

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GLI

Support person present: No

1. My name is GLI. My date of birth is 1979. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mum and dad were and I have two brothers and four sisters. was the oldest and is about eighteen years older than me. is about twelve years older, is eight years older, seven years older, who is six years older, then me and my twin brother. My mum worked in an art gallery. My dad didn't work. I was brought up in Priesthill which is near Pollok. My house was a dive. Neither and lived there as they had moved out to their own houses. I don't have any unhappy memories from my early childhood.
3. My mum got a brand new washing machine. It came in a big cardboard box so my mum let me and play in the cardboard box. I have no idea how old I was but I must have been not much more than a toddler. There wasn't polystyrene packing at that time so we scrumpled up a whole lot of newspapers to pretend we were in a boat and the paper was the sea. After an hour or so someone came to the door. It was a woman I now know to be Margaret Gray, a social worker. She said she couldn't believe the mess in the house because of all the scrumpled up newspaper. She said it wasn't acceptable. My mum told her that we were just playing. This woman was furious. I don't know why she was there or what her involvement was with the family.

4. As a child I went to Burnbrae primary school which is in Priesthill. The main thing I recall about there was regularly sitting in the front foyer having to write out lots of lines as punishment for something. This meant I had to write the same sentence over and over and it usually began 'I must not..!'
5. At some point, and I cannot be sure if it was when I was still at home or when I was in care, but I once jagged myself with a hypodermic needle which I found outside. It was in the national newspaper at the time. I also remember that I was circumcised as a child and to this day I still don't know why this procedure was carried out. I find it quite traumatic not knowing why.
6. I am not sure of the exact order of my first couple of placements. I may have been in Park Lodge first then went to Alva then back to Park Lodge, or I may have just gone to Alva then to Park Lodge.

Alva Children's home, Crookston, Pollok, Glasgow

7. I am not sure what age I was there as I was very young. I vaguely remember being put there but I think I have blanked things out from my memory. I have done this a lot through my time in care. There were several old buildings dotted about and there was a wooded area with trees. I don't really remember anything about Alva and I don't know if [REDACTED] was with me. I think I was told at that time that it was called Alva and I have been told in my adult life that I had been in there.

Park Lodge, Newlands, Glasgow

8. Park lodge was a big Victorian sandstone building and it was like a mansion. When you walk in the archway through the grand entrance, reception rooms were to the left and to the right. There were stairs going up and there were cupboards under the stairs. At the back of the building were more stairs. The rooms were all massive with high ceilings. The kitchen was on the ground floor but I don't remember a community

room or a dining room. The office was upstairs and was always locked. There were three bedrooms upstairs and three downstairs. The front door wasn't locked apart from at night. This meant we could come and go from the building and we weren't locked in. Our bedroom doors weren't locked either. I believe this home had a connection with another children's home but I can't remember the name of it.

9. I don't remember any staff structure and can't say who was in charge. There was a female manager and a cook called Tam. I am not sure if he was the head cook or a temporary cook. There was another worker and I have a photograph of him which I can provide to the Inquiry. He is big and has a beard. I believe his name was **GLN**. I am also in this picture which was taken in my room at Park Lodge. Other staff were a Jewish woman called Edel, a man called Alistair and another woman whose name I think was **GLL**. I am sure her name started with the letter **GLL**.

10. I am not sure what organisation ran Park Lodge but it may have been Glasgow city council. I may have been six or seven when I went there but I am not sure. I am not sure why any of the other children were there. They came from all walks of life with their own reasons. The ones I remember were **GLN**, **GLN** and her sister **GLN**, **GLN**, **GLN**. There were other children and in my time there quite a few came and left. **GLN**, **GLN** and **GLN** seemed to be there almost permanently. The age range of the children was roughly from seven up to eleven.

Routine at Park Lodge

Mornings and bedtime

11. I don't remember the day I was taken there. I had a room to myself and I don't think anyone ever shared it with me. We were supposed to make our own bed but I got into trouble with the staff quite a lot for not doing it.

Mealtimes/Food

12. I remember being in the kitchen although probably wasn't supposed to be in there. The first time I went in I saw the big potato peeler which amazed me. You put the potatoes in, put the lid on and there was a disc that spun at the bottom. Ten minutes later you had perfectly peeled round potatoes. I don't remember where we ate our meals and can't even say what the food was like.

Washing/bathing/clothing/uniform

13. I can't remember the routine for washing or bathing. We got an allowance of £300 a year to spend on clothes although this may have been at St Philip's rather than Park Lodge. The staff bought the clothes for us.

Leisure time

14. We were given pocket money at the weekend and we could spend it at the nearby shops. Staff didn't come with us and I sometimes went on my own. I don't remember getting permission from staff before I left. I used to go out to the nearby housing estates and offer to wash people's cars. Most paid me with cash but I remember one woman wanted to pay me with boiled eggs.
15. I went ice skating early on Saturday morning and we used the rink before it opened to the public. We were on the ice at six o'clock in the morning and off by nine. I went there and back on my own in a taxi. I think it stopped after a while because it became too expensive. The staff never came with me.
16. When we weren't out doing the occasional activity in the evening I spent most of my time in my bedroom. I would usually be playing with my computer. I didn't sit watching television and didn't really socialise with any other children.

Trips and holidays

17. There was a big green minibus that sat outside Park Lodge but I can't remember which member of staff usually drove it. GLK ██████ took me to a television studio in Glasgow one time. We went to see a show being recorded live. Some evenings we did the occasional activity and were taken to the cinema. Other times we were taken ice skating to the St Enoch centre. We went on holiday to a caravan in Great Yarmouth.

Schooling

18. When I went to Park Lodge I was moved to Merrylee primary school. I used to walk to primary school. At some point I moved to Bellarmine secondary school. All I remember about that was that when everyone else went to their classes I went to a remedial centre. It was just me and the teacher. I got quite a hard time from all the other children because I was in this class. I must have been at this school at least two years. My brother ██████ was at this school too but I don't remember any of the other children from the home being there. I don't remember anything about the classes or what I was taught there.

Healthcare

19. I seem to remember not being at school all the time I should have been. I was unwell on a couple of occasions. I had something wrong with my ears and had a dull numbing pain.
20. At some point I went to see a child psychiatrist in Thornliebank. I sat with him for ten minutes and the whole time he was clicking his pen. We chatted and that was it. I never saw him again. I am not sure why I was sent to see him.

Work/ Personal possessions

21. The only chore I remember doing was washing the minibus. We might have got money for doing it. I had posters on the wall in my bedroom and had my own computer games. My brother gave me one of them. I had a grey holdall which I still have today in a cupboard at home. I had my own ice hockey stick and all the kit.

Birthdays and Christmas

22. I am not sure if Christmases were celebrated because I don't remember there being decorations or a Christmas tree in the house. It could be I didn't spend a Christmas there and may have been on the run. I got a present on my birthday. I remember one year we went to the shops in Shawlands and I bought my first ever record from Woolworths. I am not sure if this was for my Christmas or my birthday. At the same time I used to look in a sports shop window and admire the trainers.

Visitors

23. My mum visited me two or three times when I was at Park Lodge and I think that was in my early days there. My sister [REDACTED] may have come once but I don't remember any of my other brothers or sisters visiting. I don't remember any social workers visiting me here or at any other place that I was in care. My dad died when I was in Park Lodge. Staff came and told me when I was in my room. I don't think I accepted it very well.
24. Margaret Gray, the social worker visited me. The previous social worker before her brought in chocolate bars for us. When we told Margaret Gray this she aggressively said she wouldn't be bringing us chocolate and instead would bring us an apple.

Review of care

25. I was never told what was happening, or how long I was going to be at Park Lodge. I was still going to children's hearings. The hearings were always very one sided and I

don't think there was anything that I could have said that would have changed anything. I am sure there were some hearings held and I wasn't even present. My mum and my social worker were usually with me when I went to the hearings. I am not sure how frequent the hearings were but they seemed to be quite regular.

Sibling Contact if in care

26. My brother [REDACTED] was at Park Lodge when I was there. I can't remember if he was already there when I was put there. We got on as brothers do and we probably fought quite a lot.

Running away

27. I hated Park Lodge and I didn't want to stay there. I didn't like being bullied, sat on, stamped and restrained. I ran away a lot. I ran away when I was missing my mum. I was also running away from the abuse. I used to go home and as soon as I got there I was returned straight away. The police usually caught me and they took me to the police station to wait for the standby team who were social workers and they took me back. The staff at Park Lodge were never happy with me when I was returned. I probably ran away about twice every week. It started off more often but as I settled it got less.
28. There was one time I ran away and I was away for about a week. There was an article in the newspaper for people to look out for me as they were concerned for me. Part of that week I stayed at a campsite with people who were protesting about building a motorway near Pollok house. Some of the time I spent in the cellar in the block of flats where my mum lived. I changed the locks so that it locked from the inside. I often saw the police going up to my mums to look for me. I don't think it was very healthy in there.
29. One time, when I had run away, I slept outdoors and it was January or February. I ended up with pneumonia and I thought I was going to die. I ended up in hospital but can't remember who took me or how I got there.

30. There was one time when everyone else, apart from me, absconded. The staff weren't there but I don't know where they were. The other kids broke into a room where the safe was kept and took all the money from the safe, walked out and went to Ayr. Tam the cook was still there and he told me that he would cook something for me, anything that I wanted. I can't remember what I had to eat. Over the next couple of days the kids came back in dribs and drabs and filtered back in. I think all that happened to them was the staff gave them a row. I have no idea how old I was when this happened.

Abuse at Park Lodge

31. If you needed staff for any reason they were never there for us. You had to find them and they were always in the locked office. You had to knock on the door and the conversation you had with them was through the door. There was no supervision. All the staff were bullies. They always told us that if they asked us to do something we would do it. GLK [REDACTED] was the only one in there who was remotely friendly but not all the time. If ever I wanted anything I would always wait and ask her. She was a care worker but later on may have become a manager.
32. One time my brother [REDACTED] and I were in a member of staff's car. She was the manager at Park Lodge but I can't remember her name. GLK [REDACTED], another member of staff, was in the front passenger seat and we were in the back. I must have been doing what annoying children do and kept asking if we were there yet. All of a sudden she slammed on car brakes and stopped. We were on a dual carriageway. She yelled at me "Get fucking out the car". She shouted it several times at me. GLK [REDACTED] tried to tell her that she couldn't do that but she was told that she could get out too if she wanted. [REDACTED] and I had to get out the car and we walked all the way back to Newlands. It was quite a distance. I may have been twelve or thirteen when this happened. I know now that this was Hillington Industrial Estate

33. When we went to Great Yarmouth on holiday we stayed in a caravan. One time I was in the caravan with a member of staff from Park lodge and I think her name may have been GLL. She was getting changed I think she may have been wearing a bra on her top half or her boobs were out. She may have told me to turn my head away or to not look. All of a sudden there were people looking in through the window and they started cheering presumably at her state of undress. I turned round and got into trouble for looking at her. She skelped me across the back of the head.
34. Under the stairs in Park Lodge was a cupboard. It was a cubby hole used by the cleaners to store stuff. I used to get pushed in there and the door was locked. This happened to me several times. Sometimes I wandered in there or I was tricked to go in and someone would shut and lock the door so I don't know who it was. Other times I would just get pushed and locked in. I am not sure who did this to me, whether it was staff or other children. I think I was in there twenty minutes some times. They used to say there were Ouija boards in there so it was scary and the hair would stand up on the back of my neck.
35. One Christmas or birthday I was given a gift of an electronic personal organiser. I got it wet so I thought it would be a good idea to take it apart but when I opened it all the buttons fell out and went all over the place. When the staff saw it they called me a "fucking worthless useless bastard" then a "fucking waste of space". This really crushed me. I can't remember which staff said this.
36. There was one time in the kitchen when one of the other boys threw a lump of ice and it hit me. It nearly dislocated my shoulder. Another time my brother threw a butter knife and it hit me in the chest. I still have a scar there. These are just examples of how poor the control and supervision was at Park lodge. There was never an adult there to stop things like that happening.
37. They restrained you at Park Lodge even if you hadn't done anything. I regularly got restrained. If you disagreed with a staff member, didn't make your bed or weren't getting ready fast enough they did it. Almost all of the staff did this, certainly most of the guys did it and in particular I remember GLN doing it. He was a big guy and even

GLK did it too. They put me to the floor and held me there to break my temper but it wasn't in a reasonable way. I was pinned to the floor and they would sit on top of me. They always twisted my fingers or pushed my arms up my back. I have a lump on the palm of my hand which I have had since Park Lodge and I think it is from being restrained. Everybody in Park Lodge got restrained. I saw it happening.

38. When I was restrained my face was red and I was often in tears and just felt completely broken. They broke my spirit. There were usually three people lying on me and it only ended when I stopped struggling and calmed down. It felt like it happened nearly every day. Even when I was returned by the social workers after I had run away they would restrain me. There was one member of staff called Alistair who restrained me inappropriately. He had me pinned to the floor and would be stroking my head. I am not sure if he thought this would calm me down but it made me even more angry.
39. There was bullying between the children. Staff were never there to stop things happening. The whole time I was at Park lodge was terrifying for me. The place was daunting and it was scary. I don't remember ever feeling wanted or supported at any time. I think the staff probably didn't want me to be there as much as I didn't. I hated it.
40. One time I was accused of killing the next door neighbour's cat by putting it in the tumble dryer. I didn't do anything to the cat. The staff and everyone else in the home blamed me but I didn't know anything about it and don't even remember seeing a cat. That stuck with me for a long time.
41. The incidents of abuse I have described are just the tip of the iceberg of the examples of the way that Park Lodge was run. It really broke my spirit and my soul. There was never anything positive that came from the staff, nothing that would be considered to be normal human interaction. There was no proper structure or discipline and the staff didn't control any situation when it developed. All they knew was to restrain people.

42. One time I was at Shawlands arcade when the police spoke to me. For some reason he had a D' Lock for a bicycle and the policeman rammed it into my side. I was winded. Another time when I was there a policeman threw a police baton at me and it hit me on the leg. Another time when I was on the run an older policeman caught me. He slapped me across the face with black leather gloves. I think he was trying to teach me a lesson.

Reporting of abuse at Park Lodge

43. When the police caught me when I had run away they never asked me why I was running away. They didn't care. I never told anyone else.

Leaving Park Lodge

44. I don't remember any lead up to me leaving Park Lodge or any transition between Park Lodge and St Philip's school or Johnston Resource centre. No one sat down with me and explained what was happening. I think I was just taken straight from Park Lodge to Johnston Resource centre. My feelings now are that Park Lodge couldn't cope with me any longer because I was disruptive. [REDACTED] didn't come with me. He went to Ballikinrain. I am not sure why we were separated and no one ever told me why.

Johnston Resource centre

45. I am not sure how or why I ended up at Johnston Resource centre. I would have been about fourteen when I went there. There were bars on the windows and the windows only opened a small distance. There were locked doors then more locked doors then even more locked doors. It was very secure and there was no escape. I am not sure how long I was there for. It could have been two or three weeks or two

or three months. There is only one member of staff that I remember and he was a big guy. I can't remember his name.

Routine at Johnston Resource centre

46. I don't have any memories about the daily routine at the resource centre and I can't describe anything about it or the people there. I have vague memories of going up the driveway to the building and it was positioned between two motorways. The building was like a big bungalow but not a mansion. It was like a typical social work building.

Abuse at Johnston Resource centre

47. I got battered in there by a senior member of staff. I can't remember his name but he was a big guy. He had a Neo-Geo which was a computer game. I asked him for a shot. He said something like "Who the fuck do you think you are" and the other people in the unit went on about me demanding the computer. They leathered me. I was getting hit all over my head and body. I can't remember who all the staff were that were doing this. I remember seeing a ghetto blaster later and I was so tempted to smash it up because I was so angry, but I didn't.
48. After that incident I realised that I needed to keep my head down but I got picked on again and again. There were a lot of people who had been there a long time so their roots were well established and they didn't like outsiders coming in and messing things up for them. This was both the staff and the children.
49. I got hidings in there when I was attacked by other children on a couple of occasions and I also remember getting restrained by the staff. The big guy who owned the Neo Geo definitely retrained me.

Reporting of abuse at Johnston Resource centre

50. I never told anyone about my time at Johnston Resource centre.

Leaving Johnston Resource centre

51. I have no real memories of why or how I was taken from the resource centre to St Philip's school in Airdrie.

St Philip's school, Plains, Airdrie

52. I was about fourteen when I went to St Philip's school. The main house was a beautiful big stone building with a greenhouse at the rear. There was a lawn at the front. There were bungalows in the grounds which had been the staff quarters. When I was there two were being used to store bikes and the other sports equipment. There was a big gymnasium up at the back of the building with a big indoor football pitch. Beechwood house was a sandstone building which contained the offices. There may have been some bedrooms upstairs. At the back was a garage for a car and next door was a storeroom.
53. Valerie Gunn ran the cookery, Tam Colletta ran the woodwork class, Frank Colletta a computer class and there was an art class. These were in a building between Lochisla and the main house. Beside them were the kitchens and the assembly hall and the outdoor football pitch. The head teacher, but not from the start, was a Paddy Hanrahan. He came towards the end of my time. He was a big African guy. There was a manager of each of the three units. **HWJ** was one of the unit managers. Pat McMillan was the manager of the education building. Other members of staff I remember were Bob Haley, Maggie and **HKH**. Bob Haley was my key worker. There was a member of night staff and he was called **GLM**. There was a big greenhouse and there was a gardener. I spent a lot of time helping him. His name was Mr Gardiner.

54. It was all boys at St Philip's. The age range was from ten right up to eighteen. There were roughly fifteen to twenty boys in each unit. There were three units, Lochisla, Arasaig and Morag which I found out later are places on the west coast of Scotland. Lochisla was for the older children, Morag was for the middle aged children and Arasaig was the youngest unit. I was in the Morag unit first then progressed to Lochisla unit as I got older. There was a TV room in each unit and all the bedrooms were upstairs. The smoking room was downstairs and there was a staff office. The rest was almost open plan.

Routine at St Philip's

Mornings and bedtime

55. I don't remember arriving at St Philip's or what happened on my first day. For some reason I don't really remember much about the morning and bedtime routine either. There are other aspects about my time there that is quite vague.

Clothing/uniform

56. We got our clothes from the clothes store which was behind Beechwood house. They had waxed jackets and Timberland jumpers. I ended up with five jumpers. I loved this store and it was my favourite thing through the whole of the care system.

Leisure time

57. After being there for a while, maybe around a year, I was given lots of different responsibilities. I had helped the gardener a lot and they must have seen how well I was looking after the plants and the equipment. Then I was given the job of sweeping up all the wood shavings and sawdust after I had finished churning out baseball bats in the wood shop. The staff often gave me keys to lock up some of the rooms at the end of the day. I was the first person to start up the tuck shop. The tuck shop lasted a while but people started to break into it and stole lots of stuff. Every

day I would go over to the kitchens and bring the trolley back with the food for the unit.

58. I did lots of hill walking, abseiling and skiing. I loved all the outdoor pursuits. There was a smoking room next to the television room which looking back I think was so wrong.
59. If anybody ran away the staff would always come to me and tell me to find the person and bring them back. I organised discos in St Philip's and one time I convinced staff to let me write to the Good Shepherd to allow girls to come to one of the discos. The Good Shepherd agreed and allowed a minibus full of girls to come and it went fine for the first six discos until the boys and girls disappeared into the fields at the end of the night. They stopped after that.
60. One of the staff was called HKF and he was ex-army. He used to bring in a car boot load of army gear. We put on this army gear and we would get split up into two teams. We would then go into the fields at the back of St Philip's where we hid and then had to find all the members of the other team. We did this quite often.

Trips and holidays

61. Staff took each unit walking nearly every day. Whenever there was an organised walk like this I was asked to go too. I was treated more like a staff member. This also helped me stay out of trouble. I also went on skiing trips to Aviemore. We were taken camping onto some Lord's estate in the highlands. It was beside a loch, possibly Loch Long or Loch Ness. We were in big army tents.

Schooling/Leisure activities

62. I don't remember ever being in normal classes getting taught maths, English or history. There might have been cookery and computing. I didn't get any certificates when I left but I got lots of experience in different activities which I wouldn't have got in mainstream school. I learned to take people skiing along with other members of

staff. I took people hillwalking every week sometimes several times in a week. I also did cycling, abseiling, canoeing and other things like ice skating. We spent a lot of time in the Time Capsule Aquatics Centre in Motherwell. There were lots of extra-curricular activities.

63. As my time went on at St Philip's I was given more and more responsibility. As a result of setting up the tuck shop and things like that, it was recognised and this was my reward. Another way of looking at it was they may have done this to try and keep me out of trouble. For me St Philip's was an excellent educational establishment because of all the activities and this suited me.

Religious instruction

64. St Philip's had some connection to the Catholic church. I didn't know and didn't really care what the difference was between a Catholic and a Protestant. I had always believed that I was Protestant but at some point I was taken to a Catholic church. I was offered the bread and wine and I told the priest or bishop that I wasn't Catholic but if it made him happy I would take it. He patted me on the head and said well done before he gave it to me. I didn't have a clue what this all meant. This happened a couple of times.

Visitors

65. I started to get weekend leave when I was at St Philip's so my mum never visited me. I left on the Thursday night and got the train home. Because I was regularly doing this and returning when I was supposed to I was allowed out earlier as time went by. By the end I was going home on the Tuesday for the rest of the week. My mum was very ill by this stage through her alcohol abuse and she died on my seventeenth birthday. I don't recall any visits at St Philip's from any social workers.

Review of care

66. I don't remember going to a children's panel after I was sent to St Philip's. There was a boy in St Philip's called [REDACTED]. He was getting upset at one point. Staff told him to calm down as he was only going to be there for three weeks. He ended up being there for three years. I don't remember anyone sitting down with me and telling me how long I was going to be there for.

External Inspections

67. I don't recall any external inspectors coming in to check St Philip's. In fact I don't remember seeing anyone at any of the places I have been.

Sibling Contact

68. I didn't have any contact with my sisters when I was at St Philip's. They were all much older and had their own children by that time. Because [REDACTED] was in Ballikinrain I never had any contact with him. I was never given the opportunity to phone him.

Abuse at St Philip's

69. Some of the staff at St Philip's were good and some were nasty. In my time at St Philip's I just felt there was no support. GLM [REDACTED] was nightshift and he used to shout and swear at us to get to our beds. He would also hit us.
70. There was a lot of fighting in St Philip's. Sometimes it would start off being playful but often it turned violent. When it turned really violent windows were getting smashed and people were getting hurt by the furniture getting thrown about. This happened quite a lot. This wasn't just the children, the staff did this too.

71. Some of the staff were real bullies. I was heavily restrained by staff and they just did it to break my temper. They did it to others too. If they were restraining me by bending my fingers or pushing my arm up my back they didn't hold back and you knew you were being restrained. It was a karate move that they used to get you down to the ground. If you did something they didn't like or if you didn't do what you were told they would restrain you. There was usually a reason they would do it and if it was for something more serious they would react more seriously. Being restrained happened quite regularly to me and I saw it happening all the time to other children. There was rarely a day went by without someone getting restrained, whether it was in my unit or one of the other units.
72. There were regular, what could be called riots, in St Philip's. I remember sitting outside the unit one day when the base of a bed came flying through a window. Sometimes it was a chair that was thrown through the windows. This seemed to happen quite a lot.
73. There was a boy, [REDACTED] who died at St Philip's after buzzing a fire extinguisher through the sleeve of his jacket. I vaguely remember this happened when I was there but don't remember much else about it. There was another boy there called [REDACTED] who regularly buzzed the petrol from the grass strimmer.

Reporting of abuse at St Philip's

74. I never told anyone about St Philip's.

Leaving St Philip's

75. I got into bother when I was at St Philip's and there was a court order granted which put me on a bail order which said I had to stay there an extra year. This meant I couldn't leave in 1995 when I was sixteen.

76. Towards the end of my time at St Philip's I became involved with an aftercare group in [REDACTED] called [REDACTED]. This was in 1996 when I was seventeen. This group subsequently moved premises to [REDACTED].
77. Nobody at St Philip's tried to teach me how to cook, budget with money or in any way look after myself.

Life after being in care

78. When I left care I felt that I wasn't prepared for life. As a result I became involved in a number of support groups for children leaving care. I participated in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which I became involved with when I was still at St Philip's was a group set up to support people transitioning from care into life outside the care system. I was also [REDACTED] for a number of related magazines. I was also involved in a number of working groups and steering groups all formed to try and support people who have been in the care system.
79. At [REDACTED], when I was between sixteen and eighteen there was a member of staff, possibly called [REDACTED] and some of his comments were quite inappropriate. He was quite seedy and vulgar and his comments were often homophobic. I felt quite uncomfortable with his comments. There was another member of staff who did things that made my blood boil. Every Thursday night there was an art class run by an art teacher but this was quite positive. Through [REDACTED] I also did a computer class.
80. At some point, and I think it was through [REDACTED], I wrote to the [REDACTED] Access Centre and asked if I could become a volunteer. I worked with them for a while and was given some responsibilities signing in and out cameras and other equipment and checking for damage. This didn't last very long then I went for three

months to [REDACTED] Photography. I hoped to get permanent work at these places but it didn't work out.

81. I would still have been seventeen when I left care and I went to live with my mum. She died very soon after I got home. I went to stay with my older brother for a while but I didn't really get on with him. After that I lived in various homeless accommodations around Glasgow until I found my feet living in the James Shields project, where there were thirty rooms of drugs addicts. I was around 24 or 25 by this time. After there I am not actually that sure where I went.
82. I worked in a few clothes shops for a short while then I started up my own business as a removal firm. Because I was caught drink driving the police took my van off me and that was the end of my business. I have been in my current house since 1999.

Impact

83. I suffer from anxiety and depression. I couldn't write down a list of everything I was going to tell the Inquiry in this statement as it was becoming too much for me. Glasgow city chambers has a massive stained glass window and I have always wanted to fire marbles through it, because of all the pain and suffering that they put me through by putting me in care and the way that I was treated. In time they can sell that building but they can't change what they did to me in care.
84. My memories from growing up are sometimes quite vague. I am not sure if this is because of my addiction over the years to alcohol or if it is my own brain protecting me and blanking things out. I have never been that close to my sisters or my older brother. They are all older than me and because I didn't grow up with them they now have their own lives. It has only been recently in the last few weeks that I have been talking to them but I was drunk and basically I fell out with them in a big way. I am not close with any of my siblings. They weren't there for me when I was in care and now they treat me like I am a silly young boy.

85. I don't have any friends. I had some friends but they owe me money and are into drugs. I don't want friends like that. I have no doubt that my inability to make friends stems from my time in care. I haven't had anyone in my house in the last ten years. The last time I had two people in my house ten pounds went missing. I don't trust people and don't know who I can and can't trust.
86. I have virtually no educational qualifications because of my time in care. The education provided was poor. At St Philip's I spent a lot of my time in the woodwork department just churning out baseball bats. It was only when I got involved with [REDACTED] that I got a Scotvec qualification.
87. In Park Lodge, Alistair, one of the members of staff, listened to Scottish music all the time. When I hear any Scottish music now it takes me back to my time at Park Lodge and my horrific time there. I hate it and can't tolerate it. I have to switch the music off or move to where I can't hear it. I relive moments of my time in care every day. I thought about it yesterday, and it will be there again tomorrow and the day after.
88. I started drinking alcohol virtually since I left care when my mum died. I was drinking every night. For the last twenty five years I sit at home at night on my own and drink alcohol. I have been doing it so long I just can't stop. I started drinking to block out the pain and the bad memories from my childhood. It works for that night but it is always there the next day.
89. I found it difficult to keep any sort of job. I found there was no structure because I didn't know what a structure was. When I got money I couldn't budget properly because no one had ever taught me how to. The longest job I kept was my own removal business but drink caused me to lose that. The police impounded my van.
90. I have been in Barlinnie prison three times. Each time it was because of alcohol and the three sentences were for two months and were for assault or police assault. I have also been banned three times for drink driving.

Treatment/support

91. I have tried to stop drinking alcohol. I went to a group called 'We are with you' which is a support group for alcoholics. I didn't think the facilitator was very good and he kept saying the same thing over and over and it didn't make sense to me. From there I was sent to a place called Park, a group for people wanting to stop a drink or drug addiction. I wanted to give up alcohol but didn't feel like listening to everyone's stories or telling everyone my own life story. I didn't find this helpful for me.
92. I have also been to six or seven alcoholics anonymous meetings but I just feel like I get humiliated at these meetings. They asked for donations afterwards and I was told to just put a pound in. I did, then someone asked me in front of everyone else if I was skint. This made me not want to go anymore and I haven't been back.
93. About five years ago I managed to stop drinking for around a year and a half which was just before Covid lockdown. This didn't happen at a good time for me and made it really difficult because I was in the house all the time.
94. I went to a group called Constructs because I had bad relationships especially with authority. I think I was referred to them by the court. The whole point was to recognise that the person wearing the black police uniform was not the same person that arrested me years ago and that things had moved on. I had to learn that they were only doing their job. This was good for me because I had a very negative attitude about the police.

Reporting of Abuse

95. I have never reported anything that happened to me in care to anyone in authority. I didn't feel I could talk about my abuse and tell my life story to anyone.

Records

96. I haven't tried to get any of my records. I know that when I was at St Philip's they had a booklet which contained all the information about me. I am not sure if I want to see my records.

Lessons to be Learned

97. There is no support network in place for children in care. I think there should be someone, like a lifelong coach, who could keep children updated with their progress and what is happening in the future. Park lodge especially was not a good environment for me and I think my life would have been quite different had I not gone there. I am not sure that a massive imposing sandstone building was the right place for children to be.
98. The staff shouldn't have a good cop/bad cop attitude. All this does is it turns children against them. The attitude of a lot of the staff was poor and they obviously weren't doing it because they loved what they did.

Hopes for the Inquiry

99. In this modern 21st century society where technology has become so advanced and if there was an unlimited budget a brand new system could be built where you could monitor people at every step of their childhood whilst in care. This would mean a centralised computer system with a database which could be accessed by authorised individuals. This means children can be followed at every step and the staff could read the up to date notes on that child. This could include the number of times they have absconded. This would mean staff could communicate information quickly between each other and also a method that all the regulatory bodies can use to talk to each other.

100. Children in care could be given limited access to this database and could voice any concerns or anything that they didn't feel was right. This could hopefully be done anonymously if the child did not want to be named. That way the issue would be recorded and actioned accordingly, openly and not swept under the carpet.

Other information

101. The staff and the people at Park Lodge used to regularly walk about singing and chanting a song. I still remember the words to this song. They encouraged you to learn it and sing along. Sometimes I can't get it out of my head and it still haunts me.

*"They say in Park Lodge the staff are mighty fine,
They lock you up in cupboards and have a randy time.
Gee boy I wanna go home but the staff won't let me
Gee boy I wanna go home.
You ask for twenty regal and they give you ten Woodbine
You ask for a bottle of vodka and they give you turpentine".*

102. There was another song which was regularly chanted.

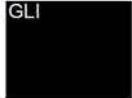
*My name is Johnny Ball, Johnny Ball
My name is Johnny Ball, Johnny Ball
My name is Johnny Ball, and I've only got one... finger.*

*I went to rob a bank, rob a bank
I went to rob a bank, rob a bank
I went to rob a bank and I stopped for a ...pizza*

*The polis came a quick came a quick
The polis came a quick came a quick
The polis came a quick and I showed them my ...stamp collection*

103. There are more verses but that is just an example of what went on in there. The staff and all the children were encouraged to learn it and sing along. This shows the mentality and lack of mentoring and leadership shown by the staff at Park Lodge. Both these songs are inappropriate.

104. 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.

GLI


Signed.....

Dated..... 15 OCT 2021