the hair and dragged him from the room.

132. I didn't see Mr EWC do that sort of thing a lot, though. It was very rare and somebody had to be doing something really bad for him to step in. If it did happen, people would calm down afterwards and so it would only really happen every couple of months.
133. EWW was a nasty character who I saw give some of the youngsters a backhanded slap across their heads on more than one occasion. One of the older, bigger laddies once asked her what she was hitting the wee lads for and she went red faced and walked off.
134. Mrs RGA and Mrs RCU, the two domestics who were then taken on as care staff, were a pair of bullies. They used to push younger boys around and they would push boys into the bathroom, shut the door and lock it and that sort of thing. They actually did that to my brother, who is quite a big lad. He told them he'd kick the door in if they didn't open it.

### **Reporting of abuse at Red House**

135. I never spoke of my experiences at Red House with anybody while I was there. I could certainly never have spoken with any of the social workers who came to visit me. I didn't know these people, they were strangers, and so there were obviously trust issues. Aside from that, like many teenage boys, I was quite closed off anyway.

### **Leaving Red House**

136. I never knew how long I was going to be in Red House. When and I were put there, we just thought that was us until we were sixteen and that's exactly what happened.

137. When I was about fourteen or fifteen, I was put into what was called the 'Annex', which was a flat at Red House that used to be occupied by Mr and Mrs EWC-EWD's kids. The staff would come over now and again to check on us and there was always an older resident in there as well who would generally have a job somewhere and was there to make sure you didn't do anything daft, like set the place on fire. The premise was that he would sort of look after you but being in the flat was supposed to be introducing us to independent living.
138. You got a budget of £11 a week and you had to go out and buy your own food and cook it yourself, but nobody actually told you what to buy or how you should go about it. Nobody showed you how to cook either, or how to budget, you were just expected to get on with it.
139. I got my money and went out and bought six 'Pot Noodles' for the week and I thought that was great because I still had £8 left for cigarettes and drink.
140. I was still living in the Annex when I left school at sixteen and got a job through one of my mates. His dad was a 'ganger', a foreman, with Robert McAlpine, who were building Edinburgh City bypass. I went to see him and got a job as a 'runner', going to the shops for the workers, making sure the urn was filled and helping the engineers by carrying their theodolites about.
141. I left Red House in 1986, however, when it came time for me to leave, nobody spoke to me about it beforehand. They never even told me that the place was shutting. I was aware that people would just leave, go to other homes or join the armed services when they were sixteen and they would not be replaced, but nobody told me it was because the home was being closed. Eventually, by the time I left, there were just five or six of us remaining.
142. Two or three days before I did leave Red House, I was told I was being taken to Ravelston Dykes Home in Edinburgh to see it. I'd never even heard of Ravelston Dykes before and there was no build up to it. Nobody sat me down and told me what was going to be happening. I was told it was another children's home and I was told I was going to stay there temporarily.

## Ravelston Dykes Children's Home, Edinburgh

143. Secondary Institutions - to be published later




144.



145. I was about sixteen-and-a-half by this time and on the day I left Red House, I packed my stuff in a couple of bin liners and one of the staff from there took me to Ravelston Dykes in their wee 'Mini' motorcar. I can't remember who it was. One of the other lads from Red House followed me to Ravelston Dykes about a week later. Secondary Insti

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



146. I was still working with Robert McAlpine when I moved, but the job on the bypass had finished and I was put on a gardening job for the new housing scheme that was being built at South Gyle. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



147. I wasn't on a bad wage for back then and all the money I earned was my own. Secondary

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

148.

149. I would have been at Ravelston Dykes for three or four months at the most when one of the staff introduced me to a guy from Castlerock Housing Association who told me they had got a house for me in Musselburgh. He asked if I wanted to go and see it and I said I did. I don't think I had even unpacked one of my bags.

150. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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

151. The house I was allocated was actually a two-bedroom flat and there was another guy already in it. He was a wee bit strange, but he was never there. He would vanish for two or three weeks at a time, come back, have a sleep and then disappear again, so I pretty much had the flat to myself.

152. It was a normal, rented flat from the association. I was paying the rent myself and so that was me out of the care system. I had a rent book that I took down to the Post Office, but I had no idea that I also had to pay Council Tax, or whatever it was called at that time.

153. I had no contact from the social work, it was a representative from the housing association who helped me get a grant for moving in. He walked me through getting money through the unemployment benefit scheme, so that I could get myself a bed, a settee, pots and pans and all the basics. He was good enough to come shopping with me as well, although perhaps that was to make sure I didn't just go down the bookies

with the money. He did more than the social work had ever done and it wasn't really his job.

154. I had to give up my job at South Gyle, because it was too far away and I was unemployed for about three months before I then got an apprentice joiner job through the father of another of my mates. At that time, it was a four-year apprenticeship, so I completed it and stayed with the firm for a couple of years as a tradesman.
155. I stayed in the flat in Musselburgh for about two years, before I moved into another flat in the town with one of my mates. I was eighteen by that time.
156. After working as a joiner, I decided to retrain as a care worker and I went to the Jewel and Esk Valley College where I completed SVQs (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) to levels 2 and 3 in Care and Social Services. Level 3 is more a supervisory qualification and was the equivalent to Higher English. The course lasted two years and was just below the level of an HND (Higher National Diploma) and the qualification allowed me to get a job in the field.
157. By that time I was married with a child, so I needed to be earning money and I got a job at a nursing home in [REDACTED], where I'd done some of my training. They offered me a job after I qualified and I stayed there for about three years. I hated it though. I was just out of college and full of all these new ideas, but instead I had to follow the way things had always been done there.
158. After those three years, I left and got a job in 'Asda', [REDACTED]. Then I went back into care services and worked at the [REDACTED] Charity for people with brain injuries, which is based at Bingham. Eventually, I moved into a quieter unit with the charity, which is in [REDACTED], in Edinburgh. It was a more hands-on role, but it was a nicer place to work.
159. After that, I got a job with Edinburgh Council as a care worker in the community and I have been in the role for twelve or thirteen years. I am now part-time and my clients are people who have been discharged from hospital, who I assess over six weeks before they are handed over to agencies or are able to look after themselves. I am

also involved in a lot of end-of-life care in my role because there are no beds in hospices.

160. I married my ex-wife in 1990 and we had two children together. We have grandchildren now as well. My wife and I separated about nine years ago and divorced two years ago and since then I met my partner [REDACTED] and we now live together.

### **Impact**

161. Perhaps as some sort of lead-on from Red House, my ex-wife was actually very like [REDACTED] EWD [REDACTED]. She was very strong-willed and it was always her way or no way. It took me twenty-odd years to realise that and I think it was when I came to that realisation that our marriage broke down. I got to the point where I wasn't prepared to be pushed around anymore and I realised I had almost been brainwashed into thinking that how [REDACTED] EWD [REDACTED] and how my ex-wife behaved, is how all women should behave.
162. My ex-wife was such a strong character that she wouldn't even let me take my kids out on my own in case I lost them. I was very closed off from my kids when they were growing up and even now, our relationship is not as close as it should be. I wasn't a very affectionate person because I didn't know how to be affectionate. I also didn't know how a family worked and I had no life training.
163. I don't have any sort of relationship with my younger brother [REDACTED] although my older brother [REDACTED] and I are still in contact regularly. [REDACTED] is going through his own difficulties at the moment, though.
164. I probably drink too much, but I have stayed away from abusing drugs. I have low self-esteem to the point that I have felt worthless in the past and would think to myself that I would just stay in my bed because nobody would miss me anyway. I attribute that to my time in care because I think you have to learn how to handle your emotions when you are a child and if you're not allowed to do that, you are restricted.

165. It's taken me years to get over that, although things are different now that I have met ■■■. She is a very bubbly character and I know that I am getting better.
166. While I was still at Red House, one of my mates' mums asked me round for my tea, but I didn't think I was worthy, because I wasn't used to people being kind. It took me a while to be able to appreciate kindness and even yet, ■■■ will give me a compliment and I don't know how to deal with it.

### **Treatment/support**

167. A few years ago, when the kids had just left home and my ex-wife and I were struggling in our relationship, everything was getting on top of me and I was off work for a while. I think my experiences in care were the cause of how I had been feeling, because I wasn't getting on with my ex-wife and I wasn't able to show her any emotion. I didn't have the knowledge or the experience to address how I was feeling, but I didn't want to go down the route of taking medication, so I organised seeing a counsellor through my work.
168. I saw the counsellor over six weeks and it did help. He gave me a few clues as to how to spot triggers and how to deal with them. It never cured how I was feeling, but it did help.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

169. I have never reported my experiences as a child to anybody. I suppose I didn't think of it as abuse at the time and it was only when I spoke to my brother and he asked me to think about my work and what abuse is, that I had a lightbulb moment. All the things that we don't do, can't do and wouldn't do in my work was done to us on a daily basis.

## Records

170. I know that the social work offices in Shrubhill are away now and I don't know what will have happened to all the records. Certainly, I have never asked for mine and I don't actually know how I would go about getting them.

## Lessons to be learned

171. As I have said, we were treated like farm animals at Red House and it was very obvious that somebody, somewhere was making money out of the home, because Mr and Mrs **EWC-EWD** and the staff didn't do it out of the kindness of their hearts. It wasn't their vocation, it was their job. I suppose somebody like Mary Grahamson, one of the staff who was employed later on, showed kindness by not looking down on us, but there was no empathy or kindness such as sitting one of the younger boys on their knees if they were upset.
172. Mr and Mrs **EWC-EWD** **SNR** Red House to suit themselves and whoever should have had oversight of them did not do their job properly. I know it was a while ago, but nobody should have the amount of control over people that Mrs **EWD** had.
173. Things should be more open and more checks, when the right questions are asked, should be made. When the Care Commission used to inspect us in my work, they would go through everything we did with a fine-toothed comb. Nothing could be hidden, even if we had wanted to.
174. People looking after children must be properly trained and must be specialised. They must know how children think and work and they should be able to look out for signs of trauma, such as a child disengaging from things. It's such a basic thing, but they should be people who are actually nice.
175. I learned about the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry from my brother **██████████** and I hope the Inquiry can help to make sure people don't get damaged as we have been. I would hate anybody to feel as worthless as I used to feel.

**Other information**

176. 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..... 17/3/26 .....