

Friday, 15 May 2026

1

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning, and welcome back to Phase 10 of  
4 our case study hearings in which we're considering local  
5 authority provision for children of residential care,  
6 either in their own institutions or in places run by  
7 others, including voluntary organisations.

8 Now, we finished yesterday on Park House (sic) but  
9 today we start on Eversley and I'm sure Ms Forbes will  
10 explain a little bit more about that, and in the course  
11 of today we'll be hearing from two witnesses in person,  
12 possibly some read-ins as well if we've got time.

13 Ms Forbes.

14 MS FORBES: Good morning, my Lady, and yes, today we'll hear  
15 live evidence in relation to Eversley and then some  
16 read-ins about Eversley and Downcraig.

17 My Lady, the first witness this morning is  
18 an applicant who is anonymous and is known as 'Sandra'.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20 'Sandra' (sworn)

21 LADY SMITH: 'Sandra', thank you for coming along this  
22 morning to help us with your evidence. As you know,  
23 I already have your written evidence. It's in that red  
24 folder in front of you. It's been really helpful to be  
25 able to see that in advance, but we'd like to explore

1           some aspects of it with you in person today. And it  
2           will make a great difference to my understanding to have  
3           heard from you yourself about the matters that we'd like  
4           to discuss.

5           If at any time you want a break, please tell me.  
6           I do understand that it's a big ask coming to give  
7           evidence in a public place, not just any old evidence,  
8           but about your own life and particularly about things  
9           that happened when you were a child, that weren't  
10          exactly easy to bear at the time and I'm sure aren't  
11          easy to go back to. So bear in mind I know that and  
12          I do understand it. If a break or anything else would  
13          help you, please just say.

14        A. Yeah.

15        LADY SMITH: The plan is that we'll take your evidence  
16          between now and 11.30, if we've not finished it by then,  
17          and then I always take a morning break at that point, if  
18          you want to know exactly how things pan out. And you'll  
19          know that I'm going to invite Ms Forbes to ask  
20          questions. I may ask the odd thing of you. If you  
21          don't understand what we're asking you, just say. It's  
22          our fault, not yours, if you don't understand; we're not  
23          explaining things properly. All right?

24        A. Yeah.

25        LADY SMITH: I'll hand over to Ms Forbes and she'll take it

1 from there.

2 Ms Forbes.

3 Questions from Ms Forbes

4 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

5 Good morning, 'Sandra'. I think your statement is  
6 in front of you in the red folder and for our purposes  
7 we give that a reference number. So for the transcript  
8 I'm just going to read that out but it's nothing for you  
9 to worry about. It's WIT-1-000001750.

10 Now, 'Sandra', if I can just ask you to turn to the  
11 very last page of the statement, which is page 37. And  
12 it will come up on the screen as well. There's  
13 a paragraph there, paragraph 206, in which there's  
14 a declaration. It says:

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

19 You've signed that and it's dated 25 February 2026,  
20 is that right?

21 A. That's correct, yeah.

22 Q. Yes, and is that still the position?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you.

25 We'll just go back to the beginning of your

1 statement. So you can turn back to the first page if  
2 you want in the folder. You don't have to use the  
3 folder though, 'Sandra', it's completely up to you,  
4 because your statement will come up on the screen. Just  
5 whatever helps.

6 So, 'Sandra', I'm just going to look at your  
7 statement now and I think the first thing you really  
8 tell us is you were born in 1961, is that right?

9 A. That's correct.

10 Q. You go on then to talk about your life before you went  
11 into care and that's from paragraph 2. And I think you  
12 tell us that initially you lived with your mum and you  
13 knew that your -- I think you knew later that your dad  
14 was a foundry labourer, but he's not someone you  
15 remember at all, is that right?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And then you tell us as well that you found out later  
18 that you had an older brother, about two years older  
19 than you, and he was given away before you were born,  
20 and you explain your mum was 16 when she had you, so she  
21 was two years younger or so --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- when she had your older brother.

24 And then you go on to tell us that your mother met  
25 your dad, this is at paragraph 4, and, as soon as she

1           turned 16, she married him against your grandad's  
2           wishes?

3   A.   That's correct.

4   Q.   Because she was very young.  But I think you tell us  
5           that they had a difficult relationship and he would  
6           mostly be away.  Is this something you found out later  
7           on about their relationship?

8   A.   Yes.

9   Q.   And he would come back at the weekend after he'd been  
10          paid on a Friday?

11  A.   That's correct.

12  Q.   You tell us then, 'Sandra', at paragraph 5 that your mum  
13          altogether had nine children in total?

14  A.   Yeah.

15  Q.   So there was a sister after you?

16  A.   Uh-huh.

17  Q.   And she was two years younger, and then there's another  
18          sister who's three years younger than you?

19  A.   Uh-huh.

20  Q.   And then there's a brother who's six or seven years  
21          younger than you?

22  A.   Yeah.

23  Q.   You give us their names there but I won't read them out.  
24          But you tell us that they had a different father from  
25          you, is that right?

1 A. Say that again, sorry?

2 Q. They had a different father from you?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And then you tell us that after your brother came  
5 a sister, who's ten years younger than you, then  
6 a brother who's 12 years younger, and then another  
7 sister and then a brother?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. But I think you explain that their father was someone  
10 else?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And you didn't really know them because you'd been put  
13 into care with your younger sisters and your brother --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- before they were even born?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And, 'Sandra', I think you explain you don't really  
18 remember a lot from the time before you went into care  
19 because you went into care quite young; is that right?

20 A. Yeah, that's true.

21 Q. But you go on later in your statement to tell us that  
22 you have recovered some records and you say at  
23 paragraph 7 that you've read some records, some things  
24 in your records, but you don't think some of what is  
25 written in there is true?

1 A. That's right.

2 Q. But you have certainly seen some things. I think you  
3 explain that you lived in Possilpark at one time and you  
4 don't remember much about the house there, but it was  
5 a ground-floor flat?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And I think you say that you'd read in your records that  
8 seemingly the house was uninhabitable and the social  
9 work were involved with you --

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. -- and your siblings. But you say you don't remember  
12 social work --

13 A. I don't remember that, no.

14 Q. You think your mum didn't work?

15 A. She didn't.

16 Q. And really was a drinker, is that right?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And you explain that she was out all the time and  
19 instead of going to school, you would just go to the  
20 park, is that right?

21 You tell us though you had a good relationship with  
22 your grandad and that you would walk up to see him at  
23 the top of Possil where he lived, and then you go on to  
24 tell us about some other early recollections. And this  
25 is at paragraph 9, I think you tell us about an incident

1 with a man who was looking after you in your house --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. -- when your mother was out --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- with, I think, the father of the second lot of

6 siblings, is that right?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. But you say that you know that this man is somebody who

9 sexually abused you when he was looking after you?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You think you've blocked a lot out but that's something

12 that you know happened, is that right?

13 A. Oh, 100 per cent.

14 Q. And I think your mum came back. There was then an

15 intervention. You were injured and you had to be taken

16 to the hospital?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And you say that you've learned since then that they had

19 to operate on you, but you don't know the extent of your

20 injuries?

21 A. No.

22 Q. You think that because of the severity of what had

23 happened, and because social workers were already

24 involved with the family, that you ended up being taken

25 into care, and I think you say your recollection is that

1 was 1967 when you were about 6?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Now, I think you know from records that we have a record  
4 saying you went in first in [REDACTED] 1969, when you would  
5 still have been aged 7, but it's within a few years, so  
6 we don't normally worry too much about the dates. It's  
7 very difficult to remember when you're so young. But  
8 certainly you're taken into care and I think it's said  
9 in your records as well that there were issues about the  
10 state of you, the fact that you seemed to be unwashed,  
11 were itching your hair, things like that. So it seemed  
12 to be a concern for your wellbeing, as well as the fact,  
13 I think, that you weren't going to school.

14 So 'Sandra', we know then from your records that you  
15 were admitted to Eversley and, again, around  
16 [REDACTED] 1969, but initially that was just on your own  
17 and then your two sisters followed after?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And at some time also your brother?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So all of you -- so it would be four of you, is that  
22 right?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. In Eversley --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- by the time they all came.

2 'Sandra', you then go on to tell us about Eversley  
3 Children's Home from paragraph 13, so I'm just going to  
4 go and ask you some questions about that now; is that  
5 okay?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. You seem to have a good recollection of the house and  
8 the layout and you give us quite a detailed description  
9 in the paragraphs from paragraph 13 onwards.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. I think you say it was essentially a beautiful mansion  
12 house, is that right?

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. It had a massive back garden and you say in that, there  
15 were separate buildings that were the laundry room and  
16 the recreational room, is that right?

17 A. Mm-hmm.

18 Q. And above this recreational room was where SNR-RLD  
19 had a flat?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. That's RLD of the home. And you tell us that she  
22 was the only member of staff who lived on the  
23 premises --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- is that right?

1           But again, you go on to describe this being a huge  
2           building and you talk about a big staircase, which led  
3           upstairs, with a big frosted glass patterned window on  
4           the landing, is that right?

5   A.   Yeah.

6   Q.   And you tell us about there being a dining room on the  
7           left as you went in the front door, on the right there  
8           was a nursery where babies were kept, and I think you go  
9           on later to tell us about the age range, but essentially  
10          it's from babies all the way up to about, is it about 15  
11          or so; is that what you recall?

12   A.   Yeah.

13   Q.   You tell us, 'Sandra', about the various layout and  
14          I'm not going to go through all of that, because we have  
15          it there and we can read it in detail for ourselves.  
16          But you do have a very clear recollection, it seems, of  
17          the layout, is that right?

18   A.   Yeah.

19   Q.   And essentially you tell us there were boys' and girls'  
20          areas of this house --

21   A.   Yeah.

22   Q.   -- in the home.  So there would be boys' toilets and  
23          girls' toilets, as well as boys' rooms and girls' rooms?

24   A.   Yeah.

25   Q.   And you tell us that upstairs, this is at paragraph 17,

1       there was a turn on the landing and another short flight  
2       of stairs up, and at the top there were two doors, one  
3       on the left and one on the right. The one on the left  
4       led into -- onto a hallway and there were two bedrooms,  
5       with a toilet in the middle, and you explain that one of  
6       those bedrooms had two beds in it and the other had four  
7       beds in it, and it would depend how old you were as to  
8       which bedroom you were in?

9     A. Yeah.

10    Q. And as you got older, you would move from a bedroom with  
11       more beds to another bedroom with less beds; is that  
12       right? And I think you explain the bedroom with the two  
13       beds in it was for the oldest girls?

14    A. Yeah.

15    Q. You tell us then that the door on the right led onto  
16       another hall and off of that was another bathroom and  
17       four more bedrooms, and you say that the hall turned to  
18       the left and then if you walked on, you would come to  
19       **RLD**'s office straight ahead?

20    A. Yes.

21    Q. You say some of those bedrooms were also for girls, but  
22       to the right of the bathroom was one of the boys'  
23       bedrooms?

24    A. Yeah.

25    Q. And you think there were about 30 children at Eversley

1 of all ages, as we've said, the oldest being about 15 or  
2 so. And certainly you were in there until 1977, is that  
3 right?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So by the time you left you were, I think, 15/16?

6 A. 15.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 'Sandra', you go on to say that Eversley was run by  
9 Glasgow Corporation, as it was called at the time, and  
10 you tell us that RLD [REDACTED], that's  
11 what you recall, is that right? RLD [REDACTED]?

12 A. That's right, yeah.

13 Q. And you say SNR [REDACTED] --

14 A. No, RLD [REDACTED], it was RLD [REDACTED].

15 Q. RLD [REDACTED]?

16 A. RLD [REDACTED].

17 Q. Okay, right. And you tell us SNR [REDACTED] was  
18 a nun called Sister Christine Sherard?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. She also had an office and that was down the bottom of  
21 the hall, past the kitchen. And then SNR [REDACTED]  
22 SNR [REDACTED] her was someone called RME [REDACTED]?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And you say Sister Christine wasn't bad, but  
25 RME [REDACTED] was awful?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. You tell us, 'Sandra', that as far as you can remember,  
3 at first, all the staff were female, and males only came  
4 later?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And when you arrived, at first, all the children did  
7 everything together, ate together, had free time  
8 together?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. But then after a couple of years of you being there,  
11 there was a change and you were split into groups or  
12 what they called houses?

13 A. That's right.

14 Q. And there were four houses and each house then had  
15 a housemother and a housefather?

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. And each then had their own room and you weren't allowed  
18 to go into other people's houses without permission?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. And I think you go on to tell us a little bit later that  
21 once you were in houses, that's where you ate together  
22 as well?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. So there wasn't the communal dining all together with  
25 everyone like you had before, is that right?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. 'Sandra', you tell us that your housefather was Charles  
3 Feely, and you say he was fantastic?

4 A. He was.

5 Q. So he was someone you seemed to like. I think you  
6 describe him as 'a hippie type with long hair'?

7 A. Mm-hmm.

8 Q. You had a housemother called Cathy Hastie whose husband  
9 was a driver for the social work, and you tell us that  
10 as well as these housemothers and fathers, there were  
11 day staff and night staff, and there was also night  
12 staff in a room where your housefather or housemother  
13 could stay overnight.

14 You tell us then, 'Sandra', at paragraph 23, that  
15 amongst the other staff you remember someone called  
16 Steven MacDonald?

17 A. Mm-hmm.

18 Q. And he was a housefather in another house, is that  
19 right?

20 A. Yeah, yeah.

21 Q. You tell us he was quite distinctive and you give us  
22 a description of him in your statement. You say he had  
23 hair down to his jaw line, so is that quite long hair,  
24 is that right? And a big beard?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. You say you also remember someone called RLO  
2 and he used to wear big glasses and baggy corduroy  
3 trousers?  
4 A. Yeah.  
5 Q. You tell us that he started on the staff after Steven,  
6 and became the housefather in your house. So that was  
7 RLO who became your housefather, is that  
8 right?  
9 And you say you don't think that they were  
10 particularly friendly, I think this is Steven and RLO  
11 because RLO was always a bit odd and didn't seem to  
12 mingle in with the rest of the staff, yeah? Is that  
13 your recollection?  
14 A. Yeah.  
15 Q. You tell us about someone called RLI who was  
16 one of the night staff, and you say she was 'evil', is  
17 the way you've described her. And you also remember  
18 John Marshall and you say he was a housefather for one  
19 of the other houses and you tell us he then married  
20 RLD; is that right?  
21 Did you know that at the time, 'Sandra'?  
22 A. No.  
23 Q. No. Is that something you found out later on?  
24 A. Later, yeah.  
25 Q. So you weren't aware of that --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- whilst you were living in the home?

3 A. No, it was after.

4 Q. Okay. But certainly he was somebody who was there at  
5 the same time you were there, at one point?

6 A. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. About '73 -- maybe '74?

7 Q. Okay. And you talk about him a little bit more,  
8 'Sandra'. You say 'he was a nasty piece of work'?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you mentioned someone called RLL [REDACTED] as well  
11 and you say 'she was nasty as well'?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. What was her role?

14 A. She was just a member of staff.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. She wasn't a housemother. She was like -- you had your  
17 housemother and your housefather and then you had other  
18 members of staff, you know.

19 Q. But she was involved in the care of --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. She wasn't a domestic member of staff?

22 A. No.

23 Q. She was involved in care, okay. Because you tell us  
24 there were also domestic staff and you remember one in  
25 particular, who was an old lady who used to serve the

1 dinner, and you remember the cook who you say was  
2 marvellous and she used to sneak you bits and pieces as  
3 you went into the kitchen?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. You tell us that RLD was always referred to as  
6 'RLD'?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So you would never use her name, is that right?

9 A. No.

10 Q. And Sister Christine was predominantly referred to as  
11 'Sister'?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. But the other members of staff, you would just use their  
14 first names?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And they also called you by your first name?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay.

19 'Sandra', you kind of tell us a little bit about  
20 what you recall of your first day and arriving at  
21 Eversley, and you say you remember being taken in the  
22 car from your mum's house by a female social worker and  
23 you say there was somebody else with the social worker,  
24 you think, but you said you had no idea where you were  
25 going; is that right? So no one explained to you where

1           you were going?

2    A.  No.

3    LADY SMITH:  Do you think you even knew that you were going  
4           away to stay somewhere for a long time?

5    A.  No, I just didn't know -- I don't know.  I don't know  
6           what I thought.  If I can try to go back there, I think  
7           I just thought they were just coming to take me, I don't  
8           know, take me out for the day or take me -- I never went  
9           back to my mum after that.

10   LADY SMITH:  Yes.

11   MS FORBES:  And I think you can particularly remember  
12           a yellow -- wearing a yellow cardigan that day.

13   A.  Yeah.

14   Q.  And that's something that's stuck with you.

15   A.  Yeah.

16   Q.  And I think you go on to tell us how you felt when you  
17           arrived.  I think you say you were so scared, because  
18           there were so many children and the building itself was  
19           massive.  Did it seem quite intimidating when you first  
20           got there?

21   A.  Yeah, I'd never been amongst all that amount of people.

22   Q.  I think you say though, you think you were maybe  
23           reasonably happy to be there at first?

24   A.  Mm-hmm.

25   Q.  Because you thought it was probably better there

1           initially than the life that you'd been living at home.

2   LADY SMITH: As you sit here now, what sticks in your mind

3           as feeling better than home was?

4   A. At home it was -- there was always fighting and -- my

5           little sister was born then. And because -- there

6           was -- because of what had happened, erm, I don't know,

7           I suppose in a way, if I look at it from a logical, from

8           where I am now, I think maybe I probably felt safer, to

9           be fair.

10   LADY SMITH: Yes. Less chaotic?

11   A. Oh, it was chaotic, but it was chaotic at home as well

12           because there was two babies.

13   LADY SMITH: Yes.

14   A. You know, my two sisters were -- [REDACTED] wasn't born at

15           that time. My two sisters were born, you know? One was

16           2 and one was 4, I think it was.

17   LADY SMITH: So quite a lot of baby care, young childcare

18           responsibilities in the house?

19   A. Yeah, pretty much. Mum was not very -- she was always

20           drinking.

21   LADY SMITH: Yes.

22   A. You know, so, yeah.

23   LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24   MS FORBES: And 'Sandra', I think you say you don't remember

25           much else about that first day, but you do remember

1 staff putting you in a bath.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And cleaning you, and you say that you remember you  
4 being full of lice, so having head lice?

5 A. I don't remember being full of lice, but I remember  
6 being told I was.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But I personally don't remember it, but I was told  
9 I was.

10 Q. 'Sandra', you go on to tell us then about the regimen  
11 and the way life was at Eversley after you arrived.  
12 I think essentially, the way you've described it is it  
13 was very regimented, is that fair? You talk about  
14 getting up at the same time in the morning, it would be  
15 7 o'clock. You'd have to brush your teeth, wash your  
16 faces, get dressed and go downstairs in single file to  
17 get breakfast. So it would be all together that you  
18 would go down, is that right?

19 A. Pretty much, yeah.

20 Q. And the staff --

21 A. You'd gather in the hallway and then all go down  
22 together.

23 Q. And the staff would be there watching to make sure that  
24 you did all these things?

25 A. Yeah. There was always someone there.

1 Q. You say before you went to school, you'd all come out of  
2 your rooms one room at a time and you'd have to stand in  
3 a line?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And staff would give you a spoonful of something and  
6 you've described that as 'horrible brown stuff'?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Did you know what that was?

9 A. No. I suppose nowadays you give children vitamins,  
10 don't you, but it was brown stuff -- oh, I don't know  
11 what it was. But, yeah, we used to be given that every  
12 morning.

13 Q. I think you say it was like Marmite?

14 A. That was it.

15 Q. So was that the consistency?

16 A. Similar, yeah.

17 Q. And you say seemingly it was to make sure our bones were  
18 growing right?

19 A. Yeah, so we were told.

20 Q. So that's something you were told, was it?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And normally it would be RLL who gave it to  
23 you?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And you say you refused to take it one day, and what

1           happened when you refused?

2   A.   She kept trying to -- just keep -- kept trying to put it  
3           in my mouth, and eventually I bit her, on her -- yeah,  
4           to stop her from putting it in my mouth.

5   Q.   So she was trying to force you to take it when you  
6           didn't want to?

7   A.   Yeah.

8   Q.   'Sandra', you then say that you'd come in from school at  
9           about 4.00 pm and you would go into the cloakroom at the  
10          back and have to take your shoes off and put them in  
11          your own little box and hang your coats on your specific  
12          hooks so that --

13   A.   We had our name on them.

14   Q.   And then you would get changed and be split into your  
15          houses and then you would all have to go into your  
16          different rooms and have dinner with your house?

17   A.   Yeah.

18   Q.   I think you tell us, though, 'Sandra', that once you  
19          were split into the houses, although you did everything  
20          in your houses, you still had your bedrooms with girls  
21          from different houses. So the bedrooms weren't split  
22          into houses?

23   A.   No.

24   Q.   It was age, from what you've told us?

25   A.   Yeah.

1 Q. And you say that each room would be like a separate  
2 house within the main house. There would be a living  
3 room with a sofa, a TV, a table for eating at, and  
4 a cupboard behind it where all the cutlery was kept?  
5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And then off that room there was another room that you  
7 called the scullery or the sluice, where there was  
8 a sink that you did all the washing up of the dishes.  
9 So it seems like everything became decentralised  
10 into these little houses, and you all ate together and  
11 washed up in that --  
12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. In that specific place.  
14 You say you also did schoolwork in that room, you  
15 would be watching TV in the room, and the dining room  
16 then wasn't used anymore?  
17 A. No, that became another house.

18 Q. And you tell us then at paragraph 35 that when you were  
19 younger, you'd go to bed between 6.00 and 7.00, but it  
20 was more lenient as you got older?  
21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. You'd have to be in your room but you didn't have to  
23 actually be in your bed until the night staff came on  
24 duty at 10.00?  
25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. So there was a degree, then, of leniency as you got  
2 older?

3 A. Yeah, as you got older.

4 Q. You tell us a bit about the food, 'Sandra', and you say  
5 that you were given certain food on specific nights, so  
6 for example, maybe fish on a Friday or something like  
7 that?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. But you say it was normal food; scotch pie, beans, and  
10 then you say that the staff would be with you, they  
11 would generally be eating with you, and you don't really  
12 remember there being any trouble at mealtimes?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But you point out there wasn't a choice of what to eat?

15 A. No, it was whatever was cooked that day.

16 Q. So if you didn't like it, then you just didn't eat?

17 A. You just didn't eat, yeah.

18 Q. But you point out that the lady in the pantry would make  
19 sure that you always got something though?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. But the staff would say to eat or you'd starve?

22 A. Pretty much.

23 Q. But you say you didn't see that as being cruel, you just  
24 thought it was part of growing up, it was normal?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And you never saw anyone being force-fed --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- or anything like that. But sometimes, you tell us,

4 you weren't allowed to leave the table until you'd eaten

5 what you were given and you recall a particular occasion

6 when you were given liver and couldn't eat it?

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. But you were made to sit there until you finished it.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. So you had to finish all of it?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Did you know what would happen to you if you didn't do

13 that, if you didn't sit and finish it?

14 A. No, but then you've got the -- there's a part of you

15 that fears of what's going to happen. You might not

16 know what's going to happen, but there's the fear of

17 what will happen.

18 Q. You again talk about the regimented way of Eversley.

19 From paragraph 39 you're talking about washing and

20 bathing and you're saying that you had to be clean.

21 Each room had to use the bathroom at certain times?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you think bath time was on a Sunday night for your

24 room. Was that for your bedroom or for --

25 A. For our bedroom, yeah.

1 Q. And you say that there was a bathroom on the left at the  
2 top of the stairs that had one bath in it, and the other  
3 one on the right was the one that you mainly used?  
4 A. Yeah.  
5 Q. And again, there was only one bath in that as well. But  
6 you tell us that you had to keep the door open when  
7 you'd have a bath?  
8 A. Yeah. Yeah.  
9 Q. So there wasn't privacy, really?  
10 A. No.  
11 Q. And there would be a member of staff, a female member of  
12 staff, standing outside supervising. And there was also  
13 a limit on how long you could be in the bath, is that  
14 right?  
15 A. Yeah.  
16 Q. So you couldn't just stay in it as long as you wanted  
17 to?  
18 A. No.  
19 Q. I think you say it was just as long as it took for you  
20 to get washed. And would they be telling you that you  
21 had to get out, the staff?  
22 A. Pretty much, yeah.  
23 Q. But I think you say you don't remember the staff on duty  
24 ever being male for that?  
25 A. No.

1 Q. You think that males would have probably supervised the  
2 boys. But you say that as you got older and you're  
3 starting to -- your body is starting to change and  
4 develop, that you wanted some privacy, so you would say  
5 something to the member of staff?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And I think you say you told them to 'f-off'?

8 A. Uh-huh, many times.

9 Q. But you'd get in trouble for that, for swearing?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Do you remember what the punishment would be if you did  
12 that?

13 A. For the bath?

14 Q. If you were swearing at them?

15 A. Well, in one instance, yeah, they put me in the bath and  
16 it was a freezing cold bath, and kept me in there and  
17 wouldn't let me get out of it.

18 Q. So that's a punishment you remember?

19 A. Yeah. Or you'd get your mouth -- soap.

20 Q. I think you tell us a bit later there's somebody in  
21 particular that would do that to you?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. We'll come to that in a little minute, but that's  
24 carbolic soap, is it, that you talk about?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. It would be put into your mouth?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. You go on, 'Sandra', to talk about clothes and you say

4 you didn't have your own clothes?

5 A. No.

6 Q. And there would be then certain clothes that you could

7 only wear at certain times?

8 A. To go to church.

9 Q. Yeah. And the clothes were kept in a locked cupboard in

10 the boys' bedroom?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So not in the girls' bedroom?

13 A. No.

14 Q. In the boys'. And at the end of the day you would put

15 your clothes in a laundry basket and after they were

16 washed, they'd go back in the cupboard?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. You wouldn't get a choice in what you wore, and whatever

19 came out of that cupboard was what you had to wear?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So it could be clothes that somebody else had worn?

22 A. Yeah, yeah.

23 Q. They weren't specifically allocated to you with your

24 name on it or anything like that?

25 A. No, your Sunday best had your name on it, like, for you

1 to go to church. You'd have whatever your Sunday best  
2 was yours. And your school uniform.

3 Q. Okay. But not the other clothes?

4 A. No, other than that, it was just -- yeah.

5 Q. And you say that even applied to shoes as well?

6 A. Yeah, yeah.

7 Q. But you explain that you used to have one leg a little  
8 bit shorter than the other and you had to have special  
9 shoes --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- made for you. I think you explain a little bit  
12 later, one was sort of built up inside the shoe?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So you did manage to get your own shoes but that is  
15 because you had a particular --

16 A. Yeah, because of my leg, yeah.

17 Q. You tell us that all the girls wore a white vest and  
18 navy blue knickers?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. But no bras?

21 A. No.

22 Q. If you needed new pants, a member of staff would go and  
23 get you what you needed?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. But again, were these allocated to you or were they just

1 in the clothes --

2 A. No, because in the hallway, where all the bedrooms were,  
3 and RLD's room is at the end, there was a big  
4 cupboard just here, in between two bedrooms -- no,  
5 bedroom, bedroom. And then it was here, big massive  
6 cupboard. And in there was all the vests, the pants,  
7 the socks. You stood and that's where -- yeah; yeah.

8 Q. And I think you say though you remember at one time you  
9 were all delighted because eventually you were given  
10 your own pants to wear?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So there came a point when you were actually given your  
13 own pants?

14 A. Yeah, and you had to keep them clean yourself, like wash  
15 'em and stuff.

16 Q. As you've said, the Sunday best clothes though were the  
17 ones that were allocated to you specifically, and you --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- particularly remember a navy blue velvet dress with  
20 a little frilly collar that was yours?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And that was something that I think you say you liked?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And then you explain that when you went to secondary  
25 school, you got your own clothes, as in uniform, because

1           you had to wear that to school?

2    A.   Yeah.

3    Q.   So that was something that you had that nobody else

4           wore, and I think you explain it was your own blazer,

5           your own shirts, your own tie and your own skirt?

6    A.   Yeah.

7    Q.   And I think you tell us, 'Sandra', that you were glad

8           you had your own clothes, even if it was just the school

9           uniform?

10   A.   Oh, yeah.

11   Q.   In relation to free time, 'Sandra', you tell us about

12           that from paragraph 47 and you say you could go outside

13           and play in the back garden. Inside there was TV, but

14           no games, books or magazines provided?

15   A.   No.

16   Q.   So there was nothing like that.

17            You don't remember any organised games from the

18           staff or anything either?

19   A.   I don't recollect, no.

20   Q.   But you tell us that you and a few of the other girls in

21           Eversley were in the Brownies --

22   A.   Yeah.

23   Q.   -- when you were younger, then the Girl Guides, and that

24           was something you enjoyed?

25   A.   Yeah.

1 LADY SMITH: Did you have to go far from Eversley for  
2 these --

3 A. Sorry?

4 LADY SMITH: Did you have to go far from Eversley for these  
5 activities?

6 A. Oh, no, no, no, it was only literally -- it was in the  
7 church hall, so it was literally -- I done the walk the  
8 other day so I can tell you exactly how long it takes.  
9 It was literally a five-minute walk down to the church.

10 LADY SMITH: So that would have been ideal for you then?

11 A. Yeah, yeah.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 A. It was next door to the school.

14 LADY SMITH: And did you get your Brownie uniform and Girl  
15 Guide uniform provided?

16 A. Yeah, yeah, and your blue Guides' uniform, and ... yeah,  
17 yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS FORBES: You explain, 'Sandra', that you used to love  
20 going rambling and that sort of thing.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you joined the rambling club at school?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. But it was a bit of a struggle because of the issue that  
25 you had with your leg?

1 A. Because -- yeah.

2 Q. And you tell us about a recollection you have of getting  
3 in trouble with your best friend at school at the  
4 rambling club when you got told off for deciding to skip  
5 off on one of these trips and open your tin of pineapple  
6 and eat it?

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. You say that as you got older, you were allowed out of  
9 the home and you would be able to go out with friends;  
10 was this friends from school?

11 A. Well, they were from the other school, erm, but we were  
12 all friends, like together, 'cos we'd meet up in the  
13 park and that's how we all kind of -- yeah.

14 Q. And you say that apart from this one girl who you  
15 mentioned, you say all your friends really were boys?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You'd go to the park, like you've said, you'd do  
18 'bob-a-job'?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. What was bob-a-job?

21 A. It was like, it was mostly the Scouts that did it, but  
22 we'd go with them and it would be like you'd go and  
23 knock on doors and ask did they want their car washed or  
24 things like that, and they'd give you money towards  
25 them. But it was a Boy -- it was more a Boy Scouts

1           thing, but we did it.

2   LADY SMITH:  And it was a particular week in the year,  
3           wasn't it, 'Sandra', bob-a-job week.

4   A.  Yeah, where everybody -- so you'd go round and maybe,  
5           I don't know, cut a hedge or wash a car or brush -- you  
6           know.  But it was great because you got money and you  
7           put it into the big pot and, yeah, it was to raise  
8           money, uh-huh.

9   MS FORBES:  And I think you say that you started drinking  
10           when you were probably about 11 years old, so drinking  
11           alcohol?

12  A.  Yeah, down the park.

13  Q.  But you say you never started smoking though until you  
14           were older, about 19?

15  A.  I tried it and got in serious trouble when I got caught  
16           and never smoked again 'til then, yeah.

17  Q.  And this drinking, though, would be up in the park with  
18           your friends together?

19  A.  Yeah.

20  Q.  In relation to school, 'Sandra', you say that you went  
21           to Melville Street Primary?

22  A.  Yeah.

23  Q.  And then Pollokshields Primary?

24  A.  Yeah.

25  Q.  You enjoyed school, I think you say school was great,

1           you were doing well, you loved it and it was your safe  
2           place?

3    A.   Yeah, it was great. I loved school.

4    Q.   And you tell us at paragraph 52 that you remember some  
5           fantastic school teachers, and it seems like a couple of  
6           them took a special interest in you?

7    A.   Yeah.

8    Q.   One took you out for a weekend in her orange Mini and  
9           another one made you an outfit to wear for Scottish  
10           country dancing, is that right?

11   A.   Yeah.

12   Q.   And then you tell us that you used to walk to the  
13           primary school, but you would get a bus to secondary?

14   A.   Yeah.

15   Q.   And that was Bellahouston Academy that you went to?

16   A.   Yes.

17   Q.   But instead of money, you were given little plastic  
18           tokens?

19   A.   Little green token.

20   Q.   Would it be the home that would give you those?

21   A.   Yeah.

22   Q.   And you say that the secondary school was split in two,  
23           so first and second year were in Paisley Road West, and  
24           the older years were in what you called the big school,  
25           which was up the hill?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And you don't remember much homework from primary, or  
3 from before Primary 7, but you say you got homework  
4 regularly in secondary school?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And the staff at Eversley would always make sure that  
7 you got it done?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. So there was -- you say they weren't regimental about  
10 it, but there was some emphasis on doing homework?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And them checking that you'd done it?

13 A. And checking it, yeah.

14 Q. And again, you say you loved secondary school as well  
15 but I think you tell us you didn't sit your GCSEs  
16 because you left before you could, and I think that was  
17 to do with when your birthday is, it's [REDACTED]?

18 A. Yeah, and you could leave in the end of May, beginning  
19 of June.

20 Q. And you say you left as soon as you could.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And got a job.

23 You tell us a little bit about the healthcare and  
24 you say you possibly saw a dentist through the school.  
25 You don't remember going to the doctors a lot, maybe

1           only a couple of times, but you had this issue with your  
2           leg, which you found painful, and it was because the  
3           Achilles tendon hadn't grown properly and it meant that  
4           one leg was a little bit shorter than the other?

5   A.   Yeah.

6   Q.   And you say that you saw the doctor for that while you  
7           were at Eversley?

8   A.   Yeah.

9   Q.   And when you were 15, around the time you left, you had  
10          an operation to lengthen your leg and have the tendon  
11          stretched?

12  A.   Yeah, yeah.

13  Q.   Was that successful then? Did that sort the problem  
14          out?

15  A.   Er, no, I still have it now. It's just something I have  
16          to live with now, though.

17  Q.   Okay. But it was certainly something they tried to fix?

18  A.   It helped at the time, but obviously as you get older  
19          (inaudible) things deteriorate a little bit.

20                   (Pause)

21  LADY SMITH: Can we just rewind, Ms Forbes.

22  MS FORBES: I think you were starting to tell us, 'Sandra',  
23          that it helped at the time?

24  A.   Yeah, when I had the first -- I've had two operations on  
25          it, but the first one did help, and then when I got

1 a bit older I had it done again, and I still have it  
2 now. But just with age now, you just have to live with  
3 it. But, yeah.

4 Q. And then you tell us that you broke your leg the first  
5 year you went to Bellahouston Academy?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And that was just an accident, you tripped up --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- at school and you were taken to hospital by somebody  
10 from Eversley and it was plastered, and that healed; is  
11 that right?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. But you do explain that over time, your behaviour  
14 started to get worse in the home and eventually, that  
15 also got worse in school as well?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And you tell us about getting into a fight in third year  
18 with someone else?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And then you were being referred to a psychologist, but  
21 you don't remember much about that. But certainly there  
22 came a time when, having had good behaviour and loving  
23 school, things started to decline; is that right?

24 A. Yeah. I remember now like being suspended, you'd get  
25 suspended and, yeah, things like that, and that was

1 quite -- that happened a few times, yeah.

2 Q. You tell us a little bit about the religious situation  
3 and you say that there were Catholics and Protestants at  
4 Eversley?

5 A. Mm-hmm.

6 Q. But religion wasn't a big thing, and even though  
7 Christine, SNR, Sister Christine, was  
8 a nun, she didn't wear a nun's uniform?

9 A. No.

10 Q. But she did used to spout religion?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And you tell us the Catholics had to go to the chapel  
13 for confession and the Protestants went to the church  
14 that was on the opposite corner to your primary school,  
15 and that you would be walked down there every Sunday,  
16 two by two in a crocodile formation, and then after that  
17 you would go on to Sunday School in the church hall?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you used to enjoy going to the Sunday School?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. I think when you were talking earlier, 'Sandra', about  
22 some of your friends going to a different school, was  
23 that because people were split according to religion;  
24 there was different schools?

25 A. Religion, yeah.

1 Q. But certainly at Eversley it was a mixed home?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And from your point of view, did there seem to be any  
4 issue about different religions?

5 A. No, I don't ever remember.

6 Q. You go on, 'Sandra', to tell us that you were expected  
7 to make your beds and keep your room tidy, but there  
8 wasn't any other work or chores types of things to do,  
9 is that right?

10 A. No.

11 Q. There were domestic staff who did the cleaning, but when  
12 you were older, I think you mentioned this earlier,  
13 you'd wash your own underwear?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. But there was no expectation to do chores.

16 You tell us that the staff would take you out to the  
17 pantomime at Christmas, but there was never any other  
18 day trips that you remember. There was two or three  
19 trips to the seaside when you were younger, where you'd  
20 go in taxis, which was a good day out.

21 And the only holidays you remember were to two  
22 caravans down in Maidens?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And you say RLD and different members of staff would  
25 take you down there in the summer and you used to enjoy

1           those trips?

2   A.   Yeah.

3   Q.   And I think you explain you stayed in caravans, is that

4           right?

5   A.   Yeah.

6   Q.   And it would be a five-minute walk from the beach?

7   A.   Yeah.

8   Q.   And you say you didn't go all together, it would be one

9           house for a week or so and then another house would go?

10  A.   Yeah.

11  Q.   And then you'd go for walks up to Culzean?

12  A.   Yeah.

13  Q.   And you say that whilst you were on the holiday, you

14           would have to do chores like washing up and that sort of

15           thing, and as you got older, you were expected to look

16           after the younger ones?

17  A.   Yeah.

18  Q.   But you don't remember any birthday when you were

19           a child?

20  A.   None.

21  Q.   And you don't remember celebrating anyone's birthday in

22           the home?

23  A.   No.

24  Q.   So that wasn't a thing that happened?

25  A.   No.

1 Q. But you say at Christmas that you'd put on a play every  
2 year in the big hall at the back of the building and  
3 children would play different parts, and local  
4 councillors would come and watch?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You say you remember doing that from quite a young age,  
7 being there?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. But you don't remember there being a Christmas tree or  
10 decorations or a special Christmas dinner?

11 A. No.

12 Q. But you explain on Christmas Day you'd each get one  
13 present and a stocking with an orange and a sweet in it,  
14 but these presents were donated to the home by people,  
15 is that right?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And you can remember people coming in and handing things  
18 in for presents?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And you say you got to keep your present, so it wasn't  
21 taken off you after that?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you remember in particular one time when you were  
24 about 14, you got a portable record player, and this was  
25 something that ran on batteries. So is this something

1           you -- a fond memory you have of getting that present?

2   A.   Yeah.

3   Q.   I think you say you remember going to the shops and

4           buying your first single with the money you got from

5           bob-a-job and it was Rod Stewart, 'Maggie May'?

6   A.   It was, yeah.

7   Q.   But apart from that record player, 'Sandra', I think you

8           explain that you never really had much --

9   A.   No.

10   Q.   -- in the way of anything else, personal possessions.

11           And this money from the bob-a-job with the Girl Guides

12           was really the only money that you had to spend for

13           yourself, is that right?

14   A.   Yeah, we never got no money.

15   Q.   So there was no pocket money?

16   A.   No.

17   Q.   But you say that the local shop would accept the plastic

18           bus tokens, so that you could buy something to take to

19           school?

20   A.   Yeah.

21   Q.   So they'd accept it as sort of money?

22   A.   Yeah.

23   Q.   You recall, 'Sandra', one or two Children's Panels, you

24           think, going to, but you say you very rarely went; is

25           that right?

1 A. Nah, I only remember going to a couple.

2 Q. Okay, and you think you remember -- sorry, you remember  
3 one when you were older and your mum being there?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And you think that that panel was to decide whether you  
6 could go home or not, and it was after that they started  
7 to allow you to have weekend visits with your mum at  
8 home?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. So when you say you were older, were you a teenager by  
11 that time?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. But before that, you weren't getting any home visits, is  
14 that right?

15 A. No.

16 Q. So you were just in Eversley the whole time?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So there was no family members coming to take you out to  
19 stay with them?

20 A. When I was young, very much younger, not long after  
21 I first went in, my grandad used to come and visit. But  
22 then we didn't see my mum for a long, long, long, long,  
23 time, and the next time we saw her was when -- that's  
24 when I found out that I had other siblings.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. By that time.

2 Q. And I think you tell us that you did go home for a few  
3 weekends and you stayed with your mum and your stepdad?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And then your younger brothers and sisters, I think you  
6 say there was two sisters and a brother at home at that  
7 time, is that right?

8 A. Yeah, and then another younger one came later.

9 Q. But you explain that while your mum was fine during the  
10 day, she would start drinking?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And you say that over one weekend visit she, the way you  
13 described it is, 'beat the living daylights' out of you?

14 A. Yeah, yeah, and they had to come and get me to take me  
15 back to the home.

16 Q. So I think you tell us a neighbour had to phone the  
17 police?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And after that, you stopped seeing your mum for a while?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. You also tell us at paragraph 75, 'Sandra', that when  
22 you were about 14 or 15 you went to stay with a family  
23 who stayed in either Nitshill or Priesthill and you did  
24 that about four or five times. So this was weekends, is  
25 that right?

1 A. That's right, yeah.

2 Q. So four or five weekends you went to their house, and  
3 you say that they were a nice couple and they had about  
4 four or five children, is that right? And that was  
5 something that you enjoyed --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- you remember.

8 You explain, 'Sandra', that you and your two younger  
9 sisters were all in the children's home at Eversley when  
10 your younger brother was born, and then he came into the  
11 home when he was only 6 weeks old?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And you remember him being brought into the home and you  
14 recall what you were doing when he came into the home  
15 and you were told about it, and you say that you went  
16 downstairs and you saw your mum, but your mum wasn't  
17 allowed to see you and you never spoke to her, and then  
18 your little brother was taken into the nursery?

19 A. Yeah.

20 LADY SMITH: What's the age gap between you and that  
21 brother?

22 A. Er, oh, hold on. There's about ten years, roughly.

23 LADY SMITH: Okay. So you'd be in Eversley quite a while by  
24 then.

25 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

1 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

2 MS FORBES: My Lady.

3 'Sandra', I think you say that initially when your  
4 two sisters came into Eversley, you were in the same  
5 house --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- as them and then later your brother. However, that  
8 changed because you tell us that a couple of years  
9 later, RLD seemed to get your birth certificate and  
10 found out that you had a different father from them, and  
11 a different surname?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And then when she found that out, she separated you from  
14 your siblings?

15 A. Yeah, yeah.

16 Q. And she moved you into a different house and she told  
17 you that they weren't your sisters and brother?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you say that you'll always remember that and it  
20 broke your heart?

21 A. Always; 'cos my little sisters got so upset about it.

22 Q. And that you'd been there together with them for at  
23 least a few years at that point?

24 A. Yeah, yeah.

25 Q. With your sisters, in any event. But you say that you

1           could still see them, but you weren't allowed in their  
2           house?

3   A.   Yeah.

4   Q.   And before this separation happened, you tell us that  
5           your sisters used to rely on you. And you say that at  
6           that time your brother was only a baby and you used to  
7           try and see him, but you weren't allowed to see him  
8           a lot?

9   A.   No. You weren't allowed in the nursery really.

10  Q.   So was that something, I think, that really affected you  
11           whilst you were in Eversley, being separated then from  
12           your siblings?

13  A.   Oh, yeah, and like my -- especially my sisters. My  
14           brother was still very young, but my sisters were really  
15           upset, because they couldn't understand it, because, you  
16           know, especially the one below me, because we lived at  
17           home together with mum at one point. And then the next  
18           sister was maybe that bit too young to remember home  
19           with mum, but the one below was like, we were  
20           inseparable.

21  Q.   So she might not remember home with mum, but she would  
22           remember being there with you in the home?

23  A.   Yeah.

24  LADY SMITH: And I suppose you being there might have added  
25           to her sense of security?

1 A. Yeah, 100 per cent, yeah.

2 MS FORBES: I think you tell us, 'Sandra', that there came  
3 a time when one of your sisters was adopted?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So she was taken out of the home. So I think, from what  
6 you tell us, the sister closest in age to you is about  
7 two years younger, and then --

8 A. The other one --

9 Q. -- the other sister is about three years younger?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. So still all quite close in age, but it's the one that  
12 was three years younger that was adopted; is that right?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. And so she left the home and then it was just you, the  
15 sister that was two years younger and your little  
16 brother?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. You say that your little brother used to go to a foster  
19 family for the weekend every so often, and you say they  
20 were relatives of one of the members of staff?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you think they wanted to adopt your brother but your  
23 mum wouldn't allow it?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. So is that something you knew at the time, or did you

1 find that out later?

2 A. No, it's what I found out when I got older.

3 Q. Okay. And then you tell us that you only learned that  
4 you had your other younger siblings, and you tell us  
5 their names, when your mother turned up at the  
6 children's home one day with all of them?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And nobody had mentioned it?

9 A. That was it, no.

10 Q. So she had them at home with her.

11 You go on to tell us, 'Sandra', about family contact  
12 whilst you were in the home and you say there was  
13 a visiting room. Families were only allowed to visit at  
14 the weekend and Sunday was normally the visiting day?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Staff would be in the room but you were left with your  
17 visitors, but there would be other kids there with their  
18 families too, so you weren't in a room on your own --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- with your family. And you tell us that you didn't  
21 see your mum for a long time after you went into  
22 Eversley because she had to stop drinking before she was  
23 allowed to see you?

24 A. That's right, yeah.

25 Q. And then she did come once she had stopped drinking, but

1 not very often. And you tell us that you remember all  
2 the families used to come and see the other kids, and  
3 you used to stand in the front room with the big bay  
4 windows, waiting for your mum to come, but she never  
5 did?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. So you would never know if she was coming or not; you  
8 would just be waiting?

9 A. No, we'd be told that she's coming, but she then  
10 wouldn't come.

11 Q. How did that make you feel back then?

12 A. Horrible. You know. I think it affected my little  
13 sister probably more than me.

14 Q. And you say that after visiting was over, everyone had  
15 to hand over anything that they'd been given, like  
16 sweets or whatever, and it would just be dished out to  
17 everyone?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So you didn't get to keep it?

20 A. I think it was more for the fact that some children  
21 didn't have any visitors, so they all got something.

22 Q. To try and make it a bit fairer?

23 A. I think so, yeah.

24 Q. And you say you remember your grandad coming to visit  
25 and he brought you sweeties and a bottle of Irn-Bru?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And he gave you some money which you tried to hide -- or  
3 he tried to hide, sorry. But somebody found it though  
4 and that was taken away.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Did you ever get that back?

7 A. No.

8 Q. You tell us, 'Sandra', your first social worker that you  
9 remember was someone called Norma MacPhee, and you say  
10 that she came along in 1970 when you were about 9 or 10?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. That's your recollection?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But you don't remember any social workers before her?

15 A. No.

16 Q. But you thought Norma was really nice. You became  
17 friends with her and you say you're still friends now to  
18 this day; is that right?

19 A. Yeah, yeah.

20 Q. And you describe her as being almost like a surrogate  
21 mother to you?

22 A. Yeah, definitely.

23 Q. So this was somebody who came into your life that was  
24 a very positive thing, and it's a constant that's  
25 remained in your life as you've grown up?

1 A. Yeah, yeah.

2 Q. And you tell us then that Norma used to come and see you  
3 regularly and take you out in her car occasionally, and  
4 you'd be told she was coming and you'd look forward to  
5 it. But you tell us though that it would be then used  
6 as a punishment?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Or a threat of a punishment to you, that if you did  
9 something wrong or they thought you'd done something  
10 wrong, that you wouldn't be allowed to see her?

11 A. No, that was my punishment, and even if she turned up,  
12 I still wasn't allowed to see her.

13 LADY SMITH: How did that make you feel? How did it make  
14 you feel?

15 A. Angry. Very angry.

16 LADY SMITH: So on an occasion like this, how long before  
17 the visit would you have known that she was coming to  
18 see you?

19 A. Oh, you would always know, but she would, nine times out  
20 of ten, tell you when she was coming next anyway. But  
21 then the member of staff would then say to you: 'Oh,  
22 you've got -- your social worker's coming'. So you'd  
23 know yourself, you'd get ready for your social worker  
24 coming, but I'd always know because she'd tell me when  
25 she was coming. But obviously RLD knew when the

1 social workers were coming and -- yes, so I was --

2 LADY SMITH: I'm just thinking, does that mean that you had

3 time to look forward to her visit?

4 A. Yeah. Oh, God, yeah.

5 LADY SMITH: Days maybe? Weeks, days?

6 A. No, no, she'd come regular. Sometimes it would be every

7 couple of weeks; sometimes, you know -- I think it just

8 depended. There was never a regular, every two weeks on

9 a Wednesday, or it wasn't -- I don't recall it like

10 that. But she'd say, 'I'll come and see you next week',

11 and that sort of thing.

12 And I don't know whether social workers had to

13 inform the home that they were coming. Do you know what

14 I mean?

15 LADY SMITH: Yes, yes.

16 A. I think there's a possibility.

17 LADY SMITH: Yes.

18 A. Because they would say to me, 'That's it, you're not

19 getting to see her', and they would -- yeah.

20 LADY SMITH: But we're talking about something that was

21 good.

22 A. Yeah.

23 LADY SMITH: And you'd be looking forward to it, knowing

24 that it was probably going to be quite soon.

25 A. Yeah, 'cos quite often she would go out in her car.

1 LADY SMITH: And then it happened, but it didn't happen.  
2 A. Yeah.  
3 LADY SMITH: Because she was there and you weren't allowed  
4 to see her.  
5 A. And nothing worse when you're sitting upstairs knowing  
6 she's downstairs. Yeah.  
7 MS FORBES: 'Sandra', you go on to tell us about discipline  
8 within the home and you tell us from paragraph 88 that  
9 if you were doing something the staff didn't like, you'd  
10 be pulled by your arm?  
11 A. Yeah.  
12 Q. But that got less as you got older, and you say that's  
13 possibly because you could fight back and you would do  
14 that?  
15 A. Yeah.  
16 Q. You say you don't remember any member of staff  
17 recording, or seeing any member of staff recording any  
18 sort of punishment they might have used. And you say  
19 the records that you've seen, nothing like that was  
20 written down about punishment?  
21 A. No, yeah.  
22 Q. And you tell us about Christine, Sister Christine, the  
23 nun.  
24 A. Yeah.  
25 Q. And you say that one time she took you to St Euphrasia's

1 Home in Bishopton to show you what it was like. And you  
2 say you were always misbehaving and she took you there  
3 to tell you that if you didn't start behaving, that you  
4 would be going there. And you say that whilst you were  
5 there, she took you up to a room that was in this sort  
6 of turret and it was padded?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So is this the walls of the room that were padded?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And she told you you'd be put in there?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So some kind of padded room, padded cell-type thing.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. And what kind of effect did that have on you? What did  
15 you think about that?

16 A. I don't think it changed me an awful lot, but it  
17 terrified, the fact that I just didn't want to go to  
18 that home. 'Cos if they put you up there, nobody would  
19 hear you.

20 So it did scare you a little bit, so you kinda  
21 reined in -- in older words now, you kinda reined  
22 yourself in a little bit, 'cos you really didn't want to  
23 go there.

24 Q. You tell us that you ran away a lot from Eversley, but  
25 that wasn't until you were about 13?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And you say you were never away overnight because you'd  
3 always get caught and you weren't really good at hiding,  
4 and you say that RLL, who you have mentioned  
5 earlier, one of the staff, she lived locally and she  
6 caught you a few times and used to drag you back?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And you say that you ran away once when you were on  
9 holiday at the caravans in Maidens as well, and you  
10 jumped on a boy's motorbike and went with him to the  
11 funfair in Girvan?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. But you say that youngsters used to run away as well,  
14 and you mention a particular young boy, who you name,  
15 who was hiding in the bushes in the grounds?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You tell us that one time you ran away with a girl that  
18 you were sharing a room with, but you didn't get far,  
19 and you say that you and her ran out the fire escape in  
20 the boys' room, and you say you managed to persuade the  
21 girl, because she was scared, but you managed to  
22 persuade her to carry on, but you got caught not long  
23 after?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. But you go on to tell us that you suffered for that, and

1           you tell us about being taken separately into  
2           Sister Christine's office by RLD . And what  
3           punishment were you given in there?

4    A. Oh, we got the cane.

5    Q. And so, I think you say separately, because you say you  
6           each got the cane. Was this separately that you each  
7           got the cane?

8    A. Separately, yeah.

9    Q. So the girl wasn't in the room with you at the time that  
10           that happened?

11   A. I don't recollect so, no.

12   Q. But you explain how that happened and you say she bent  
13           you over the table?

14   A. Yeah.

15   Q. And hit you four or five times on the backside with it,  
16           on top of your clothes, but it left marks --

17   A. Yeah.

18   Q. -- where she'd hit you. And you can't really remember  
19           what RLD was saying to you. Is that when this is  
20           happening?

21   A. Yeah.

22   Q. When she's caning you? But you say it never stopped you  
23           from running away.

24   A. No. If anything, it makes you want to run even more.

25   Q. And would that be a punishment you got each time you ran

1 away?

2 A. Pretty much.

3 Q. You say that the home would report you missing to the  
4 police and it was usually the police that would bring  
5 you back. The staff wouldn't go out looking for you.  
6 And you say you used to go to your friend's house and  
7 you say the police found you there once, hiding in the  
8 wardrobe?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you mention there being a big, blue police box that  
11 they used to have?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. You said you would call it a 'Doctor Who box', and the  
14 local bobby, the policeman, would often be in there and  
15 as you'd walk by, he'd tell you not to run away that  
16 night because he was on the nightshift?

17 A. 'Cos he was on nightshift, yeah.

18 Q. But you say he was somebody that took you back many  
19 a time?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And you explain, each time you were taken back you would  
22 be punished. It wasn't always the cane from RLD.  
23 You say sometimes you were put in a room and told not to  
24 come out.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And you'd have to stay in there for hours. Do you  
2 remember what room that was?

3 A. In your bedroom.

4 Q. In your bedroom.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Would you be in there on your own?

7 A. Yeah, 'cos you weren't allowed up in the rooms during  
8 the day. Rooms were for sleeping in.

9 Q. Okay. So a punishment might be that you'd have to go  
10 there outwith --

11 A. And not see anybody.

12 Q. -- nighttime for hours.

13 You explain, 'Sandra', at paragraph 97 that nobody  
14 ever spoke to you about why you were running away. You  
15 ran away persistently. You think the police found it  
16 kind of funny. And you explained you used to go out the  
17 fire escape in the boys' bedroom and when you were moved  
18 into a different bedroom, you'd climb through the window  
19 onto the roof and slide down a drainpipe?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And you'd sometimes go back in that way and sometimes  
22 the staff never knew that you'd been gone?

23 A. Didn't even know I was gone.

24 Q. And you tell us about one time when you were about 13,  
25 you ran away to watch football with a couple of boys and

1           you were in one of their houses watching the football.  
2           **RLL** lived across the road and saw you and came  
3           over and told you to go back to the home and you  
4           refused, but she dragged you back anyway?  
5    A.   Yeah, 'cos where she lived, it's literally just round  
6           the corner from where the children's home was, so it  
7           wasn't far to drag, if you know what I mean.  
8    LADY SMITH: So on that occasion you were running away so  
9           that you could get to watch the football with friends.  
10   A.   I wasn't really running away, I just wanted to go and  
11          watch the football but I wasn't allowed, so I went  
12          anyway.  
13   LADY SMITH: On the other occasions you ran away, and you  
14          tell me you ran away a lot, what were the reasons that  
15          you were doing so?  
16   A.   Just to get out of there. Just -- and sometimes you  
17          didn't go anywhere. It's not like you ran away, you ran  
18          away to go and go to somebody's house or whatever.  
19          Sometimes you'd just go and sit in the park. You  
20          didn't -- you didn't necessarily go anywhere, to see  
21          anyone.  
22   LADY SMITH: So you give me the impression it was to get  
23          freedom?  
24   A.   Yeah, 100 per cent.  
25   LADY SMITH: Your own space?

1 A. Your own space mostly. 'Cos as you get older, you know  
2 yourself, I mean, I have children myself, and as they  
3 get older, they need that little bit more space for  
4 their personal things and just to think sometimes, you  
5 know?

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 MS FORBES: 'Sandra', you say there was another occasion  
8 that RME [REDACTED], you mentioned her before, you say she  
9 accused you of stealing a ring from the couple you  
10 went -- that you were fostered out to at weekends?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. You hadn't done that, but as a result of that  
13 accusation, you weren't allowed out after that, and then  
14 she also told you she wanted you to go on the pill?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. How old were you at that time, do you remember, roughly?

17 A. About 13, roughly.

18 Q. You say, 'Sandra', you hadn't had a relationship with  
19 any boy?

20 A. No.

21 Q. But RLD [REDACTED], RME [REDACTED] and Cathy Hastie started saying that  
22 you were being promiscuous, and you say that hurt you at  
23 the time because it wasn't true, and RME [REDACTED] told you  
24 that she would tell Norma, your social worker, and you  
25 were then worried that Norma wouldn't come back to see

1           you?

2   A.  Yeah, I mean, as I say, about them saying about me being  
3           promiscuous, I don't know whether it was because all my  
4           friends were boys.  Erm, I only had one girl friend, but  
5           the rest, 'cos we enjoyed football and stuff, you know,  
6           so, I think.

7   Q.  And you tell us that this occasion, when RME was  
8           telling you this, happened at the bottom of the stairs  
9           and you say she grabbed hold of you?

10  A.  Yeah.

11  Q.  And you turned round and you were kicking and punching  
12           her, trying to get her off you, because you were so  
13           angry.  And I think you say you never went on the pill  
14           but you were given some sort of injection --

15  A.  Yeah.

16  Q.  -- to make sure you didn't get pregnant.  So was that  
17           from about the age of 13?

18  A.  About 14 -- yeah, about 14.  Maybe just before I was 15,  
19           maybe.  I can't remember the exact age.

20  Q.  But it was while you were still in Eversley?

21  A.  Yeah.

22  Q.  So you were still under 16?

23  A.  Yes.

24  Q.  And was that something that you wanted?

25  A.  No.  I wasn't doing anything to warrant it, if you know

1           what I mean.

2   Q.   But you say you were given that and you kept getting it  
3           until you were 17?

4   A.   Yeah.  I think it was every few months it happened.

5   Q.   Every 12 weeks or something?

6   A.   Yeah.

7   Q.   And who was it that would give you that, was it a member  
8           of staff?

9   A.   I'd have to go to a doctor.  I don't know if it was at  
10          a clinic -- I can't remember whether it was a doctor in  
11          a surgery, or whether it was a clinic with a nurse.  
12          I'm not -- I just know that you had to go there.  Or  
13          whether it was a -- I don't know if they had family  
14          planning clinics back then, I don't know.

15  Q.   'Sandra', you go on to tell us about bed-wetting  
16          a little bit and you say there were no issues about --  
17          with getting up to go to the toilet during the night, so  
18          you were allowed to do that.

19                You didn't have a problem with bed-wetting but some  
20          of the girls did.  And you say one night, one of the  
21          girls you were sharing a room with wet her bed, and you  
22          say she'd come to Eversley from St Euphrasia's where she  
23          must have been punished for doing that, and she was  
24          scared she was going to get punished this time too.

25                I think you go on to explain that you think you were

1           only about 9 at the time and so you then intervened and  
2           told her not to worry, went and got clean sheets,  
3           changed her bed and then hid those wet sheets in another  
4           girl's locker to make it look like she'd wet the bed,  
5           and she got in trouble for that?

6    A.   Yeah.

7    Q.   But you say that she knew that -- that girl knew that  
8           you had done that, and so she didn't like you after  
9           that?

10   A.   That's right.

11   Q.   So was there a punishment that you were aware of for  
12           wetting beds in Eversley, or were you just worried about  
13           the girl, about the staff finding out that the girl had  
14           wet her bed?

15   A.   I don't recollect anybody getting in trouble for wetting  
16           the bed, but I knew she was upset.  So whatever had --  
17           looking back now, maybe something happened where she'd  
18           come from, but I don't recollect anybody getting in  
19           trouble for wetting the bed.  They might have done, but  
20           I didn't see.

21   Q.   'Sandra', I'm now going to move on to a part of your  
22           statement where you talk about abuse at Eversley, so  
23           I'm going to ask you some questions about that.  Is that  
24           okay?

25   A.   Yeah, that's fine.

1 Q. I think you tell us, some of which you've already  
2 touched upon in your evidence, you say you were  
3 physically abused regularly at Eversley. You say that  
4 in the records that you've seen, it says that you were  
5 uncontrollable, but you say if you did something wrong,  
6 you knew about it. Do you mean that you knew about it  
7 because you would be physically punished?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. You say some of the staff were really lovely but some of  
10 them were not, and lots of them would hit you for no  
11 reason at all. And you explain they'd slap you on the  
12 back of the head?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Or sometimes you would get it on the back of the leg?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And you say that also, you'd be told to strip down to  
17 your vest and pants by RLD [REDACTED] and stand and look at  
18 the wall?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. So that was a punishment?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you explain there was one incident when you were  
23 still quite young that you'd had a fight with your  
24 roommate and RLD [REDACTED] caught you and she told you both to  
25 strip down to your vest and pants and made you fight

1 each other in the big hallway outside her office in  
2 front of her and the other children?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. So that's a particular incident that happened that  
5 you -- that's stuck with you?

6 A. Oh, yeah.

7 Q. How did you feel when you had to do that?

8 A. Awful, because the two of us didn't want to fight. We  
9 were just normal girls that had got into a row and, you  
10 know, but -- I think RLD just wanted to do it to me  
11 anyway. That was just it.

12 Q. And you go on to say that when you first went to  
13 Eversley, that you were actually RLD's favourite?

14 A. Mm-hmm.

15 Q. And you got a lot of ridicule from the other children  
16 because of that?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And you tell us she had a disabled girl living with her  
19 in her flat. That was the one that was outside in the  
20 garden upstairs, is that right?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you say you think that RLD had fostered or  
23 adopted that girl or something. She was in a wheelchair  
24 and you think that she must have had cerebral palsy, and  
25 you used to be allowed up to RLD's flat to see that

1 girl. And one time RLD took you and the girl away on  
2 holiday with her, just the two of you --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- and RLD. And you say you went to a bed and  
5 breakfast in a seaside town somewhere and all you  
6 remember of the trip is being in the bed and breakfast,  
7 and RLD bought you a pair of red shoes on the trip.  
8 And you also remember being allowed to buy a present of  
9 two little deer on a chain for someone. You don't know  
10 if that was Norma that you were buying it for --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- your social worker, but you were allowed to buy that.  
13 And you say you don't know why RLD took you there and  
14 you don't know if something happened on that trip that  
15 you've blocked out, but shortly after that, when you  
16 came back to Eversley, RLD's attitude towards you  
17 changed and you say she hated you and was really bad to  
18 you after that?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. So you went from being her favourite and one that she  
21 was taking on a trip, to you feeling like she hated you?

22 A. Oh, absolutely.

23 Q. And you don't know why that happened, is that right?  
24 You still don't know?

25 A. It was like an overnight thing and it's like, in your

1 head you're like: well, one minute it's this and now,  
2 now this. And being young, and you're like: what have  
3 I done wrong? You know. Yeah, and it became really  
4 quite unbearable. As a child.

5 Q. And 'Sandra', you then tell us that abuse, you say,  
6 really started after you were split into houses?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So this was after you'd been there for a couple of  
9 years. And you say looking back you think that  
10 splitting the children up like that made it easy,  
11 'because they wouldn't have been able to abuse us when  
12 we were all together', is the way you put it.

13 And you say that -- you mentioned this before -- one  
14 of the female staff, you can't remember which one, was  
15 always taking you into the scullery where she would  
16 shove carbolic soap in your mouth for doing something  
17 like swearing or fighting someone?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you describe that she would drag you in there, hold  
20 you, force your head back and shove the soap in your  
21 mouth?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. But was it just you that that happened to?

24 A. I didn't see it happen to anyone, but -- it may have  
25 done, but I didn't see it. But then, as it says there,

1 I don't think I took much notice, to be fair.

2 Q. And that RLI [REDACTED], who you mentioned before, who  
3 was night staff, you say she used to come into your room  
4 during the night and hit you with a slipper across the  
5 head --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- for talking, and she did that several times to you,  
8 and you say she battered other girls too?

9 A. Yeah. I felt it was mostly me, though, to be fair.

10 Q. Okay. You say you got thrown in a cold bath, that  
11 happened a lot of times?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And in particular, you say you didn't start your period  
14 until you were about 13.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And RLL [REDACTED] threw you in the bath, and you remember  
17 coming running out the toilet because there was blood?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you didn't know what that was because no one had  
20 told you -- no one told you about periods?

21 A. No one. I didn't have a clue.

22 Q. And you say you thought you were dying?

23 A. I did.

24 Q. And when she saw you, she dragged you to the bathroom,  
25 ran a bath for you and threw you in freezing cold water.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Didn't tell you what was going on and she was trying to  
3 duck your head under the water.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And I think you tell us that as she did, you bit her  
6 finger and nearly --

7 A. Again, yeah.

8 Q. -- bit it off.

9 But you say she was practically drowning you in the  
10 bath and telling you you were filthy, and she was  
11 holding you in there until the blood stain came out of  
12 your pants?

13 A. Pretty much.

14 Q. But you say it was later that Vera, another member of  
15 staff, took you aside and explained to you what was  
16 happening. Was that about periods?

17 A. Yeah. And that it was normal and told me what to do.

18 Q. But before that, you hadn't had any explanation.

19 A. I didn't have a clue.

20 Q. 'Sandra', you go on to say that you don't know how old  
21 you were when sexual abuse started, but you do know it  
22 was when you were in the room with four beds in it?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. So you think you were at secondary school by then so you  
25 must have been --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- over 11?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. And you say there were three beds down one wall and your  
5 bed was on the opposite wall?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And you go on to tell us what happened. You say that  
8 you were lying in bed, is that right? And  
9 Steven MacDonald -- who you have told us about before,  
10 he was one of the housefathers --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- came in. He wasn't your housefather, is that right?

13 A. Not at that time, no.

14 LADY SMITH: How did you know that it was him who had come  
15 in?

16 A. His voice. His voice. 'Cos it was dark, but it was his  
17 voice.

18 MS FORBES: I think you tell us in the next paragraph  
19 something particular that he said, so we'll come to that  
20 in a minute.

21 I think you say there was only one other girl in the  
22 room when this happened and she was sleeping, and you  
23 were asleep initially as well, but you woke up when he  
24 came in and the door opened, and you tell us that he was  
25 then touching you down below under the covers. And when

1           you say 'down below', was that your private parts?

2   A.   Yeah, 'cos we weren't allowed to wear pants to bed.  It

3           was classed as being dirty.

4   Q.   I think you explain you had a nightdress on, but you

5           would have been naked underneath.  So he's touching you

6           on your naked private parts?

7   A.   Yeah.

8   Q.   And you say you asked him what he was doing and he said

9           something to you that you've told us about there.

10  LADY SMITH:  What did he say?  What did he say to you?

11  A.   That nobody would believe me.

12  MS FORBES:  And I think --

13  LADY SMITH:  And what had you said to him, anything?

14  A.   To be honest, in my recollection at the time, it was,

15           you know, quite -- it's a kinda shock, in a sense, and

16           it's like, 'What are you doing?', and it's like, 'Well,

17           don't worry, nobody's going to believe you'.  And they

18           didn't.

19  MS FORBES:  And I think that the full phrase you have told

20           us that you recall is:

21           'Nobody will believe you if you tell anybody.'

22           And I think those were words -- you tell us later on

23           there was a trial and the police had to have you hear

24           different people saying those words --

25  A.   Yeah.  When it came to saying who it was, it wasn't

1 visual. It was voice. And the words, 'Nobody will  
2 believe you', was what I identified Steven MacDonald all  
3 them years later in the police station, and it was the  
4 voice.

5 LADY SMITH: So this was a voice identification parade --

6 A. Yeah.

7 LADY SMITH: -- you went along, was it?

8 A. So you didn't see them, it was just their voice. Yeah.  
9 And when I, when I -- his voice came in the police  
10 station, I just fell to the floor, as soon as I heard,  
11 and I hadn't seen this person for over 30-odd years,  
12 maybe more. And, erm, yeah, I was quite shocked at  
13 hearing his voice, the effect it still had on me, at the  
14 time.

15 MS FORBES: But certainly it was an identification you were  
16 able to make from his voice, even then?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you say, 'Sandra', that after he did this to you, he  
19 never really spoke to you?

20 A. No.

21 Q. He just used to kind of smirk at you?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And you say looking back, you say you know that he was  
24 laughing because he thought he'd got away with it?

25 A. Mm.

1 Q. And you say one day you were in the sluice room at the  
2 back. Is this one of the separate buildings or is this  
3 within the main house?

4 A. No, it was in the house.

5 Q. In the house. So this was the scullery or the sluice  
6 room?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And you say this is when RLO [REDACTED], housefather of  
9 your house, came in. So he was actually your  
10 housefather. And you tell us this is when touching  
11 started from him?

12 A. Yeah.

13 LADY SMITH: How old do you think you were then?

14 A. I was older. So I was probably 12/13.

15 LADY SMITH: How long had he been your housefather by then?

16 A. I can't really recall, but -- 'cos Charlie Feely was the  
17 main person and he was, like, under Charlie. But, erm,  
18 time, I can't recollect how long, no.

19 LADY SMITH: Don't worry.

20 MS FORBES: I think, 'Sandra', you say in that paragraph  
21 that it wasn't long after he did that that you left the  
22 home, so you think you must have been about 14, but  
23 again --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- it's difficult potentially --

1 A. It's difficult.

2 Q. -- now to remember all that time ago; we understand.

3 A. It's very difficult remembering the exact time --

4 lengths of time, whether it's 16, 15, 12. Because it

5 kinda gets into like a bundle and trying to -- what's

6 that word -- decompartmentalise, or whatever.

7 LADY SMITH: Yes, yes.

8 A. Put them into places to -- so it's very difficult to

9 give you an exact.

10 MS FORBES: Okay. And you say that he never really spoke to

11 you about what he was doing, other than to tell you not

12 to tell anyone?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But you say you can't remember exactly what he said, but

15 it was along the same lines as Steven MacDonald, that

16 you're not to tell anyone?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And you say that he shut the door behind him and came

19 over to you and started touching you, and was this on

20 your private parts?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Was it over your clothes or under your clothes?

23 A. Erm, over to start with.

24 Q. And did it progress then?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. To underneath clothes?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And you say he made you touch him as well?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So was this his private parts?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And again, was that over the clothes or under his --

8 A. No.

9 Q. Under his -- under?

10 A. No, open.

11 Q. Okay. And you say that after that first time he

12 regularly touched you whenever you were alone in the

13 house or in the garden, and you say eventually he took

14 you to the laundry house in the garden and this is when

15 you say that the first time happened where it

16 progressed?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. It was much more serious; is that right? And he took

19 your bottom half of your clothes off, you tell us?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And this is when he had full penetrative sex with you,

22 so rape?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And it didn't just happen once; I think you tell us this

25 happened again?

1 A. A few -- yeah.

2 Q. And it was four times in total. And it would be in the  
3 corner of the back garden, so would it be in that  
4 laundry house, and in the sluice room?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You also, 'Sandra', mention John Marshall and you say  
7 that you know that he abused your sister?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. This is your sister who's two years younger?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Because she told you?

12 A. She told me.

13 Q. But I think that was later in life, was that right,  
14 years later? Was that later, after --

15 A. Oh, yeah, yeah, when she was older.

16 LADY SMITH: So it was when she was older that she told you?

17 A. That she told me, yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: That it was while she was in the home --

19 A. It was that -- yeah.

20 LADY SMITH: -- that she was abused?

21 A. She told me when she was older what happened to her in  
22 the home, and who.

23 MS FORBES: That's my fault, 'Sandra'. It's the way I asked  
24 that question, sorry.

25 But I think you do tell us you suspected it was

1           happening at the time because of her behaviour. Did you  
2           suspect something was happening with John Marshall at  
3           the time or just that some --

4   A. No, John Marshall. He was creepy.

5   Q. But you say it was years later she confirmed it, and  
6           what did she tell you that he did to her?

7   A. That he had raped her when she was in the home.  
8           I believe it was after I left, 'cos my sisters remained  
9           in the home -- well, my sister remained in the home  
10          after me. So she told me that -- and I think as she --  
11          when she was older, she blamed me for leaving, because  
12          then that happened to her, and if I hadn't left, it  
13          wouldn't have happened to her. That's how she saw it.

14   Q. And I think she told you that that happened more than  
15          once, it was a regular --

16   A. Oh, yeah.

17   Q. -- thing?

18   A. It had such a detrimental effect on her.

19   Q. I think you tell us later in your statement, 'Sandra',  
20          that she went on to have serious problems in life and  
21          alcohol issues; is that right?

22   A. Yeah.

23   Q. And she sadly passed away?

24   A. Yeah.

25   Q. And she never got any justice for that while she was

1           alive?

2    A.  Nah.  She didn't get the justice.

3    Q.  Is that something that was important to you about coming  
4           to the Inquiry to tell us about?

5    A.  To be honest with you, it was -- it's a big part of why  
6           I wanted to help.  'Cos I feel that I can talk for her,  
7           as well as myself, because it did happen in the same  
8           place.  And, you know, I don't know whether it happened  
9           to other people, but I just know about me and her.

10   Q.  But that's something she confided in you when she was  
11           alive?

12   A.  Yeah.

13   Q.  But something -- you suspected something going on at the  
14           time when you were in Eversley with her?

15   A.  She just became -- was becoming so angry, you know, and  
16           she used to come and visit me to where I'd been moved to  
17           after the home, and she'd come and visit me, come and  
18           see me and she'd be crying and -- but I didn't know what  
19           was wrong until she was older.

20   Q.  I think you tell us, 'Sandra', that you found out later  
21           on that John Marshall actually married RLD ?

22   A.  Yeah, I didn't know at the time, no.

23   Q.  And you say you don't know why, because RLD was not  
24           the marrying kind?

25   A.  Oh, definitely not.

1 Q. What do you mean by that?

2 A. Oh, she was like -- the only way I can explain it is  
3 like Trunchbull.

4 LADY SMITH: Oh, yes.

5 A. In the film.

6 LADY SMITH: Yes.

7 A. That's kinda -- maybe not as big, but she was kind of  
8 that scary.

9 LADY SMITH: That's in 'Matilda', Roald Dahl's 'Matilda'.

10 A. Yeah, yeah, she was kinda like that.

11 MS FORBES: And you say you weren't aware whilst you were in  
12 Eversley of them having any sort of relationship?

13 A. No.

14 Q. But you do say that thinking back, you think he knew  
15 what he was doing and it was his way of making sure he  
16 would continue to have access to children?

17 A. I believe so, yeah.

18 MS FORBES: My Lady, we are getting somewhere, but I think  
19 we still have a little bit to go.

20 LADY SMITH: I think we should have a short break. I think  
21 we should take the morning break now.

22 Would that work for you, 'Sandra' --

23 A. That's absolutely fine.

24 LADY SMITH: -- if we just have a break just now, and then  
25 we probably haven't got very far to go with your

1 evidence, but we can finish it after the break.

2 A. Yes, that's fine.

3 LADY SMITH: Okay? Thank you.

4 (11.30 am)

5 (A short break)

6 (11.48 am)

7 LADY SMITH: 'Sandra', welcome back. Are you ready to carry  
8 on?

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

11 Ms Forbes.

12 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

13 'Sandra', just before the break, we'd got to part of  
14 your statement where we were talking about abuse that  
15 you suffered at Eversley. And I think you go on to tell  
16 us at paragraph 124 that this is something that's hard  
17 to explain, but when something was happening as  
18 regularly as it did in Eversley, it's hard to look on it  
19 as abuse, because you just thought it was the normal  
20 routine?

21 A. Didn't know anything different.

22 Q. And you say that a lot of the children there used to  
23 touch each other. Is that sexually touch each other?  
24 And that would be often in the toilets at the back and  
25 you would speak about it amongst yourselves. And you

1 say you were still young but for a lot of your time at  
2 Eversley, sexualised behaviour was normal, although you  
3 don't think any of the staff would necessarily have been  
4 aware. That's about what the children were doing.

5 But you go on to say that:

6 'Touching used to happen when we were away in the  
7 caravan as well.'

8 You say it wasn't as bad as what RLO did,  
9 but if it happened nowadays, you would think it was too  
10 close for comfort, and it would be things such as  
11 sitting on each other's knees and that sort of thing?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And you say looking back, you realise that those other  
14 children must have been getting abused too, and that is  
15 how they knew what to do?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. But you say you never witnessed anyone being sexually  
18 abused. Is that by a staff member? You never witnessed  
19 any staff members abusing any other people?

20 A. No.

21 Q. So you can't say that a particular member of staff did  
22 a particular thing, but you say that you know it was  
23 happening. So that's the impression you had --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- at the time.

1           You tell us that when you were about 14 you'd become  
2           really good friends with a boy who you tell us his name.  
3           He was also at Eversley, and although girls were not  
4           allowed in the boys' rooms, you were in his and you were  
5           lying on his bed with him talking. One of the staff saw  
6           you and you were then accused of having sex. Is that  
7           right?

8   A. Yeah.

9   Q. And you say that you were taken into the recreation room  
10       below RLD's flat in the garden and you were caned by  
11       RLD in there. You didn't see the boy getting  
12       punished, but you say you know that he also got caned by  
13       RLD?

14   A. Yeah.

15   Q. And you tried to tell RLD that nothing had happened,  
16       but she didn't believe you and she called you various  
17       names. And you say she was basically accusing you of  
18       being a slut --

19   A. Yeah.

20   Q. -- while she hit you with the cane. And you say that  
21       she hit you about five or six times across your backside  
22       on top of your clothes, and you'd done nothing wrong?

23   A. No.

24   Q. You go on, 'Sandra', to tell us about different times  
25       when you tried to report abuse that happened to you, and

1           you tell us that you reported the man who had abused you  
2           at your mum's house before you'd gone into Eversley.  
3           You say that you reported him to the police and you were  
4           still a child when you did that. You were about 10 or  
5           11 and you'd recognised his voice, seen him on the  
6           street and he was selling papers, shouting out.

7                     And you say you reported it but you don't remember  
8           speaking to the police about it?

9   A. No.

10  Q. You also reported RLI [REDACTED], the night staff member  
11       who hit you with a slipper, to one of the day staff, but  
12       you say she didn't believe you and nothing was done?

13  A. Yeah.

14  Q. And you told your housefather, Charles Feely, the next  
15       day after Steven MacDonald had abused you sexually, and  
16       he took you to RLD [REDACTED], but she called you a liar and  
17       you got into trouble?

18  A. Yeah. For telling lies.

19  Q. Yeah. And you say you told other children about that  
20       and asked if Steven MacDonald had done the same to them,  
21       but they said he hadn't and you thought it was just you?

22  A. Yeah.

23  Q. And you then say that you knew it was no use telling  
24       anybody about what RLO [REDACTED] was doing after that,  
25       because you say you knew nobody would believe you then

1           either?

2    A.   Yeah.

3    Q.   But you say, thinking back, that's when your behaviour

4           started to change, you say, to escalate?

5    A.   Yeah.

6    Q.   You comment, they should have been looking at why, but

7           instead they didn't believe you and told you that you

8           were a liar. And you say you realise now that you

9           became angry and you were fighting with everybody and

10          yet none of the staff asked you why?

11   A.   Thinking back on that, then, yeah.

12   Q.   And do you think that is why your behaviour changed?

13   A.   Yeah, I think so, 'cos when you're continuously being

14          told you're a liar, or things are happening and you

15          don't -- as a young brain, it's hard to kinda work out

16          what's right, what's wrong, do you know what I mean?

17          And as you say, when you're not believed, and then it's

18          like: Well, what's the use? Then you just get angry at

19          things.

20   Q.   And you've spoken about your social worker, Norma, and

21          you say you got on very well with her and she was

22          a comfort for you and you could speak to her, but you

23          say the home had drummed it into you not to say

24          anything?

25   A.   Yeah.

1 Q. And you say:  
2 'Abuse was the norm and as much as I now understand  
3 how it was wrong ...'  
4 At the time it was your life and you didn't feel  
5 traumatised?  
6 A. Not at that time.  
7 Q. So -- and I think you tell us later in your statement,  
8 you didn't tell Norma about what happened to you until  
9 later --  
10 A. No.  
11 Q. -- in life when you were an adult?  
12 A. Yeah.  
13 Q. So you didn't feel that you were able to tell her when  
14 you were a child --  
15 A. No.  
16 Q. -- even though you had a good relationship with her?  
17 A. I think when I think back to being a child, where  
18 Norma's concerned, is that where nobody believed me in  
19 the home and called me a liar, maybe there was a part of  
20 my child brain that, if I told Norma, maybe she might  
21 not come back as well.  
22 Q. I think you say that at paragraph 134, there was the  
23 fear that if you did say anything, people might not want  
24 to know you and would look at you differently?  
25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And was that something you were worried about, that  
2 people might look at you and you'd feel ashamed?  
3 A. Yeah.  
4 LADY SMITH: 'Sandra', I'm also wondering whether what was  
5 going on there was: Norma was a good part of your life.  
6 A. Yes.  
7 LADY SMITH: And you wouldn't have wanted to risk making  
8 a good part of your life --  
9 A. Become part of the bad.  
10 LADY SMITH: Damaged in any way at all. Would that be  
11 right?  
12 A. Yeah.  
13 LADY SMITH: So you don't take the bad part into the good  
14 part.  
15 A. That's right, yeah.  
16 LADY SMITH: Thank you.  
17 MS FORBES: 'Sandra', you tell us you left Eversley in 1976  
18 when you were 15. I think we have a date in your  
19 records that you went into a hostel, it was West Princes  
20 Street Hostel in Glasgow.  
21 A. That's right.  
22 Q. The date we have there is [REDACTED] 1977, so you  
23 maybe would have been 16 at that point. But around  
24 about that time --  
25 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

1 Q. -- you say that you thought you were getting taken out  
2 of Eversley because you were bad, but you were told that  
3 you were too old to stay there anymore?

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. And it was Norma who picked you up and took you along to  
6 the hostel in Glasgow.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
9  
10

11 A.

12 Q. And you were still seeing Norma; is that right?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Sorry. I think you say you were still seeing your  
15 social worker regularly, but Norma was ill for a while  
16 I think?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And so there was a man that you would see?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. Yeah, and you give us his name.

21 There then comes a part of your statement, 'Sandra',  
22 which is redacted, Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
23 Secondary Institutions - to when you were staying at the hostel in  
24 West Princes Street.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q.

2

3 A.

4 Q.

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14 A.

15 Q.

16

17

18 A.

19 Q. And then a place was sought for you at -- in Bristol?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Which was with the Richmond Fellowship, and it was

22 a sort of place which maybe focused a little bit more on

23 mental health welfare --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- for kind of troubled --

1 A. More psychology, that type thing.

2 Q. So just looking at that history, I just wanted to  
3 briefly, if I could, [REDACTED], take you to a couple  
4 of documents --

5 LADY SMITH: So when you first went there, you were still  
6 under 16?

7 A. Yeah.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MS FORBES: My computer has stopped working. Apologies,  
10 my Lady, things are happening.

11 LADY SMITH: That's all right.

12 (Pause)

13 MS FORBES: Apologies. Sometimes my mouse doesn't work.  
14 So there's a document, and it was something that you  
15 hadn't received yourself from your records, but you are  
16 aware, because before today I've taken you to certain  
17 parts of it. So I just want to take you briefly to  
18 a couple of bits. We're not going to go through --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- lots of detail, but the reference for these records,  
21 these are your social work records and it's an extract  
22 of them, and it's GLA-000004095. And the first part  
23 I want to take you to is page 5 of those records.

24 If we can go to page 5. Now, it's quite difficult  
25 to see because these are handwritten, but if we could

1           maybe zoom in a little bit. On the left-hand side of  
2           the page there's a column with dates?

3   A.   Yeah.

4   Q.   And if we go kinda halfway down the page, it says March  
5           1977 on the left-hand side?

6   A.   Yeah.

7   Q.   And then to the right there are some handwritten notes,  
8           and it seems that these are social work handwritten  
9           notes about you, and what we can see there is it says,  
10          on page 5 it says:

11          'Case papers received. Case unallocated for many  
12          years. Children seen at least yearly for review reports  
13          to hearing. No case reviews in children's home. Very  
14          little factual information on ['Sandra'] or any other  
15          children.'

16   LADY SMITH: So at this stage you're still 15, at that date,  
17          yes?

18   A.   I think I was just -- I was just -- I think I was going  
19          to be 16.

20   LADY SMITH: You'd be 16 later than year.

21   A.   Yeah, yeah.

22   LADY SMITH: But in March 1977 you were still 15.

23   A.   Yeah.

24   MS FORBES: And then there's a part of a paragraph which  
25          talks about some weekend leave you had at home and some

1 issues involving the police.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. But then it starts and it says, about halfway down that  
4 paragraph, it says:

5 'Again, promises -- '

6 So, I don't know if we can see that there --

7 A. Yeah, yeah, I see it.

8 Q. It says:

9 'Again, promises to behave as she used to, long  
10 discussion with RLD who is very bitter about  
11 ['Sandra']. Apparently, ['Sandra'] was one of RLD's  
12 favourites and since her behaviour deteriorated has been  
13 ignored. RLD is very hostile in her attitude to this  
14 girl and speaks to her and of her in a very sneering  
15 manner.'

16 A. Aye.

17 Q. So it appears that --

18 A. There you go.

19 Q. -- whoever is writing this from the social work point of  
20 view, has spoken to RLD about you and that this is  
21 their impression of observing her attitude, from what  
22 she said and what they've seen towards you.

23 So if we could then go, again briefly, to page 20 of  
24 that document. And if we can see at the top right  
25 there's an address and then it says 1977. So

1 date-wise this seems to be from --

2 A. Oh, right, yeah.

3 Q. -- [REDACTED] 1977, so you would have just turned 16.

4 A. That was the social workers' office.

5 Q. Yes. And we can see this is a sort of report and  
6 I think it's a report to the panel or the hearings, and  
7 if we can go to page 21, just to the end of that, we can  
8 see that the author of this report is Ms N MacPhee,  
9 Senior Social Worker, so it seems to be written by  
10 Norma.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So if we go back to page 20, and I just want to take you  
13 to a particular part. And this is the third paragraph  
14 and it says:

15 '["Sandra"] states that she was happy in Eversley  
16 and felt herself loved by RLD [REDACTED] and the staff there  
17 until two years ago. I cannot obtain a clear reason why  
18 the breakdown in ["Sandra's"] behaviour occurred and the  
19 subsequent complete breakdown of the relationship  
20 between ["Sandra"], RLD [REDACTED] especially, and the rest  
21 of the staff in the home.'

22 So it's clear that Norma, again, has -- Norma here  
23 anyway, is definitely the person who authored this  
24 report, and she seems to have recorded this change, not  
25 only in your behaviour, but in the behaviour of RLD [REDACTED]

1       RLD       towards you?

2    A.   And I think that's why I felt that that's why they  
3       wanted rid of me out the home.

4    Q.   Yeah.  And I think there's just one final part I wanted  
5       to take you to, so it's page 15.  I know we're going  
6       backwards but this is actually forwards in time, because  
7       the pages are slightly out of order.

8               And this is an application for admission to the  
9       Richmond Fellowship.  I think you can see the Richmond  
10      Fellowship at the top right?

11   A.   Yeah.

12   Q.   The name at the top right of the page.

13              If you just go up slightly -- sorry, go down  
14      slightly.

15   A.   Yeah.

16   Q.   Yeah, you can see that there.  And again, if we, just so  
17      we see who wrote this, if we go to page 16 of this --  
18      actually, sorry, it might be further down.  Sorry,  
19      page 19.

20              We see there's       but that's  
21      actually Norma MacPhee, Senior Social Worker.  So she's  
22      the one that's made this application, and at the part  
23      where there's a section to put in a case history and  
24      a social history, she seems to have filled in the  
25      information.

1           So we can see that that is, again, written by her.

2           So if we can go back to page 17 of that document.

3           Again, this is where she's given a bit of a history of

4           how you came to be in care and when you were in care.

5           And there's one big paragraph at the beginning there and

6           if we can see the last sentence there, I'm just going

7           to -- sorry, I'm just going to start reading from that

8           first paragraph. So it says:

9           ['Sandra'] was admitted to care in ██████████ 1969.

10          At that time she was very difficult and beyond her

11          parents' control. She was defiant and aggressive. The

12          family had been known to the RSPCC for some time and it

13          was arranged that ['Sandra'] should be admitted to care.

14          Her three siblings followed her in ██████████ [that says]

15          1969. All of the children were placed in Eversley

16          Children's Home Glasgow.'

17          And then it talks about your younger sister, the one

18          that's two years younger than you, being the only one

19          still there by the time that this report has been

20          written. And then it says:

21          ['Sandra'] was apparently quite happy there,

22          progressed well at school and in her relationships with

23          her peers and adults. In 1975, several happenings

24          resulted in her becoming very aggressive, defiant and

25          very much a problem for the staff.'

1           And then there's three things listed, so I'm just  
2 going to read that:

3           '1. Supplanted by a handicapped child in RLD 's  
4 affection. Previously ['Sandra'] had been very much RLD  
5 RLD 's favourite. This is fact. Staff in home very  
6 angry about RLD 's favourites, but situation has been  
7 that way for 20 years and cannot or will not change.

8           '2. Her housemother was ill for approximately nine  
9 months and ['Sandra'] was passed from house group to  
10 house group.

11           '3. Her friend with whom she spent most Saturdays  
12 and occasional weekends disappeared and subsequently let  
13 the home know she had married and emigrated to Canada.

14           'The obvious results can be seen on this girl, just  
15 13, change of school, now adolescent, and the three  
16 major relationships vanished almost literally overnight.  
17 The social work department can accept some  
18 responsibility. No social worker was working with the  
19 family or children at that time, not indeed until  
20 RLD 1977 when I was given the case.'

21           So I just wanted to take you to those parts because  
22 it seems to support what you tell us about RLD and  
23 her behaviour changing towards you, and the fact that  
24 this behaviour change in yourself was noticed, but the  
25 reasons, the underlying reasons for that, were never

1 explored or identified.

2 A. No.

3 Q. And as you've said, you've told us about the abuse that  
4 was happening to you. That seems to be the catalyst for  
5 this change in your behaviour.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. But it wasn't detected at the time.

8 So you hadn't seen this before yesterday, 'Sandra',  
9 but --

10 A. That's the first time I've seen it.

11 Q. But I think is it something -- seeing that, is that  
12 something that gives you a little bit of solace, knowing  
13 that there is support there? Even though Norma didn't  
14 know what was going on because you hadn't told her --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- she was recognising this?

17 A. For me, 'cos when I started out on this journey now,  
18 it's like I was telling my story of what my life was.  
19 And getting it out there and being listened to is a big  
20 part of it, but then, when you told me yesterday about  
21 the other records that collaborated what I'd already  
22 said last year when I did this originally, it made me  
23 feel: oh, my God, now they can see that what I've said  
24 is true, all along.

25 LADY SMITH: So, is this okay, that you've only just seen

1           this, 'Sandra'?

2   A.  It feels in the hope, my Lady, that now I can put some  
3           closure on things as the --

4   LADY SMITH:  Good.

5   A.  It's like a closure, that now you've been listened to,  
6           and now you can sort of sit back and go: right,  
7           hopefully this will never happen again.

8   LADY SMITH:  But I hope you also see reassurance in this,  
9           this document.

10  A.  Yeah.

11  LADY SMITH:  That your feeling about what was going on,  
12           particularly with **RLD** and her favourites and then she  
13           changed her favourites.

14  A.  Other people had seen it but just nothing was done,  
15           yeah.

16  LADY SMITH:  And you were just 13.

17  A.  Yeah.

18  LADY SMITH:  Just coming out of early childhood into  
19           puberty.

20  A.  Secondary school and --

21  LADY SMITH:  Secondary.  Yes.

22  A.  Yeah.

23  LADY SMITH:  That must have been tough.

24  A.  Yeah.  This has been a bit of a tough journey but, you  
25           know, you see the light at the end of tunnel now, kind

1           of thing, you know?

2   LADY SMITH:   Good.

3   A.   It's where you can kind of put it to bed, so to speak,  
4           and say: right, people know the facts, people know the  
5           truth. Now you can breathe and go: now's time for my  
6           life.

7   LADY SMITH:   Yes, good.

8   A.   Yeah.

9   LADY SMITH:   Ms Forbes.

10  MS FORBES:   Thank you, my Lady.

11           And what we looked at last -- we're just going to go  
12           back to your statement now, 'Sandra', which is -- ends  
13           1750.

14           What we looked at last was that being an application  
15           to the Richmond Fellowship and you tell us in your  
16           statement that after being at the placement in  
17           Benbecula, you went to the Richmond Fellowship in  
18           Bristol for a period and you tell us a little bit about  
19           that in your statement.

20           You say you weren't really happy to go but you went  
21           anyway and it was actually all right, but you ran away  
22           from there as well though. But you say then that after  
23           that, you were put into a homeless hostel in Glasgow for  
24           a week or two, and then you say that St Elizabeth's, the  
25           Richmond Fellowship, were persuaded to take you back and

1           you did go there.

2           Then you tell us about your life after being in care  
3           from paragraph 152 and you say you left Bristol when you  
4           were 17, and you tell us about a relationship that you  
5           got into. You got a flat with that man. You got a job.  
6           And you say you then went on to meet a man who was to  
7           become the father of your oldest daughter, and you say  
8           you started going out with him, but when you got  
9           pregnant he didn't want to know. But you stayed down  
10          there, this is down in Croydon, and you say you were  
11          getting in trouble with the police because at this time,  
12          I think the way you describe yourself was, you would  
13          fight with your shadow back then. So there was still  
14          a lot of anger from what you're telling us?

15        A. Yeah, a lot.

16        Q. But a lot of chaos, from what you've described, still  
17          going on in your life.

18          You stayed in touch with Norma and you say she'd  
19          become your friend and was like a mother figure to you,  
20          and then, just before you gave birth to your daughter,  
21          you were given a house by the council and Norma helped  
22          you furnish it.

23          And then you say you had another relationship for  
24          a couple of years and then you moved and got a job in  
25          a bar and met the man who was to become your husband --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- after that. And you got married. You had another  
3 daughter. And you say there was still trouble involving  
4 the police at that time and a period of probation when  
5 you were pregnant with your third daughter, but you say  
6 that you went to see this probation officer and she  
7 asked you if you'd ever thought about what you wanted to  
8 do with your life, and you said you'd always wanted to  
9 be a nurse?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And certainly that's something that is in your records,  
12 that is recorded, that when you were young you said you  
13 wanted to be a nurse?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. But as you've explained already, you didn't sit any  
16 GCSEs --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- before you left school so she found you an access to  
19 nursing course. You completed that. You did extremely  
20 well and were the top student for the year and got  
21 an award for outstanding achievement, and you then went  
22 on to study nursing at South Bank University and at  
23 King's College.

24 Sorry, you applied, sorry, to study nursing at South  
25 Bank University and at King's College. They both

1           accepted you so you went to King's.

2           You qualified in 1998 and worked your way up the  
3           ranks, did things like learning to drive, and you say  
4           that's when your life started to come together, bit by  
5           bit?

6   A.   Yeah.

7   Q.   You tell us about some health problems that you've had  
8           and some pain as a result of that. However, you  
9           continued nursing. You sat a degree course to get  
10          further promotions.

11  A.   Yeah.

12  Q.   And you say at the time of this statement, which was not  
13          that long ago, you are a matron in practice development,  
14          clinical lead?

15  A.   Yeah.

16  Q.   So you've done really well. You're now training others?

17  A.   Yes, now, that's the role I do now.

18  Q.   You say sadly your husband died in 2021 --

19  A.   Yeah.

20  Q.   -- of cancer, but you'd been together with him up until  
21          that point, and you explain that that was a struggle for  
22          a while for you and your daughters.

23          But you tell us that your daughters are all nearby  
24          and that you have bought a static home near one of them  
25          and that's your happy place, is that right?

1 A. Yes. We bought it for -- I bought a caravan for the  
2 children, and so, for somewhere where we can just go and  
3 go off for weekends together with the grandchildren and  
4 what have you. Yeah, so it's a happy -- we call it the  
5 happy place.

6 Q. And I think you tell us a bit later that it's your  
7 daughters and grandchildren that really mean a lot to  
8 you; is that right?

9 A. Oh, the world.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 In relation to impact, 'Sandra', you tell us that  
12 really you trusted nobody, and the older you got, the  
13 angrier you got. You tell us about struggles with  
14 self-harming, but that stopped when you had your  
15 children.

16 A. Yeah, when I had my oldest daughter.

17 Q. And you explain that you never took drugs, but alcohol  
18 has sometimes been an issue --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- over the years. You have struggled to get help with  
21 that sometimes, but you say you are getting better now.

22 But you go on to say, at paragraph 165, that sex was  
23 normalised at Eversley, and as much as it was bad, you  
24 say:

25 'I don't remember being traumatised by the sexual

1 abuse when I was a child.'

2 You say, I think you go on to say, it didn't seem to  
3 bother you until you were an adult and you started to  
4 have a consensual sexual relationship?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And then that's when the issues really started; it made  
7 you physically sick?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. So you say that that, then, tore you apart, but you  
10 managed to get through it and that's when you started to  
11 tell Norma about how you were feeling, and it was only  
12 then that you were able to tell her about what happened?

13 A. Yeah, that's when I told her.

14 Q. And you say you were able to tell your husband as well  
15 before you got married. And so that's something that  
16 you were able to do, but you say that that was at a time  
17 when you were self-harming and he was struggling to know  
18 how to help you with that?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. You go on to tell us that you struggled when your  
21 children each left home, but you say that your kids  
22 don't go without, you're always there, sometimes too  
23 much, and you often -- don't often say 'no'?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. So that's not a word in your vocabulary?

1 A. No. I wish it was.

2 Q. And we've talked about your sister, the one that sadly  
3 passed away, and you tell us a bit about that and we  
4 have heard obviously how important it is for you to come  
5 and get her story out as much as you can.

6 I think you tell us then about the sibling contact  
7 that you've had, and it seems that the fact that you  
8 were separated from your siblings seems to have affected  
9 the relationship that you're able to have in later life;  
10 is that fair?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And you do -- obviously there's siblings to different  
13 fathers, but all with the same mother; is that right?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. But you say, paragraph 172, you don't see your other  
16 sisters and brothers a lot but you're in contact every  
17 now and again. But you explain that there is issue with  
18 your other sister; that's the one that was adopted out?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And that, I think, is related to the fact that she  
21 didn't want to see your mum when she was alive --

22 A. That's right.

23 Q. -- but turned up at her funeral, is that right?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And you explain that you don't tell many people what

1           happened to you, but you seem to be drawn to a certain  
2           type of person, and that's people who have been abused?

3    A.   Yeah.

4    Q.   But you can explain it's something that you sort of  
5           recognise --

6    A.   It seems to be.

7    Q.   I think the way you put it is you say:

8           'You also attract abusers if you have been abused.  
9           It's as if you are transparent and they can see right  
10          through you and they know you are a person they too can  
11          abuse.'

12          Is that how you felt?

13   A.   More so years -- not so much now, but, yeah.

14   Q.   You go on to tell us, 'Sandra', later in your statement  
15          about the struggles that you have had; the self-harming,  
16          the attempted suicide, struggles with anorexia and the  
17          treatment that you've gone through. But you also tell  
18          us that you've seen a counsellor and that seems to have  
19          helped, but you've done a lot of self-help as well; is  
20          that right?

21   A.   Yeah.

22   Q.   And that as a nurse you've learned a lot through your  
23          job?

24   A.   Yeah.

25   Q.   And you've been able to understand a lot more as time's

1 gone on?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And has it helped then, the time, being able to get some  
4 perspective and learning about it, that's really helped  
5 with that?

6 A. I think when I passed all my national exams and as you  
7 go through your nursing career, you start obviously  
8 a young student nurse and then you go on and you learn  
9 all the various different -- and the type of nursing  
10 that I done back then, it's not so much now, but we done  
11 a little bit of everything when we were training, a bit  
12 of mental health, a bit of maternity, then you decide  
13 where you wanted to go, and I decided I registered.

14 But during that time then you go on and I've worked  
15 in A&E for over 25 years and you get all sorts coming  
16 through the door, from mental health, to rapes, domestic  
17 violence, and sometimes it can cause a little trigger,  
18 so you learn how to deal with it, because you're there  
19 to help them, but it helps you understand it more, if  
20 that makes sense.

21 Q. And I think you go on, 'Sandra', to talk about the fact  
22 that you, in 1999, reported both Steven MacDonald and  
23 RLO to the police in Kilmarnock?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. There was a time when you'd moved up to Scotland for

1 a while?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. I think it didn't really work out so you moved back down  
4 to Croydon?

5 A. Yeah, that was in 1998.

6 Q. Yeah. And you say you went into Kilmarnock Police  
7 Station and told them everything that had happened and  
8 you say there was an investigation. The police didn't  
9 do anything about RLO [REDACTED], because they told you  
10 he had mental health problems?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Was that something that surprised you at the time?

13 A. It annoyed me when they said it to me and I was like:  
14 I don't understand. At the end of the day, he still did  
15 it, regardless of whether he's got a mental health  
16 problem or anything. He's still guilty of what he's  
17 done. And they said that they wouldn't get anywhere  
18 with him, that he was more like a little, like a Roy  
19 Cropper type out of Coronation Street. But I was angry,  
20 'cos I thought: well, that doesn't give the right that  
21 -- not to be taken to account for what he's done, 'cos  
22 who's to say it wasn't just me? There might have been  
23 others.

24 Q. But in relation to RLO [REDACTED], that didn't go  
25 anywhere.

1 A. Nothing happened.

2 Q. But in relation to Steven MacDonald, he was arrested?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. And we talked about the voice identity parade --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- that you had to do and you were able to do, and you

7 tell us he was charged with several offences and it went

8 to court?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you gave evidence in court, is that right?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And I think in your statement you thought that would

13 have been in 2004, but I think we know from a record we

14 have, it was 2002, so thereabouts.

15 But ultimately, I think what we know is that he was

16 convicted of two offences, one related to you, and that

17 related to your time in Eversley between the ages of

18 about 12 and 13. I think it was referred to as

19 'shameless indecency', the words of the time.

20 And there was also another girl, again somebody from

21 Eversley, who was a lot younger than you, who was on the

22 other charge.

23 Now, I think until now, you didn't really know what

24 had happened properly with that case?

25 A. No.

1 Q. And you've not really been told properly --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- what the outcome was. But I think you know, because

4 we've talked about it?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. So you know now that ultimately, even though he was

7 convicted, he appealed it and in 2003, the Appeal Court

8 heard that appeal, and the appeal was in relation to the

9 evidence of the other girl who gave evidence. So it

10 didn't relate in any way to your charge. And because of

11 the problems with the evidence and the defence not being

12 able to do certain things in that trial, the Appeal

13 Court decided that that charge couldn't stand.

14 And I think it's been explained to you that because

15 your charge relied upon her charge, to be able to prove

16 it, to mutually corroborate one another, both charges

17 then fell.

18 But I think you now know that the appeal that

19 quashed his conviction was not in any way in relation to

20 your evidence; it related to --

21 A. I understand that now. All this time I didn't know.

22 Q. You hadn't been told about that before?

23 A. No.

24 Q. It hadn't been explained to you?

25 A. No.

1 Q. But certainly a jury accepted both your evidence and the  
2 evidence of the other girl, but on appeal, evidentially  
3 there was a problem with the other charge, which meant  
4 that your charge -- both charges fell.

5 So I think from our conversation before about that,  
6 this is something that's given you a little bit of  
7 solace, again, because you didn't know what had  
8 happened?

9 A. No.

10 Q. And had you been told it was something to do with  
11 something your husband had said outside court?

12 A. Yeah, we were told it was something that -- somebody had  
13 overheard my husband talking outside the court, in  
14 Glasgow, and my husband and I were like: well, what did  
15 we say, you know? And for all these years, [REDACTED]'s felt  
16 as if he'd let me down, because it got overturned. And  
17 now, if he was alive, I'd be giving him a big cuddle to  
18 say: 'It weren't you, it was something completely  
19 different'. But all these years we thought it was  
20 something [REDACTED] had done.

21 Q. And do you know how you got that impression? Was it  
22 that someone told you --

23 A. Because we were called in.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And told that it was overheard, he was overheard. We

1 got called back to the court.

2 Q. Was it somebody from the court or the Crown --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. The court --

5 A. Told us that it was a conversation that was overheard,  
6 so we put it down to that, only to find out now it was  
7 nothing to do with that.

8 Q. I think you say that you know that John Marshall's  
9 victims eventually got justice, but as we've discussed,  
10 that didn't happen, unfortunately, for your sister?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Because she died before there was any trial. And  
13 I think from what you told us, she hadn't reported  
14 anything before that to the police about him; is that  
15 right?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You go on to tell us, 'Sandra', about a civil action  
18 against Glasgow Council and we have that there, and you  
19 make the point that even though you were awarded  
20 compensation, it's all very well, but that doesn't take  
21 it away, and no amount of money can take anything away.

22 So I think you make that point quite clearly, that  
23 it was something you did. But you say that although the  
24 council are accountable, have accepted responsibility,  
25 the people who committed the abuse haven't?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And you go on to tell us about records, 'Sandra', and  
3 we've already talked about that and we've gone to some  
4 today, so I won't go over that with you.

5 You then go on to 'Lessons to be Learned' from  
6 paragraph 201, and I think really what you tell us is  
7 that the council should really do regular visits to  
8 these types of homes. They should just turn up and  
9 that's the best way to do it. That people in social  
10 services need to have the right qualifications and  
11 knowledge to help them understand and recognise an  
12 abused child. People should be properly vetted and  
13 qualifications checked thoroughly. And you say children  
14 in your time did not have a voice.

15 So children having a voice now is something you feel  
16 quite strongly about?

17 A. 100 per cent.

18 Q. And you say, 'Sandra', at paragraph 205:

19 'I hope that abuse such as I experienced never  
20 happens again. I hope that people are able to recognise  
21 the impact abuse can have on a child. I am now in my  
22 60s and my experiences still have an impact on me.  
23 I wouldn't want that for anybody.'

24 A. No. That's exactly it. That's all I would want, is  
25 that they listen, and for people to be trained in --

1       it's like us as nurses, we are trained in certain areas.  
2       It might be cancer, it might be A&E, might -- and you're  
3       trained, and during that training you're trained to pick  
4       up on certain things and what to do. And obviously  
5       children's homes back in the day, when I was younger,  
6       they're not like that -- I wouldn't presume they're  
7       anything like that now. But I just feel that vetting is  
8       a big, big thing, and making sure that they've got no  
9       convictions, they've got nothing, you know. And just  
10      let the children have a voice.

11 MS FORBES: Well, 'Sandra', thank you very much. I know  
12       I've taken a lot longer this morning than you maybe  
13       thought you were going to be giving evidence, so  
14       I'm sorry about that, but thank you very much for  
15       answering all my questions so fully.

16             Is there anything that you want to say that you  
17       haven't had a chance to say?

18 A. No, I just want to say that, if anything, I just want to  
19       say thank you for having the chance to actually,  
20       I suppose you could say, tell my story. But it's pretty  
21       much my life story really. And that something is now  
22       taking place to prevent these things happening in the  
23       future.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, 'Sandra'. Let me add my  
25       thanks. I'm really grateful to you for bringing to life





1           that quite recently. It's been really good though to be  
2           able to study it in advance and your CV, which has  
3           helped with my understanding of the amount that's been  
4           in your professional life so far.

5           What we would like to do today, as you'll  
6           appreciate, is focus on some particular aspects of what  
7           you have already told us about in writing and explore in  
8           particular matters relating to Eversley, which is the  
9           chapter that we're looking at, at the moment, in our  
10          work here.

11          If, at any time, you've got any questions, do speak  
12          up. If we're not making sense, that's our fault, not  
13          yours. The plan is to take evidence for about 20  
14          minutes from you, just now, have the lunch break and  
15          then resume at about 2 o'clock and we'll pick it up  
16          again there?

17   A. Great.

18   LADY SMITH: If you're ready to start, I'll hand over to  
19          Mr Sheldon and he'll take it on; is that all right?

20   A. Yes, fine, thank you.

21   LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

22                                Questions from Mr Sheldon

23   MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

24                                Well, good afternoon, Norma, as it now is.

25                                Norma, you should have your statement in front of

1           you?

2   A.   I do.

3   Q.   And just for our purposes to get it into the record, the  
4           reference for your statement is WIT-1-000001772.  And if  
5           you could turn to the end of your statement, please,  
6           that's page 24, do you see at paragraph 86 there you  
7           have said:

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

12          You signed that, I think, on 30 April of this year;  
13          is that right?

14   A.   Yes.

15   Q.   And does that remain the case?

16   A.   It does, yes.

17   Q.   Thank you.

18          We can turn back to the start of the statement.  
19          And, as Lady Smith has said, we'll go through this, not  
20          line by line, but taking particular aspects of it and we  
21          are particularly interested in your knowledge of, your  
22          experiences at, Eversley Children's Home in the 1970s  
23          and in particular working with then a child who we know  
24          as 'Sandra'.

25   A.   Yes.

1 Q. Before we get into the detail of that, while you are, as  
2 it were, a witness to fact, as Lady Smith has noted, you  
3 have had a career really working in social work, child  
4 psychology, working with child trauma?

5 A. Mm-hmm.

6 Q. And you very helpfully provided us with a CV. I just  
7 want to divert into that briefly. It's a lengthy and  
8 impressive CV and I won't go through it in any detail.

9 But just to get it into the record, I think you  
10 completed a certificate of qualification in social work  
11 in 1973?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Advanced Diploma in Social Work 1984. That was in  
14 London by that stage?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. The initial qualification was Glasgow?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Then a Diploma in Forensic Child Psychology, 1998 at  
19 Leeds?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And MSc in Child Forensic Studies, Psychology and Law at  
22 Leeds. Can I just ask you very briefly about that?  
23 What was the legal component of that?

24 A. It was about how to use the criminal law in terms of  
25 when interviewing children for forensic purposes.

1           Because we needed to understand what the legal  
2           requirement was to have a guilty finding, what things  
3           the defence would likely come up to argue, that if we're  
4           saying if it was rape then what would be the defences  
5           that would be used and to make sure that the interview  
6           with the children then included questions that the  
7           defence would ask. So that, with the new procedures in  
8           interviewing children, the defence would then be  
9           prohibited from asking some of those questions.

10           We could ask them in a better way so that the  
11           children didn't feel so blamed or shamed and it was to  
12           make sure that you understood the law, the criminal law,  
13           not just the safeguarding situation or the care  
14           proceedings and whatnot.

15   Q. I understand. Thank you.

16           You then do a Diploma in Sensorimotor Psychotherapy,  
17           that's 2006, and you talk a little bit about that in  
18           your statement so I'll come back to that.

19   A. Right.

20   Q. And then a Diploma in EMDR Therapy and I want to get  
21           this right, is it eye movement desensitisation and  
22           reprogramming?

23   A. Reprocessing.

24   Q. Reprocessing?

25   A. Yeah.

1 Q. I beg your pardon.

2 So that's the qualifications that you have, but you

3 list quite a number of additional training courses that

4 you've been through?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And at the foot of the first page of your CV, you note

7 your work experience. So 1970/71: Trainee Social

8 Worker. Then a course leading to the CQSW, '71 to '73

9 and at that time you're working principally in Glasgow

10 is that right?

11 A. Yes, I was.

12 Q. '73 to '75: Social Worker to Urban Aid Project. '75 to

13 '78: Team Leader, Homeless Families Team, Glasgow. And

14 then I think at that stage you moved down south; is that

15 right?

16 A. Met an Englishman.

17 Q. All right.

18 And '78 to '86 you're a team leader for the children

19 and families unit in Maidenhead; that's Kent, right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And from 1986 you are then working as an independent

22 child protection consultant, trainer and

23 psychotherapist, but I think at that stage you were

24 still working part-time for -- in child social work,

25 child psychology?

1 A. Yes, I wasn't employed by a health authority or a local  
2 authority. In fact, I was -- no, I wasn't. I was  
3 independent entirely, but I was invited to participate  
4 in different pieces of work by different agencies from  
5 education to health and social services.

6 Q. All right. Thank you.

7 A. Yeah. We set up the first joint interviews with police  
8 officers and social workers. I did some training in  
9 Chicago with the I-SEARCH programme, where they had  
10 psychologists and police officers interviewing children  
11 and they said: that's what you should be doing in  
12 Britain. So a police officer and I set it up in  
13 Maidenhead.

14 Q. All right. We'll perhaps come back to look at that in  
15 a little more detail, Norma, thank you.

16 But just to complete, as it were, the survey of your  
17 professional resumé, I think you set up a consulting  
18 firm, essentially --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- to do your consulting work. If we can look, please,  
21 at GLA-000004094, please.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Is that -- what is it? Is it a flyer, as it were, a CV  
24 for your consulting work?

25 A. I think it was because we were invited to speak at

1 a national conference about the work that we were doing  
2 and we were asked to give a resumé of our experience  
3 and --

4 Q. I see.

5 A. -- what we would be contributing to the conference.

6 Q. Do you recall when this was, Norma, when this would have  
7 been put together?

8 A. Probably mid-'80s.

9 Q. If we look at page 2 --

10 A. No, a bit later than that. It would have been mid-90s,  
11 mid-90s, sorry, mid-90s, yes.

12 Q. If we look at page 3, we see there is a resumé of both  
13 you and would this have been your partner?

14 A. My colleague, yes.

15 Q. And we see in the second paragraph of the second column  
16 in relation to you, that you've been working  
17 independently since 1986?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So this is presumably after that?

20 A. Yes, it would have been. I think it was the mid-'90s.

21 Q. Okay. Thanks very much.

22 A. I don't remember this, but, yeah, it's definitely what  
23 we wrote.

24 Q. And looking at page 4 and just to glance at that  
25 really --

1 A. Do you know what I think it might have been? I think we  
2 were -- it was we were reviewing the interviewing -- the  
3 red book, the how to interview children in criminal  
4 proceedings, and then they were rewriting it and we were  
5 asked to contribute to that document for the 'Achieving  
6 Best Evidence' document.

7 Q. All right. Thank you.

8 And looking at page 4, it's page 4 in our  
9 pagination, but we see just, I think, a list of some of  
10 the issues that you would be dealing with and talking  
11 about --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- in the consultancy.

14 Well, thank you. We can put that aside now. And  
15 move back to your statement.

16 We don't need your date of birth, but I think you  
17 were born in 1950; is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I should have asked you in relation to your working life  
20 and your career; are you still working, Norma?

21 A. If you asked my family I would have to say no, but I do  
22 continue to do some consultations because organisations  
23 like Barnardo's and several others that know about my  
24 experience will, when they have a particularly  
25 challenging situation, come to me and I still do some

1 supervision with some of the psychologists and the  
2 forensic work that I did.

3 Q. Thank you.

4 So on the first page of your statement you give us  
5 a very brief, as it were, early life history.

6 You grew up in Scotland I think in Glasgow' is that  
7 right?

8 A. My family -- my parents were missionaries in Africa and  
9 because I would have had to have been sent back to  
10 school, they decided to come back to Glasgow and came  
11 back to Glasgow when I was 6 so that I could go to  
12 school, yes.

13 Q. And you didn't know -- you tell us you didn't know what  
14 you wanted to do at university, paragraph 2, and are you  
15 telling us that you were told that you had to go into  
16 this line of work effectively?

17 A. Well, he -- the chap at the Labour Exchange was blind  
18 and he asked me to do it with a pin. I had to fill in  
19 a questionnaire with a pin and he could then use it and  
20 like Braille so that he could assess it. And then at  
21 the end of it he said to me: well, this is what you have  
22 to do. You have to be physiotherapist, an occupational  
23 therapist or a social worker, so apply for these  
24 courses.

25 And he gave me the application forms and I got onto

1 all of them and I thought: oh, social work sounds quite  
2 interesting and given my family history of being people  
3 who did and looked after folks who -- so I went: so,  
4 okay, social work seemed to be the thing to do.

5 Q. You tell us, paragraph 3, that you had a job as  
6 a 'trainee' social worker for six months before going to  
7 college. You put 'trainee' in quotation marks; why do  
8 you put it that way?

9 A. I couldn't remember what the actual title was. I think  
10 it was actually 'trainee social worker', because  
11 I didn't have any qualifications at all, but it was  
12 allowing me to do -- I think at this time it would be  
13 an assistant social worker, because I was going round  
14 using a survey that had been done on old people who  
15 lived in Greenock to find out if they were still alive.

16 LADY SMITH: So was this the very beginning of social  
17 workers working under the 1968 Act?

18 A. It was, yes. We were -- I think my group in Jordanhill  
19 and the group in Moray House in Edinburgh were the first  
20 tranche of -- generically qualified social workers.

21 LADY SMITH: I thought your dates might fit that.

22 A. Yeah, and for that reason we were pushed quite hard to  
23 become managers, because they wanted the managers to be  
24 generically trained.

25 LADY SMITH: Ah, right.

1 A. I think that's why, when I was 24/25, I was managing the  
2 homeless families team for the city of Glasgow and you  
3 look back at that and think: for goodness sake. But we  
4 were generically trained so we needed no further  
5 training. We needed no further qualifications, we were  
6 it.

7 MR SHELDON: You tell us a little bit more in outline really  
8 about working in Glasgow and then moving to England.

9 You tell us at paragraph 4 that your role as  
10 a safeguarding consultant came about because a child on  
11 your caseload disclosed that they, she and her sisters,  
12 had been sexually assaulted by their uncle?

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. And you tell us:

15 'I was thinking about what was going on for children  
16 who had been sexually assaulted.'

17 How did that thought process come about and how did  
18 it develop?

19 A. Well, I think because I was watching these girls. Do  
20 you want me to tell -- I can tell you about them.

21 There were six children in the family, three boys  
22 and three girls, and one of the girls was 12 and she  
23 said to me: 'Can I ask you a question?', and I said:  
24 'Yes, sure, what's that?', and she said, 'My uncle's  
25 been having sex with me, is that okay?'. And I said to

1 her: 'I thought you were 12?'. And she said: 'Yeah'.  
2 And I said: 'I actually have no idea', because in  
3 Scotland the age of consent and the age of criminal  
4 responsibility was different to in England. So  
5 I thought I need to go back to the office and find out  
6 what I do for these children.

7 Q. Was there any guidance about what to do at that time?

8 A. Well, what I was told was: if you believe her take her  
9 and her sisters into care. You can leave the boys at  
10 home because they'll be fine. And so I took the three  
11 girls into care and I watched them, from how they  
12 behaved when they were with female adults and how they  
13 behaved when they were with male adults and it intrigued  
14 me, because I thought these little girls became bone  
15 liquid and so kind of sexualised. I was told afterwards  
16 to call it sensualised not sexualised because sexualised  
17 becomes mixed up with sexual development. This is my  
18 training in the States about using language  
19 appropriately.

20 And so I watched these little girls and I thought  
21 there's something going on with these little girls that  
22 makes them think that they need to be sexualised,  
23 sensualising their behaviour with male adults. What is  
24 that about?

25 And it was because of that curiosity that I was then

1 thinking back to some of the young people that I had met  
2 in Glasgow and remembered RLC and remembered another  
3 lass and both of them I contacted and said: 'I need to  
4 ask you something. Has anything sexual ever happened to  
5 you?'. Straight out, you know, never -- yeah. And both  
6 of them said: 'Yeah, of course'. To which I replied,  
7 being a really helpful person: 'Why did you not tell  
8 me?', and one of them said she did and I thought how,  
9 when, what did you tell me?

10 Q. Just to be clear, one of them said that she had told  
11 you?

12 A. Yes, both of them said they had -- no, both of them said  
13 they had been sexually assaulted and when I said: 'Why  
14 did you not tell me?', one of them said: 'I did'. And  
15 then when she told me what she'd said, I thought: I can  
16 see what you are telling me: would my dad start doing,..  
17 would my grandad start doing to my sister what he's done  
18 to me all these years? And a lightbulb went on in my  
19 head and I thought: that's what she was asking me,  
20 telling me. And I said to her: 'Oh, I'm really sorry'.  
21 And she said: 'No, don't be sorry, because if you'd  
22 said, "Yes, he will", I wouldn't have come into care.  
23 I would have stayed at home and protected my sister'.

24 Now then later on she probably wasn't protecting her  
25 sister because he was probably abusing her as well, but

1 my learning at that point went phew and I couldn't  
2 find -- I contacted the NSPCC. I contacted lots of  
3 agencies to say to them: where do I get training on  
4 finding out about sexual abuse of children? Nothing.

5 I had a friend living locally who was American and  
6 I said to her, 'What do they do about sexual abuse in  
7 America?' 'Oh, you have to learn about that', she said.  
8 'There's some really good training in the States. You  
9 need to come to the States and do some training'. So  
10 I did. And that developed from there, and I went back  
11 every year to renew my training in the States.

12 Q. Sure.

13 A. And met a young man from Texas who said to me, 'What are  
14 you doing?', and I said, 'I'm working with children who  
15 have been sexually abused', and he said, 'Ah, don't you  
16 call it sexually assaulted?' and I said, 'Well, no'. He  
17 said, 'It's a criminal --'.

18 Well, anyway. 'It's a criminal offence', I'll  
19 change my language. And he said, 'Have you worked with  
20 the perpetrators?', and I said, 'No, I'm going to be  
21 working with victims'.

22 And he said, 'Well, tell me, ma'am, how can you undo  
23 the brain-fucking when you've never worked with the  
24 brain-fuckers?'. Oh, that's going to be interesting.

25 And then I did some training working with sex

1 offenders in the States. And my ability to work with  
2 victims, I would say, escalated to another level,  
3 because I now knew about how perpetrators even chose  
4 their partners with greater care than they chose their  
5 victims, and it completely changed my view on working  
6 with perpetrators and victims.

7 My youngest perpetrator was a 4-year-old, very  
8 sophisticated little operator, right through to a nun in  
9 her 80s. And -- yeah, I've had a quite interesting  
10 career.

11 Q. Thank you, Norma. I don't want to spend too much time  
12 on this, because there is quite a bit of statement still  
13 to go, but just to pick up on one thing that you said  
14 there about perpetrators choosing their partner more  
15 carefully than they choose their victims?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Can you explain briefly what you mean by that?

18 A. We know about -- we know about perpetrators identifying,  
19 targeting, grooming, manipulating their victims over  
20 time, to enable them to -- I think it's that expression  
21 about 'brain-fucking': they're using their brain-fucking  
22 techniques to make the child/adult feel responsible for  
23 the perpetrating adult's behaviour.

24 So I got that -- I had that clear in my mind, but  
25 then thinking about it, I thought: so, if they choose

1           their victims with this much care, their victim is only  
2           one part of the risk that they're taking, because the  
3           risk they're also taking is with their partner. So  
4           surely they must choose their partner with just as much  
5           care as they choose their victim. And then started to  
6           think about that, and then when I was then doing the  
7           assessments on the criminal aspect, some of the  
8           assessments I was also doing was in what should happen  
9           to the children and would they be safe to live with  
10          their mother or their female parent/person, and I was  
11          thinking: I need to do as much of an assessment on this  
12          adult, the female part of this relationship.

13                 And then as I did that, found that it was such  
14          a crucial component, because these guys had targeted  
15          their partner with even greater care than they had  
16          chosen their victims, because their partner was the  
17          risk. Their partner needed to take -- I can't say to  
18          consent, but their partner needed to be not interfering  
19          with their behaviour with their children.

20         Q. Are you saying not interfering even if the partner knew  
21          what was going on?

22         A. Yes.

23         Q. Or perhaps suspected it?

24         A. Yes, because they had done as much manipulation and  
25          programming and grooming of their partner so their

1 partner would be blamed: 'Well, you didn't'. 'Well, you  
2 didn't'. 'Well, you've done' -- you know, and it was  
3 like: 'Well, your dad' -- it was -- it was the kind of,  
4 yes, the manipulation of their partners, I found, was  
5 just as interesting.

6 And then particularly with the -- when I knew more  
7 as a therapist about how victims and -- whether they  
8 were partners -- as a victim you would use a huge amount  
9 of a psychological process called dissociation, to  
10 enable you to not know and to not do joined-up thinking.  
11 And I just found the partners, the children, had this  
12 high level of not doing joined-up thinking, not being  
13 able to work out, what does -- if this means this, how  
14 does -- you know, it's saying, 'Well, it's my fault he  
15 hits me'. 'Okay, it's your fault he hits'. And part of  
16 my initial training was: just tell them it's not their  
17 fault.

18 Now when I'm doing training I say: 'Never say to  
19 anybody it's not their fault'. That is really, really  
20 not helpful, especially if you're doing an assessment or  
21 you're doing any therapy. What you need to say is: 'Do  
22 you know, that's really interesting. You tell me a bit  
23 about how come you think it's your fault. Have you  
24 always thought it was your fault? Has anybody ever told  
25 you it's your fault? How did -- what happened when

1           somebody else told you it was your fault? Tell me about  
2           that'.

3           And then you'd find out how the manipulation  
4           happened.

5           One woman saying she wanted to watch EastEnders in  
6           peace, and so she knew her husband was going to hammer  
7           her when she got home, so she irritated him when he got  
8           home so that she would get it over with, so she could  
9           watch EastEnders. And I said to her, 'Where were your  
10          children when this happened?' And she hadn't even  
11          thought where -- what impact would this have on her  
12          children, watching her behaviour. So that when I'm then  
13          interviewing the children and talking to them about what  
14          happens between their parents, the children would say:  
15          'It's my mum's fault. My dad said, "Have the dinner on  
16          the table". My dad said, "You sit down". My dad said,  
17          "You do this". Mummy didn't do it, so it's her fault  
18          she got hit'.

19          You know, so I'm thinking: whoa, this is  
20          interesting.

21   MR SHELDON: It is interesting.

22          My Lady, I'm about to move on to Glasgow years, as  
23          it were.

24   LADY SMITH: Yes, we should probably break.

25   MR SHELDON: Perhaps that would be an appropriate moment.

1 LADY SMITH: Norma, thank you very much. We'll stop now for  
2 the lunch break and I'll sit again at 2 o'clock.

3 (1.05 pm)

4 (The luncheon adjournment)

5 (2.00 pm)

6 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. Welcome back, Norma. Are you  
7 ready for us to carry on?

8 A. Yes, good, thank you.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

10 Mr Sheldon.

11 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

12 Norma, I want to move on to talk about your time  
13 training as a social worker in Glasgow and the  
14 placements that you had there.

15 You tell us in your statement really about three  
16 placements: St Euphrasia's, or at least that you saw  
17 St Euphrasia's when you were on placement;  
18 a Dr Barnardo's home in Hawick.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And also Eversley, which of course we're principally  
21 interested in.

22 But I just want to ask you briefly about  
23 St Euphrasia's and Dr Barnardo's. You tell us in some  
24 detail about some of the incidents, or the features,  
25 perhaps, of St Euphrasia's in particular that you

1 found -- your word is 'shocking', actually.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. But you tell us, and it's paragraph 19 of your  
4 statement, that at Dr Barnardo's you could see that --  
5 and I'll ask you about Eversley, of course, in a short  
6 while, but you say that it was very different, that  
7 Dr Barnardo's was very different to Eversley. The staff  
8 were caring and the children were happy:

9 'It felt like they had fun.'

10 And thinking about Eversley and St Euphrasia's, can  
11 you think what it was at Dr Barnardo's that they seemed  
12 to be doing right, to help foster that kind of  
13 atmosphere?

14 A. It had a sense of -- it was lighter. Everybody seemed  
15 happier. The staff seemed to be quite delightfully  
16 involved with the children. They would have laughing  
17 conversations with them. I would be sitting at the  
18 table with them while they would be having their dinner  
19 and it would be -- they would be joking back and  
20 forward. It felt more family orientated. It felt more  
21 like they were trying to make it not a children's home  
22 but make it into something that was a bit more child  
23 friendly and settled, which just felt so completely  
24 different to what I was -- what I had seen and heard in  
25 St Euphrasia's.

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And as I say, you describe for us, and it's evidence  
4 that we have now in your statement about the perhaps  
5 more difficult features of St Euphrasia's and Eversley.

6 But the other topic I wanted to ask you arising from  
7 that is the attitude of your colleagues, particularly  
8 your supervisors --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- in relation to what you were reporting to them. We  
11 understand you were going back to them and saying: look  
12 at St Euphrasia's, for example, they're locking these  
13 girls up in a turret?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. What was their attitude, or what did their attitudes  
16 seem to be, and what do you think lay behind that?

17 A. Essentially, it was none of my business. Essentially,  
18 'Don't stick your nose where it's not invited. Anyway,  
19 what's wrong with it?'

20 Q. Well, that was my next question, Norma.

21 A. And I think that that was the other part of it; it was  
22 kind of like: you don't need to worry about this,  
23 there's nothing wrong with it, but anyway, it's none of  
24 your business. Yeah.

25 Q. Did your managers, your supervisors, not seem at all

1 concerned that this sort of practice was going on?

2 A. No, not at all. Didn't get that -- I didn't get that  
3 impression at all. It was like it was -- it was me that  
4 was the problem by raising that I thought it was  
5 a problem, and therefore I was too young to understand  
6 and essentially it was none of my business.

7 Q. So did it seem to you, at that time, that these  
8 practices -- well, first of all can I ask you: did your  
9 supervisors, managers and so on, appear to know about  
10 these practices already before you had told them about  
11 it?

12 A. They weren't surprised.

13 Q. All right.

14 A. Because I think, as part of my induction/initiation to  
15 being involved, I would be shown round and it seemed  
16 like people were quite frequently being shown round. It  
17 wasn't -- I wasn't exceptional in being shown round. So  
18 I would have been with another couple of adults from  
19 other professions, I think, who were being shown round  
20 at the same time and it was -- I just, I felt like I was  
21 the only person who thought this wasn't all right, and  
22 that was why I discussed it with my supervisor to say,  
23 you know, kind of like, 'What's going on here? Is this  
24 acceptable?' And it was, 'Yeah, very much so'.

25 Q. You tell us at paragraph 27 that in relation to

1 St Euphrasia's, everyone was accepting that  
2 St Euphrasia's knew what they were doing with these  
3 girls and you were looked on as overreacting, too young  
4 and so on?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So did it seem then that these practices that you're  
7 talking about, that they were tolerated and indeed  
8 accepted as being normal?

9 A. Very much so. Because in the meeting nobody was  
10 surprised. It was -- nobody seemed to be at all  
11 questioning or shocked. I knew that at the time they  
12 were doing the research on using the Depo injection for  
13 young women, to stop them becoming pregnant if they were  
14 too young to go on the pill, or they would be in  
15 a better way of dealing with a risk of them becoming  
16 pregnant. And I was thinking: why is this not on the  
17 agenda? Why is this not being discussed? If they're so  
18 sure these girls are going to get pregnant, then stop  
19 them getting pregnant, you know. It's -- you don't need  
20 to arrange for them to have a hysterectomy. That just  
21 seemed to me to be an extraordinarily bizarre,  
22 over-intrusive thing to be doing to them.

23 And for some of the young women who had  
24 Down's syndrome, it was -- or that they had mental  
25 health histories or their parents had mental health

1 histories, it was almost like that was an acceptable  
2 reason for having this procedure agreed to. It wasn't  
3 being questioned.

4 Q. And you tell us, this is paragraph 28 now:

5 'Nobody wondered about their behaviour and how come  
6 they were there. They were just bad girls.'

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Can you tell us a bit more about that, please?

9 A. It seemed as if -- it seemed as if the girls' behaviour  
10 was the problem and therefore that made the girls the  
11 problem. Nobody asked: well, what must have happened to  
12 these girls? What was their life situation? If their  
13 parents had mental health issues, when there were other  
14 reasons for the violence, what was stopping that from  
15 being considered and looked at, to say: is nobody going  
16 to have any conversations with these girls about what's  
17 making them behave the way they do?

18 Because it just seemed like: 'You're naughty, you're  
19 bad and you will be disciplined, and until we knock this  
20 out of you, you've got a lesson to learn. Therefore, we  
21 will help you to get this knocked out of you, by the way  
22 that we will treat you'.

23 Q. You mentioned earlier on, in a series of questions and  
24 answers with Lady Smith, that, of course, this -- at  
25 this time the 1968 Act was just really coming into --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- force and into action. So in what was perhaps  
3 intended to be a brave new world after the '68 Act, did  
4 it surprise you that this was the attitude that was  
5 being -- that was on display?

6 A. I was -- I was, I think -- I don't know, I think I was  
7 more shocked than surprised, because I think having been  
8 at college and having had conversations with people who  
9 were kind of of the same mind as myself, trying to  
10 become good social workers, we were having interesting  
11 conversations about what was okay and what was not okay,  
12 and then meeting these people who were -- who had been  
13 around for a long time, and we were told it was because  
14 we didn't know much. We weren't probation, we weren't  
15 mental health, we weren't children's services, we  
16 weren't adult services; we were these newly qualified  
17 generic social workers, and our generic training meant  
18 we didn't know anything.

19 Well, we didn't. We had a superficial knowledge of  
20 a lot of things, but the people who were our managers  
21 had a lot of experience and were 10, 20 years older than  
22 us and therefore --

23 Q. And sometimes that experience would have been in what we  
24 would now think of as criminal justice-type services?

25 A. Oh, completely, yes, absolutely, or mental health, or

1 family situation, or probation officers. Yes, I think  
2 three of my managers were ex-probation.

3 Q. All right.

4 So, I want to turn now to the things that you  
5 observed at Eversley. And you tell us in paragraph 29  
6 about coming to work with a particular family who were  
7 on your caseload, 1972 until 1974. And if we can  
8 perhaps just go straight to paragraph 35, please.

9 You talk about your experience of working with  
10 a particular child, one of the four siblings --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- in this family, I think all of whom ended up in care?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But this particular child, who we're calling 'Sandra',  
15 she ended up being split off from her siblings because  
16 she had a different father?

17 A. Yes. When she was first admitted to Eversley, the  
18 children were all admitted as having their mum's  
19 surname, and then I guess when the information about  
20 their birth certificates and things came through, then  
21 the information was then that this -- that 'Sandra' had  
22 a different dad and a different religion, that she was  
23 actually baptised as a Protestant, whereas her siblings  
24 were all Catholic, as was her mum, and so she could be  
25 therefore split off.

1 Q. All right.

2 A. And called by her birth certificate name, rather than  
3 the name she knew herself as.

4 Q. All right. Did you form any impression of what the real  
5 or the main reason for the split was? Was it the  
6 different father or was it the different religion?

7 A. The different religion, because she then had to go to  
8 a different church and a different school and she had  
9 a different name, and therefore the children, the other  
10 three being part of a family, were going into  
11 a different family group within Eversley, whereas  
12 'Sandra' was placed in a different family group. So she  
13 was split off from her siblings.

14 Q. Now, you told us just a moment or two ago about the  
15 attitudes or some of the attitudes that seemed prevalent  
16 at the time of seeing children as the problem --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- rather than thinking about their behaviour and the  
19 reasons for it. Where did Eversley fall in that space,  
20 in that continuum?

21 A. Oh right at the top. It was the children who were the  
22 problem, definitely.

23 Q. How did that manifest itself?

24 A. These were naughty children. These were children who  
25 lacked discipline and who needed to be, erm, who needed

1 to be disciplined, taught a lesson, taught that their  
2 behaviour was unacceptable. That if you swore then you  
3 would have soap put in your mouth. Which I guess at  
4 that time might not have been too unusual. I mean,  
5 I know in other families and other parents who actually  
6 did that to stop their children from swearing and to  
7 stop their children from being naughty.

8 But not in my family and not in people I spent time  
9 with, wouldn't have done anything like that, so it was  
10 just like: hang on a minute, these are care staff.  
11 They're supposed to be giving best care practice in what  
12 they offer these children.

13 But it just seemed harsh. It seemed punishing. It  
14 seemed limited. It seemed controlling, erm, and not  
15 only of the children, but of me as well.

16 Q. Well, I'll come back to that, Norma, if I may.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. But I just want to tease out a few more of the strands  
19 from this paragraph.

20 You were saying that you were informed by 'Sandra'  
21 that some of the children would be clipped around the  
22 ear?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. I think perhaps she later told you that she was also  
25 caned?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And you say, a couple of lines before that, that the  
3 staff spoke about the children in very derogatory terms  
4 and had no clothes of their own.

5 First of all, did you see any child being  
6 disciplined in the way that you set out there? Did you  
7 see anyone being clipped around the ear?

8 A. No, because I would be -- as soon as I got to the front  
9 door, I would be marched up the stairs and into RLD's  
10 office.

11 Q. By who?

12 A. By whoever opened the door.

13 Q. All right.

14 A. I would be taken straight up to RLD's office and sat  
15 on a chair: sit there.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And then it was like, I felt like I had to be -- I felt  
18 like I almost had to be on my best behaviour as well and  
19 it was like: don't ask any questions, don't say  
20 anything. You know, it was --

21 Q. You were being taken to the headmistress's office?

22 A. Absolutely. That is exactly what it felt like, yes.

23 Q. In terms of the derogatory language used by some of the  
24 staff, did you personally witness any of that?

25 A. Only very briefly, because it would be as I would be

1 walking up the stairs or I would be walking back out  
2 again, somebody might say something to one of the  
3 children and it would be like, 'Pack it in you  
4 little --'. Yeah, I'm not having that. Yeah. 'Keep  
5 your --'. Yeah, it would be, something --

6 Q. And how would that language be delivered?

7 A. Oh, with a shout, yes. With a definite force, you know.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. They weren't missing -- they weren't missing the  
10 children. They were actually very focused on that  
11 child.

12 Q. So, I mean, we understand that you became quite close to  
13 'Sandra' and -- both then and later. And so, how did  
14 that happen? What time did you have together while she  
15 was at Eversley? How did that relationship come to be  
16 formed and bonded?

17 A. I think I quite quickly realised that if I arranged to  
18 see her in Eversley, that was completely ineffective and  
19 I wouldn't be allowed to spend time -- I wouldn't be --  
20 I felt -- I was going to say I wouldn't be allowed to  
21 spend time with her.

22 So I would pick her up and take her out, so that we  
23 actually had some time for us to just spend time  
24 together.

25 And I tried -- I think at the time I was also trying

1 to help her to realise that some of the things that she  
2 was doing were making her life worse. You know, that if  
3 she continued to run away, and one of the consequences  
4 of her running away was that RLD would be stopping  
5 her from seeing me, then I'd be saying to her: 'RLC,  
6 why are you running away? Because if you stop running  
7 away, RLD wouldn't be able to stop you seeing  
8 me'.

9 You know, so it's like -- sorry: 'Sandra'.

10 And it would be -- yeah, I would be trying to help  
11 her to say, you know: 'Don't annoy these people', you  
12 know, it's --

13 Q. I'm jumping around a little bit and I'll come back to  
14 some of this, Norma, but at paragraph 44 you talk a bit  
15 more about 'Sandra's' running away.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You say that that certainly troubled you. I mean, it's  
18 perhaps an obvious question, but why did it trouble you?

19 A. Because I couldn't -- if it was all right where she was,  
20 what would be making her run away? What was going on in  
21 Eversley that was making her feel that being out of  
22 Eversley was better than being in Eversley?

23 And then I would say to RLD, or to Sister, you  
24 know, 'What do you think is going on? What's happening  
25 that's making RLC run away?' 'Oh, it's her, she just

1 wants to be promiscuous, she's just having sex every  
2 time she runs away, she's just into boys. She's someone  
3 who is -- she's just so promiscuous, we just -- and we  
4 can't control her because she's just -- she's  
5 uncontrollable'.

6 It was RLC that was the problem in her want, wish,  
7 to be free.

8 Q. Looking back, with the knowledge that you now have and  
9 the experience that you now have, do you think that  
10 RLC's behaviour was perhaps a sign of something else  
11 that was underlying what was going on?

12 A. Completely. Completely. I would -- now I would have  
13 absolutely no doubt that her behaviour was the answer to  
14 the problems and the difficulties that she was  
15 experiencing. And that she was telling me her behaviour  
16 was one thing, and the staff were telling me her  
17 behaviour was something else.

18 RLC was telling me very clearly that she was not  
19 having sex with anybody, and RLD and Sister were  
20 saying to me, yes, she was, and she was promiscuous and  
21 she was going to get pregnant and that was the worst  
22 thing that could happen to her.

23 And when they said to me, 'You have to get her on  
24 the pill and you have to take her to family planning and  
25 you have to get her on the pill', I agreed because

1 I thought, actually, the last thing she does need to be  
2 is be pregnant. And I -- while I was believing RLC  
3 that she wasn't having sex, these people were so  
4 determined that she was, I thought: okay, if I can do  
5 nothing else for RLC, I'll stop her getting pregnant.

6 Q. Going back then, and jumping back in your statement to  
7 paragraph 36, you say a little bit more about the staff:

8 'The strong impression I was given was that it was  
9 very much that the staff were having to deal with  
10 children who were not easy children to deal with, that  
11 they needed to be taught a lesson. I never heard the  
12 staff compliment a single child or say anything positive  
13 about any of the children who were in their care. It  
14 was always about how naughty and undisciplined they  
15 were, how they would lie, and how they were terrible  
16 children.'

17 It sounds from that passage, Norma, as if really  
18 you're saying that the staff didn't appear to like the  
19 children very much?

20 A. I never met a member of staff who spoke in any positive  
21 way about any of the children. Any of the comments that  
22 were made or any of the information that I would get  
23 from them was about how difficult their job was, how  
24 difficult these children were, how you couldn't trust  
25 them, they lied. They were naughty. And the job they

1 had was to try and discipline them and give them enough  
2 discipline so that they could come back into being  
3 well-behaved children.

4 Q. You tell us, paragraph 37, that the staff never had  
5 names. [RLD] was '[RLD]' and Sister was 'Sister'?

6 A. Mm-hmm.

7 Q. Did you see or hear any of the other staff being called  
8 by their first names, for example?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No.

11 A. Not ever, no. And the insistence that any of the  
12 children or 'Sandra' should not call me Norma: 'Her  
13 name's Ms MacPhee'. Okay.

14 Q. All right.

15 A. Which made me shudder, never mind -- I was just like:  
16 goodness me.

17 Q. And you tell us, this is about six lines down in  
18 paragraph 37:

19 [RLD] was always right. She was opinionated and  
20 dismissive of any opinion other than her own. Sister  
21 was the same.'

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. 'They were in control. It was their child and they were  
24 going to do what was best for that child.'

25 Presumably what they thought was best for that

1 child?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And obviously this is you looking back at the situation  
4 at that time and what you saw and experienced then. Is  
5 that something that you felt at the time?

6 A. Yes. Yes, but when I then took it back to any of my  
7 managers or anyone else that I would have a conversation  
8 with, it was very much: well, that's how it is, you  
9 know, that's just how, that's -- these people know what  
10 they're doing, this is how it is, it's got a very good  
11 reputation.

12 It's -- it was kind of like: what's wrong for me for  
13 thinking there was something wrong with there?

14 Q. Sure.

15 I would like to look with you, please, at a couple  
16 of records, briefly. The reference is GLA-000004095.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. This set of documents is an extract from 'Sandra's'  
19 records that the Inquiry obtained.

20 And we'll come back to the first page. I just want  
21 to look at two pages in it for your reaction and  
22 comment.

23 The first one is page 5.

24 Bear with me, I'm sorry. I think this -- well, it  
25 appears to be a set of handwritten notes. We see in the

1 left margin, December 1976, February 1977?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. March 1977. Does any of this look familiar, Norma?

4 A. Yeah, this is my writing.

5 Q. It's your writing?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And if we first of all scroll down towards the

8 foot, there's the heading in the left column: 'March

9 1977 case papers received':

10 'Case unallocated for many years. Children seen at

11 least yearly for review reports to hearing. No case

12 reviews in children's home. Very -- '

13 Is that 'very little factual information'?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And that's 'Sandra' or any other children? First of

16 all, did it surprise you that there had been no case

17 reviews in the home?

18 A. Yes. I was told there was no paperwork.

19 Q. All right. Would it have been normal practice? Would

20 it have been required practice to do such reviews?

21 A. We certainly did in Barnardo's. Any conversations that

22 you had with the young person would be recorded. For

23 example, my conversation with that young man about how

24 come he was mixed heritage, and the explanation, and

25 then me saying to -- you know: should I be telling him

1           that it's because he's got a black dad; it's not because  
2           he likes Marmite.

3   Q.   Sure.

4   A.   Yeah, you know, so it was like -- so, yes, I would have  
5           expected there to be that kind of information available.

6   Q.   All right. Thank you.

7   A.   At least for the children's reviews, yes.

8   Q.   The note goes on --

9   A.   I don't even know if there were any reviews.

10  Q.   I'm sorry?

11  A.   I don't even know if there were any reviews.

12  Q.   Well, that was really where I was going to with that.

13  A.   Yeah.

14  Q.   And if there were no reviews, what would your reaction  
15           be to that?

16  A.   Well, that was just how it was. That's just, yeah, what  
17           would make me think there would be reviews, you know?  
18           It's like: 'That's not what we do here'.

19  Q.   Okay. So the note goes on:

20           'After some discussion with [I think that's  
21           Mrs ██████████ and ['Sandra'] it was agreed that  
22           ['Sandra'] should have a weekend at home. Behaviour  
23           during that weekend very bad. Stayed out all night  
24           Saturday. Was found by police in car in --'

25           Is that Gatehouse?

1 A. Easterhouse.

2 Q. Easterhouse; I beg your pardon.

3 ['Sandra'] spoken to at length about this and

4 the --'

5 I can't make out that word, can you help me?

6 A. 'Reputation'.

7 Q. 'Reputation ...

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. ... she was gaining in Pollokshields.'

10 A. Yep.

11 Q. 'Again promised to behave as she used to. Long

12 discussion with RLD who was very bitter about

13 ['Sandra']. Apparently ['Sandra'] was one of RLD's

14 favourites, but since her behaviour deteriorated has

15 been ignored. RLD is very hostile in her attitude to

16 this girl, speaks to her and of her in a very sneering

17 manner.'

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. That was your impression of how she was --

20 A. Absolutely.

21 Q. Well --

22 A. Yep. She was a liar. She was out of control. She was

23 bad to her core. She was just seriously not all right.

24 Q. Where did the information about 'Sandra' having been

25 a favourite come from? Was that from RLD

1 herself?

2 A. Yes, yes: 'She was one of my favourites', yes.

3 Q. What was your reaction to that?

4 A. Well --

5 Q. Well, actually, I'm sorry, can I say, what was your  
6 reaction to that then, and what would it be now?

7 A. It wasn't up for discussion then. It was almost further  
8 blaming RLC. There was something suddenly wrong with  
9 her. It wasn't that RLD had changed. It was that  
10 RLC -- that 'Sandra' had changed and had become -- and  
11 had become this horrible child, and RLD couldn't  
12 trust her. RLD couldn't make -- just thought she was  
13 awful.

14 Q. Would it concern you that [REDACTED] in this home or any  
15 home was in effect playing favourites?

16 A. Completely, yes, yes.

17 Q. What would the concern be about that?

18 A. It would be like, what -- I don't know if I would have  
19 thought it then, but my thinking now would certainly be:  
20 what would make it necessary for this person to have  
21 a favourite, and what impact would that have, not only  
22 on the child who was the favourite, but on the other  
23 children who were in the home as well.

24 If you separate out one child from another, what  
25 does that do within the relationships within the home as

1 a whole?

2 I know that attachment and being close to somebody  
3 is really important, but it is -- it needs to be equally  
4 shared. And okay, you might have one child who touches  
5 your heart in a bit more, but you wouldn't let that --  
6 the other children know that that was part of your  
7 concern. It would be all the children -- the same as  
8 any loving parent might have a favourite child, there  
9 would still be enough love to go around and enough care  
10 to go around for all of the other children.

11 Q. If I can --

12 A. Now it would make me wonder what was going on with -- in  
13 how RLC was being -- sorry, in how 'Sandra' was being  
14 treated, what was happening to her. I would -- I would  
15 now have been extraordinarily concerned about her  
16 behaviour and what caused this change in her  
17 relationship with this woman.

18 Q. And why does -- well, yes, why does the cessation, the  
19 end of her status as favourite, why does that  
20 particularly concern you?

21 A. In that what 'Sandra' had experienced prior to that was  
22 that she was cared for, loved and that she was a nice  
23 child and that she was lovable and looking -- and  
24 feeling worthwhile. And then all of a sudden she's this  
25 terrible, terrible child.

1 LADY SMITH: Was it also, Norma, to do with the perception  
2 that she had had of RLD, that this was somebody  
3 who was dependable, on whom she could depend to keep her  
4 safe, and that's safe in the widest sense of the world,  
5 someone who's reliable and will not change or wave in  
6 the wind and suddenly, that's all gone?

7 A. I don't know. I would think that 'Sandra's' need for  
8 being loved and being cared for was so high that anyone  
9 who offered her that would have been seen as being  
10 a special person.

11 LADY SMITH: But isn't that need there because,  
12 fundamentally, children, particularly children in her  
13 position, in a home, require somebody to make them feel  
14 safe? Somebody they can always depend on?

15 A. Yes, absolutely, and I think for that reason, RLC --  
16 sorry, 'Sandra's' behaviour and 'Sandra's' ability to  
17 manage in school and to make friendships was fine;  
18 because I could read that about her. And then all of  
19 a sudden she's this monster and it was like -- so, if  
20 nothing's changed in 'Sandra', what else must have  
21 changed? And RLD said nothing else had changed  
22 except her. She was the -- she was suddenly this  
23 terrible person, and really, it wasn't helping her at  
24 all that she saw me.

25 MR SHELDON: Norma, I want to just, as it were, turn back

1 the clock slightly. Just still looking at the same page  
2 of these notes, it's February 1977. Still your  
3 handwriting, correct?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. It said:

6 'I attended the hearing at [I think Ms ██████]'s  
7 request, or Mrs ██████, rather], not as the child's  
8 social worker. ['Sandra'] looked very smart.'

9 And taking that short, end of line 3, is that  
10 'Eventually'?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. '... broke down when questioned about her behaviour and  
13 at panel's request agreed to --'

14 LADY SMITH: 'Try harder'?

15 A. 'Try harder', yes.

16 MR SHELDON: '... try harder to behave'?

17 A. '... and behave', yes.

18 Q. And you go on then:

19 'Very difficult hearing. Too many people i.e. three  
20 children, their care staff, a mother and social worker  
21 and home --'

22 Is that 'homemaker'?

23 A. 'Homemaker', yeah.

24 Q. '... and social worker from Northern Ireland, giving 14  
25 in all.'

1 A. No, it's N1, it was North 1, it was the office that was  
2 in the north of the city.

3 Q. I see, I beg your pardon, I misunderstood that:  
4 'Supervision requirements continued, ongoing support  
5 will be given to the mother of these children.'  
6 And so on. But it's quite striking that -- and  
7 you're a very junior, if I may say so, social worker at  
8 this point?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. But you are saying there, it's a very difficult hearing  
11 and there's too many people. Was that an impression  
12 that, as it were, immediately hit you when you were in  
13 that place at that time?

14 A. Yes. Yes.

15 Q. So can you spell out for us what you felt was wrong with  
16 it?

17 A. There was no -- there was no time for individual -- for  
18 the individuals to be -- for the children to be listened  
19 to. There was no time for each of the individual  
20 members of staff to be listened to. Everybody was --  
21 everybody wanted to say what they wanted to say, and it  
22 just felt like pandemonium. It was -- Mrs [REDACTED] was  
23 wanting to say her bit. It was just like (indicating)  
24 bouncing.

25 Q. So Mrs [REDACTED] was there?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Even though she'd asked you to attend?

3 A. Yes, with her.

4 Q. It wasn't, as it were, on her behalf?

5 A. With her, yes.

6 Q. But with her. All right.

7 A. Yes. If I remember, I actually probably would have

8 picked her up.

9 Q. Well perhaps we can look now at page 1 of this document,

10 and you can take it from me that this is a note of --

11 well, it's a note of a children's hearing in February

12 1977, 23 February to be precise. It is the hearing

13 dealing with 'Sandra' and her siblings and we see that

14 the reason for the hearing is an annual review of the

15 supervision requirement.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And there's some material about their mother. And it's

18 noted, it's really the third main paragraph down at the

19 end there:

20 'Ms MacPhee has been working with this family for

21 over a year and in her opinion, Mrs [REDACTED] needs a lot

22 of support to cope with the children she has at home.'

23 First of all, if that's right, Norma, what would

24 have made you say that?

25 A. She already had three other children by her partner and

1           any time I went to see her to talk to her about the  
2           children in the children's home, it would be chaos.

3   Q.   So this was --

4   A.   At home.

5   Q.   This was the children's mother?

6   A.   Yes.

7   Q.   I beg your pardon, I misunderstood that. That's my  
8           fault, Norma.

9           The panel then go on to talk about 'Sandra'. This  
10          is where we see it's redacted, the names are redacted,  
11          but we have the number 15?

12  A.   Yes.

13  Q.   '... is in her third year at Bellahouston. She likes  
14          school, plans to stay on, wants to be a nurse. Because  
15          of bad temper she has had problems with a couple of  
16          teachers recently. She has been in Eversley for nine  
17          years. She states frankly that for the last month the  
18          place is driving her up the wall. She feels that she's  
19          now old enough to decide what she wants to do and that  
20          everybody's interfering. She admits openly that she has  
21          a terrible temper and very often gets off the mark and  
22          that she's probably driving the staff crazy. She  
23          understands that she's difficult and does not really  
24          want to be like this, but cannot control herself. She  
25          doesn't want to stay in the home any longer but she

1 doesn't want to go and stay with her mother either. She  
2 admits she does not really know what she wants.'

3 And in the next paragraph, it's said:

4 '['Sandra's'] housemother confirms that it has been  
5 impossible to cope with ['Sandra'] over the past months.  
6 Her temper tantrums are impossible to stop and it is no  
7 help to argue with her. This is very upsetting for the  
8 staff as well as for other children in the home.  
9 Another problem is that ['Sandra'] is allowed to go out  
10 two evenings in the week and does not come in at the  
11 decided time. Apparently she has got many boyfriends  
12 and the home is worried about what could happen to her.'

13 And then if we then go over the page, just at the  
14 top there:

15 'Regarding ['Sandra's'] wish to leave the home,  
16 **RLD** and housemother both say that for their own sake  
17 they will have no objections to this, as they do not at  
18 the moment feel able to cope with her. However, they  
19 also realise that it probably didn't solve ['Sandra's']  
20 problems, or that anybody else would be able to cope  
21 better, as they have known her for a long time.'

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And just for completeness, if we scroll to the bottom of  
24 that page, I think we see that that report appears to  
25 have been completed by a Ragnhild Vaksdal, social

1 worker?

2 A. Never heard of that person.

3 Q. Right. You don't recall --

4 A. Nope.

5 Q. You don't recall her?

6 A. Not a bit, no.

7 Q. So we have there a note of the hearing, or at least what

8 we think might be the hearing that you were at and

9 described as difficult.

10 Do you recall how the -- well, first of all, did the

11 panel directly address the children?

12 A. I don't remember, but I -- I think I would remember if

13 they had, but I just remember it being complete chaos,

14 yes. The children were all over -- they weren't sitting

15 still. They were going under the table. They were

16 wanting -- it was -- 'Sandra's' mum was not able to do

17 anything or say anything to get them to behave, nor were

18 the staff that was there.

19 Q. Yes, the youngest of the children is, what, 8 at this

20 time?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And Mrs RLD was there, RLD ?

23 A. Yeah, she -- they would have been, yes.

24 I don't know who this social worker is.

25 Q. Right. I don't think it really matters for our

1 purposes.

2 A. No.

3 Q. In relation to the report from the housemother, how does  
4 that fit with your evidence, your view, that children  
5 were being viewed as difficult, as the problem?

6 This is two paragraphs from the foot of page 1.

7 A. That is just consistent with what I was being told, that  
8 it was the children who were the problem, not the regime  
9 of care that they were being offered.

10 Q. Yes, she's saying this is very upsetting for the staff?

11 A. If that's the social worker who has written that, then  
12 that social worker has listened to the staff, somehow,  
13 that she's been told that, that this is upsetting for  
14 the staff.

15 Q. I think we understand that is the housemother --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- who is saying that.

18 A. Oh, I see.

19 Q. But has been reported, I think, by the social worker.

20 And at the top of page 2, does it appear, that first  
21 paragraph on page 2, that really, **RLD** and  
22 housemother actually want to get rid of 'Sandra'?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Well, I think we can leave that for the moment and if we  
25 can go now to paragraph 41, you say:

1            '[You] can't say how many times I was stopped from  
2            seeing ['Sandra'] for one of my arranged visits because  
3            there were so many.'

4            And I think RLD was quite open in saying to  
5            you that this was a punishment for 'Sandra's' behaviour;  
6            is that right?

7    A. Yes, absolutely. It was the only thing she could think  
8            of that might work.

9    Q. Did that seem then as an appropriate punishment and does  
10           it seem an appropriate punishment now?

11   A. I didn't think it was, but I wasn't allowed to have  
12           an opinion on that. And when I came back to the office  
13           and said, 'Hang on a minute, what do we -- you know,  
14           what -- is this allowed?', I would be told, 'They know  
15           what they're doing. If that's the way that they try to  
16           get this young person to behave, then that's what they  
17           have to do'.

18   Q. When 'Sandra' was telling you, for example, that she was  
19           being clipped around the ear, was that while she was  
20           still at Eversley?

21   A. Yes.

22   Q. All right. And this would be when you were outwith the  
23           home?

24   A. Yes. She would tell --

25   Q. Because that was the chance you had to speak to her?

1 A. Yes, when we were in the car, yes.

2 Q. In the car, all right.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 You tell us, paragraph 46, that from what 'Sandra'  
6 was saying to you, RLD was a fierce disciplinarian,  
7 and you go on to say that, well, I think that is how she  
8 appeared to you as well; is that right?

9 A. Yes, very much so, she was with me, yes. I had to be on  
10 my best behaviour as well and do what she said, without  
11 any argument.

12 Q. You tell us in that paragraph:

13 'There were not written rules. If you didn't stick  
14 to the rules you were in trouble. There were not  
15 written rules, but just how the place was run.'

16 So -- and I don't want to put words in your mouth,  
17 but can that really be boiled down to: do what you're  
18 told or that you'll be in trouble?

19 A. Oh yes, absolutely.

20 Q. 'The rules are what I make them', essentially?

21 A. Yes, because I would say, I would ask, you know, what  
22 are the rules that she keeps breaking, you know, so that  
23 I could at least have a conversation with her about  
24 them. And they weren't -- they seemed to either not  
25 exist or they were -- just kind of come out of the air.

1           Whatever somebody did wrong, that was against the rules.  
2           But they hadn't been told that there's a rule that  
3           you're not -- it just seemed like: you do what you're  
4           told, and if you do what you're told then you'll not be  
5           in any trouble. Don't argue.

6   Q.   In paragraph 48 -- you go on to repeat what you have  
7           told us already really, that in the staff's view,  
8           'Sandra' was a liar, a thief, impossible to trust or  
9           manage, and you go on:

10            'RLD ██████ expected me to support her and her staff by  
11           believing this about ['Sandra']. I was to stop  
12           believing ['Sandra'], stop being nice to her, and fully  
13           support her and their staff in their dealings with  
14           ['Sandra'].'

15   A.   Yes.

16   Q.   'And these always felt like instructions.'

17   A.   Oh completely, yes, I was told I was interfering and if  
18           I would only just stop being nice to her and would stop  
19           listening to her and would stop believing her --

20   Q.   What did they mean by being nice to her?

21   A.   Not telling her off. You know, just having  
22           a conversation with her. I didn't think I was being  
23           particularly nice to her. I was just having what  
24           I would have called a fairly ordinary conversation with  
25           a young person. But that was me being nice to her.

1 I needed to -- all my conversation that I should have  
2 with her should be about her naughty, bad behaviour and  
3 tell her that she has to behave, stop sleeping around,  
4 stop being naughty, stop stealing, that's it.

5 And I would say to 'Sandra', 'We need to have  
6 a conversation about what they're saying about what's  
7 happening'. 'I'm not doing it. That's not me', she  
8 said. 'I'm not doing that. I'm not sleeping with  
9 anybody. I'm not'.

10 She said, 'Yeah, I'll argue with the staff', and she  
11 knew she did, she'd stick up for herself. But anything  
12 else that they were accusing her of doing, she was  
13 absolutely clear that she wasn't doing it.

14 And while I would be thinking, 'Yeah, come on, you  
15 can tell me if you are, you know, I'm not going to be  
16 cross with you, I just need to know', 'I'm not', she'd  
17 say, 'I am truly not'.

18 And so I would be quite -- and then I was told off  
19 for being naive, ridiculous, for listening to her. Not  
20 only listening to her, but believing her. Even  
21 questioning the staff about what they were saying about  
22 her was just a sign of my naivety. That they knew  
23 better and therefore I should just behave the way they  
24 did and then there wouldn't be any problem.

25 Q. You go on then in two paragraphs, paragraphs 50 and 51,

1 to make a couple of quite interesting statements, and  
2 perhaps dealing with them together, I wonder if you  
3 could just talk us through what you mean by, first of  
4 all, the regime being 'one of coercion and planned  
5 denial'; and also that, in paragraph 51:

6 'The systemic culture was to believe adults and not  
7 listen to children. This was a dangerous but useful,  
8 necessary, maintained and appreciated belief for those  
9 who, instead of looking after the children in Eversley,  
10 and no doubt elsewhere, were causing them significant  
11 harm.'

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can you just talk us through that, please, and your  
14 thought process there?

15 A. I think that's from my further training and my further  
16 experience in working in situations where there have  
17 been --where there's been substantial harm being done to  
18 children within the care system, within different  
19 children's homes, even harm being done to children  
20 within their own homes by the adults that they're living  
21 with, is that if you want to set up an environment in  
22 which you can behave in a particular way towards  
23 children, that you can commit criminal offences, that  
24 you can manipulate the children, create a level of  
25 dependency and trauma bonds that enables them to be

1 controlled and to be held within that situation, then  
2 you create an environment in which that can happen, and  
3 that you exclude people who are -- you exclude people  
4 from that environment who might put that environment at  
5 risk, and/or you manipulate the external environment so  
6 that you take control of anyone who's in that external  
7 environment that stops anyone outside interfering with  
8 what you're doing inside.

9 And I could see that that was what RLD was doing  
10 to me, to say: 'You're putting a spotlight on something  
11 here that we don't want a spotlight on. You're asking  
12 questions about something that we don't want anybody to  
13 be questioning. So the quicker we can get shot of you  
14 and get -- or get you to agree with us, that this is  
15 an okay way to behave, we won't have a problem'.

16 That you find people with -- who are recruiting  
17 staff, will be very careful about the staff that they  
18 recruit and they'll manipulate members of staff.  
19 They'll employ vulnerable adults and then, with their  
20 strength of personality, their own behaviour, manipulate  
21 those adults to agreeing with them. And it becomes  
22 a very coercive, controlled environment.

23 Q. Yes. You say at paragraph 52:

24 'If you want to set up a children's home where you  
25 can harm children physically, emotionally and sexually,

1           you would have that ethos in the home.'

2           I just want to ask you though, can this type of  
3           situation arise, as it were, and I'm going to use this  
4           word with heavy inverted commas, but 'accidentally'? In  
5           the sense that if you have the attitude that children  
6           are liars, not to be believed, that adults are to be  
7           believed and reinforce that, that culture, that one  
8           could create a situation where children were vulnerable  
9           to abuse, without intending to create a situation where  
10          they were vulnerable to sexual abuse. Or, is this  
11          something that is, as you say, I think, planned?

12        A. My experience is that where I have seen it operating  
13          over years, with no -- with -- where you would have  
14          expected there to have been inspections or  
15          interventions, or somebody is coming forward to say,  
16          'This is not okay', and being curious about it, even if  
17          they actually stopped working there and then on  
18          reflecting back said, 'I need to say something about  
19          what was happening in that place', when that doesn't  
20          happen, there has been quite a sophisticated system  
21          around. And I think we still see it; there's still  
22          circumstances in which that still happens.

23          There's someone who is charismatic. There's someone  
24          who presents as being knowledgeable, caring and, you  
25          know, kind of almost entitled and able to -- and they

1 persuade, through their kind of charisma, that their way  
2 of operating is the right way to do things, and then  
3 they very carefully recruit people who agree with them  
4 in their philosophy and in their behaviour, and then it  
5 becomes quite toxic.

6 And we've seen several serious case reviews and  
7 several investigations and reviews into children's  
8 homes, different places, where that has been the  
9 situation.

10 Q. Well, we know in this case that RLD [REDACTED], ultimately,  
11 was married to John Marshall, who went on to be  
12 convicted in 2002 --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- of multiple sexual offences against children --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- in his care?

17 A. Yes. Now, you see, I said earlier that I thought that  
18 we needed to be -- that one of the things I think is  
19 missing from training, and still missing from training,  
20 and actually, has surprised one of the lecturers at  
21 Glasgow University on the social work course there, when  
22 I said to him about the need to actually very carefully  
23 assess the partners of offenders, not just the  
24 offenders, because offenders will choose their partners  
25 with even greater care than they choose their -- before

1           they even move on to their victims, they need to make  
2           sure that they've got their partner on side, then  
3           I think RLD and her husband have -- are a nice  
4           example of that. That you have two people who fit; you  
5           have two people who fit together.

6           I don't know if it would be helpful, but one of the  
7           young people that I was working with, her dad had very  
8           sick -- very seriously sexually assaulted her, and when  
9           her mum was given the choice about, either her dad  
10          leaves home, or she leaves home to come into the care  
11          system, her mum said, 'I'm staying with her -- I'm  
12          staying with my husband'. And she said to me, 'How can  
13          my mum stay with my dad when she knows what he's done?'  
14          And I said to her, 'Do you know, I have no idea'.

15          And somewhere in my head I said to her, 'Do you  
16          think they might be a bit like jigsaw shapes, that your  
17          mum and dad are jigsaw shapes, that if your dad does  
18          things, it gives him a bump, and your mum was  
19          a victim' -- because she knew her mum had been sexually  
20          assaulted by her grandad.

21          So she said, 'So my mum would have a dent, and my  
22          dad would have a bump'. And I said, 'Yeah, I think  
23          that's what I'm thinking', and she went 'Oh, yeah,  
24          right'. She said, 'But that would mean I'd only been  
25          hurt once. I've been hurt a lot of times'.

1           She says, 'You know about the first law of  
2 physics?', and I thought, I have no idea. She said,  
3 'Matter can neither be created nor destroyed, so if you  
4 got a little dent, you'd get a little bump. If you got  
5 a big dent, you'd have a big bump'.

6           She said, 'So that would make me and my family much  
7 more (inaudible)' -- oh, sorry.

8           She said, 'That would make my family much more  
9 shaped like that', and she did that (indicated) with her  
10 hands to interlink her fingers. And she said, 'That's  
11 why we all fit together, because we've all got dents and  
12 bumps'.

13           And then she said, 'So if I don't get myself  
14 straightened out, I'm going to meet somebody like my dad  
15 and my dad is going to do the same thing to my children.  
16 I'm not having that', she said, 'How do I get myself  
17 straightened out?'.

18           And that was from a 12-year-old. And I thought:  
19 great, I can -- that is so helpful.

20           So if we listen to children, they have the most  
21 remarkable insights into what is going on, and that's  
22 why I think that's so important, that whoever is working  
23 with these children, they need to have space in their --  
24 time, availability, curiosity. No blame, no shame.  
25 Genuinely interested. And these children have the most

1           amazing insights into what is going on for them.

2   Q.   If we can go back, as it were, to talk about your  
3       colleagues, and I'm looking at paragraph 58 of your  
4       statement now.  You have told us that at the time you  
5       didn't know, didn't realise -- didn't suspect, I think,  
6       that 'Sandra' was being sexually abused?

7   A.   Yes.

8   Q.   But at paragraph 58 you say another striking thing,  
9       which is that if you had been aware, concerned or  
10      puzzled at the time:

11           'I would not have felt this was something to discuss  
12      with my manager.  I don't know what I would have said.  
13      Discussions with your manager were only about  
14      practicalities and getting things done.'

15           Can you perhaps again just talk us through what you  
16      mean by that, and if you couldn't have talked to your  
17      manager, what do you think you would have done with it  
18      at the time -- done about it at the time, rather?

19   A.   I think -- I think that was based on my trying to share  
20      with my manager about what 'Sandra' had said about  
21      having to sit in a bath of cold water with her  
22      stained -- her menstruation-stained knickers, until the  
23      stain came out of her knickers.

24           And I said to him, 'I have to tell you about this.  
25      This is not okay.  This shouldn't be happening, surely

1 this shouldn't be happening'. And he just thought it  
2 was the most disgusting thing to even talk to him about,  
3 never mind think that it -- it was just almost like:  
4 'No, that couldn't possibly be happening, don't be  
5 ridiculous, of course that's not happening, they  
6 wouldn't do something like that'.

7 And he just didn't want to hear it, didn't want to  
8 think about it. And at the time I would have been,  
9 what, 23/24/25? Maybe this is -- I don't know.

10 There was no -- my sense of it, my sense of it  
11 looking back was: how come I didn't do something about  
12 this? What was it that stopped me from being more  
13 curious about what was going on?

14 And I think it was that I was not -- it was not safe  
15 for me as a professional to be curious. It was felt  
16 like I was becoming the problem.

17 Q. Bear with me just for a moment, please.

18 (Pause)

19 A. We had too much to do as well.

20 Q. You go on then over the page, Norma, to talk about  
21 becoming involved in obtaining contraception for  
22 'Sandra'.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And a visit to the family planning clinic to do that,  
25 and ultimately that 'Sandra' had the -- what was called

1 the Depo injection, and this -- at this time she'd be  
2 14?  
3 A. Yes.  
4 Q. And at paragraph 63:  
5 'The doctor told ['Sandra'] to take her clothes off  
6 and put a green gown on. Her feet were filthy because  
7 she'd been sleeping rough for a bit. I said to her to  
8 stand up in the sink and we'd get her feet cleaned  
9 before the doctor came back.'  
10 A. She didn't like being dirty.  
11 Q. Sorry?  
12 A. She didn't like being dirty, yeah.  
13 Q. 'We were laughing, trying to get her feet clean.  
14 Afterwards, ['Sandra'] said to me it was the first time  
15 she knew that I loved her, because I helped her to get  
16 her feet clean.'  
17 A. Yes.  
18 Q. 'I thought that there was something seriously wrong with  
19 what was going on for ['Sandra'] when having her feet  
20 washed was being loved for the first time.'  
21 A. Yes.  
22 Q. It's a very striking thing to say, Norma?  
23 A. Yes. It was an extraord -- I can feel it now, just how  
24 extraordinarily sad that made me, that this is a young  
25 person who, because we're having a bit of a laugh and



1 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

2 Norma, before we had our break, I was actually just  
3 looking for the reference that you had made to your  
4 manager, who you said was rather disgusted about the  
5 difficulties that 'Sandra' had had with her period.

6 A. Mm-hmm.

7 Q. And the reference actually is paragraph 66 in your  
8 statement.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And we don't need to look at that in detail, because  
11 you've mentioned it already, but I suppose if one wished  
12 to comment on this, it wouldn't seem ideal to have  
13 a manager working in social work services who was  
14 uncomfortable talking about issues -- difficulties that  
15 children were having?

16 A. Yes. Yes, he was very much of a kind of, what I would  
17 have called an old-fashioned probation officer, is that:  
18 if these people would just behave themselves then we  
19 wouldn't have a problem. And that was one part of it,  
20 really.

21 The other part was that you wouldn't talk to him at  
22 all about bodies or about any kind of sexual thing at  
23 all, and mentioning that even girls had periods would  
24 be: 'Oh no, no, no, no, you don't have to talk about  
25 that'.

1 Q. So again, a real difficulty if one wanted to discuss  
2 with your manager or supervisor the possibility that the  
3 child might be being sexually abused?

4 A. Right. I cannot even -- looking back, I wish I could  
5 have had, but I was definitely never given the  
6 opportunity to, nor any encouragement to, nor even  
7 curious about my curiosity. It was: 'You're the  
8 problem, just do what RLD [REDACTED] says, just, she knows  
9 what she's doing, she knows how to run these places,  
10 butt out'.

11 Q. I think you said before the break that you were  
12 encouraged not to be curious?

13 A. Yes, very much so, yes.

14 Q. And at paragraph 68, you note when 'Sandra' was telling  
15 you about her treatment at Eversley, you say:

16 'I didn't have the authority to move her to  
17 a different residential establishment. That wasn't  
18 considered.'

19 Was there ever any discussion that you were aware of  
20 about transferring children out of Eversley, or indeed  
21 out of any other home, because of problems that they  
22 were experiencing?

23 A. Well, I raised that as a possible solution, that perhaps  
24 if we moved her to another children's home, perhaps we  
25 could see whether or not that might actually be helpful.

1 Not only for her, but also for the staff, because they  
2 were saying how awful she was and how difficult she was  
3 and how disturbing it was to have her there.

4 No: This is where she is. It's her that's the  
5 problem. She needs to fit in. She's being treated  
6 well. They know what they're doing. Be quiet.

7 Q. Ultimately we know that 'Sandra' was moved, in this  
8 instance to a hostel rather than another home. She's  
9 then aged 15. You say at paragraph 69:

10 'She needed to be somewhere that she couldn't run  
11 away, where she didn't know where she was, and so that  
12 she would be more controlled. She needed to be in  
13 a more controlled environment.'

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was the hostel a controlled environment?

16 A. Not remotely, no.

17 Q. I don't think we need to go into the detail of that,  
18 we've got your statement and we're not looking into the  
19 hostel specifically, but I think we get the sense that  
20 this was not in any way a controlled or even healthy  
21 environment?

22 A. It was in the wrong part of town. It was too easily  
23 accessible to kind of a predatory environment. It  
24 was -- it didn't have -- as places didn't, they didn't  
25 have locked doors. They couldn't restrict or restrain

1 the young people. They generally just had a grand time,  
2 doing what they wanted.

3 Q. It was an open-door policy, effectively?

4 A. Absolutely, and the staff would try really hard.

5 I remember the manager, Ralph, saying to RLC, 'RLC, if  
6 you don't behave, you're going to get pregnant. How are  
7 you going to stop yourself getting pregnant?' And she  
8 said, 'I'll think about you, Ralph, and that will stop  
9 it', and both of us thinking that was -- and him  
10 thinking, 'Oh, for goodness sake'.

11 But that, it was -- agh, it wasn't okay. And that  
12 was just coming to the end of my time.

13 Q. Sure.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You go on then, page 21, paragraph 72, it's quite a long  
16 passage about records.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. But I think we can take that fairly short, because we  
19 know now that we've got the records, or at least those  
20 that we were able to recover, and I've shown you some of  
21 the passages --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- that actually are your -- some of your reservations  
24 perhaps about Eversley?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But in short, it was quite a struggle to get there; is  
2 that right?

3 A. Completely. I think -- 'Sandra' tells me that we first  
4 tried to get them about 30 years ago.

5 Q. Well, I was just going to ask you, when did you start  
6 trying to get hold of the records?

7 A. Yes, it was a long time ago, because she -- we were  
8 trying to figure out what we had both remembered about  
9 what we had both -- what -- the information.

10 She has a clear memory of a yellow cardigan that she  
11 had on when she was seriously hurt, when she was living  
12 with her mum, and neither of us could quite remember  
13 where we got that information from, but we both  
14 remembered reading it somewhere.

15 So we thought, 'Well, let's see if we can get your  
16 files'. And I was at that point involved with some  
17 other children who were accessing their in-care files.  
18 So we thought, 'Oh, let's see if we can get the files'.  
19 No, they were burned in a fire at John Street, not  
20 available.

21 Q. Right, that's what you were told?

22 A. That's what we were told.

23 Q. That's what you were told or that's what --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- 'Sandra' was told?

1 A. Yes, they were not available, because they'd been burned  
2 in a fire at John Street.

3 Q. And I think --

4 A. And then when RLC began her compensation case, her  
5 solicitor applied for them and they were told -- they  
6 were given -- they -- her solicitor actually had to get  
7 the judge to make an order for the council to release  
8 the notes, and then when we got them, they were about 3  
9 centimetres, inch-and-a-half. Now, I remembered her  
10 file being at least 6 inches, so --

11 Q. Might that have been because the file that you recall  
12 was a family file rather than just a file for 'Sandra'?

13 A. That was the only explanation that I could come up with  
14 as to how come there was no other -- maybe there was so  
15 much information about her siblings that this was the  
16 only bit that they could release.

17 Q. Sure.

18 A. And so we kind of just accepted that at the time and  
19 then when her solicitor applied for more, suddenly there  
20 was more papers available and then you apply for more  
21 and suddenly there's more papers available. So it was  
22 being some kind of -- what was the reason they weren't  
23 being --

24 Q. But it took a court order to do it?

25 A. Yes. Yes. With the excuses as to why they were not

1 available changing, which made it even more suspicious.

2 What do people know are in these files?

3 Q. Or what do they fear might be in the files, I suppose?

4 A. Yes, or no, yeah, both, yeah.

5 Q. Page 23, you give us some reflections on your  
6 experiences in relation to 'Sandra's' time in care and  
7 more generally your work with children in the 1970s.

8 Perhaps, again briefly, you can just tell us a bit  
9 more about that, about what your experience of it was  
10 like at that time and how that translated into the care  
11 of children who were in care?

12 A. Yes. I think we were given -- we had phenomenally high  
13 caseloads and because we were generic -- I can remember  
14 having 20-plus male people -- male people -- men on my  
15 caseload, who were on probation or on parole or -- and  
16 I saw them on a Monday and a Tuesday for half an hour.  
17 So we were living in that kind of chaos.

18 And then you had your children-in-care cases and you  
19 had your family cases and you had your -- and so there  
20 was -- it was like spinning plates. You were trying  
21 really hard to try and -- it was great fun. We --  
22 I enjoyed it. I enjoyed working in Glasgow very much.

23 We were trying -- my team and I, when I was doing  
24 the homeless families team, we were trying really hard  
25 to help people who were homeless and to help them to get

1 settled and to get -- we did -- we really thought we  
2 were doing a grand job, but we weren't looking at all at  
3 what were the reasons for these people becoming  
4 homeless.

5 How would we -- how could that system be changed?

6 It was like: okay and even if -- when I said about  
7 a house being a squalid health hazard, they were  
8 a squalid health hazard.

9 Q. And in the midst of all this trying to deal with  
10 'difficult' children in care?

11 A. In care, absolutely, you know and saying -- and now if  
12 I visited a house that was squalid -- I can remember as  
13 a team, we were really annoyed with some of these  
14 people, because we'd get the house all cleaned up and  
15 six months later it would be back to how it was again.  
16 You know, what -- but we were so busy trying to sort  
17 something out that we never had time to stop and say:  
18 can we just have a question mark about this? And then  
19 I'd get a phone call from Eversley to say: she's run  
20 away again, you know. Come and tell her off.

21 Q. In relation to lessons to be learned, you say that every  
22 child should have an external visitor. Now we know,  
23 from what you've told us, that you managed to have some  
24 conversations with 'Sandra' --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- usually outwith the home and that she disclosed some  
2 aspects of the abuse that she was suffering --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- to you. Thinking back now, what was it about your  
5 relationship that allowed that to happen, and how could  
6 that be built on? How does one develop the skill to be  
7 someone that a child can confide in?

8 A. Right. I think it goes back from the simplest of  
9 things, like understanding what language you have to  
10 use. I hear social workers and police officers and  
11 other people saying to children: 'My job is to talk to  
12 children'. And I say to them: 'No, it's not. Your job  
13 is to listen to children'. If you introduce yourself to  
14 a child by saying: 'My job is to talk to children', then  
15 that child expects you to talk. If you say to a child:  
16 'My job is to listen to children', that child thinks  
17 you'll be somebody who listens.

18 So it's from something as simple as that and then  
19 I think with the training that I've done as  
20 a psychotherapist in my sensorimotor, it's like you're  
21 not just looking at -- you're not just hearing what the  
22 child is saying, you're looking at what the child's body  
23 is doing. That if a child is squirming and a child  
24 looks uncomfortable, if a child tightens up in their  
25 shoulders, if a child suddenly looks down, if a child

1 suddenly licks their lips, there's a reason for that.

2 So you need to be encouraging and complimenting them  
3 and helping them to put what's going on in their bodies  
4 into words, so that you can -- and it's just by that  
5 simple fact of a depth of empathy, a depth of care, a  
6 depth of concern, a depth of curiosity, no blame, no  
7 shame, that's engaging.

8 And I -- one of the reasons that I find it so  
9 frustrating now that has actually, with sadness, made me  
10 stop trying to train social workers, is that the  
11 environment in which they're working still is not really  
12 conducive to hearing what children are saying.

13 The introduction of using emojis to ask children  
14 about their relationships with family, I think is: for  
15 goodness sake, what emoji would I choose? You know,  
16 I tried this with one of the children I was working with  
17 just out of curiosity to see what I got. He picked five  
18 different emojis for the different relationships that he  
19 had with his dad, and the different relationships his  
20 dad had with different people that were in his  
21 environment. And I thought well there's a kid that's  
22 actually given me a great deal of information. But when  
23 I spoke to the social worker about it, she said: 'Oh, no  
24 you just ask them for one emoji'. You just ask them for  
25 one emoji? Come on! Or you can do it on your phone.

1 I'm thinking -- it's something -- well.

2 Q. No substitute in other words for proper --

3 A. Relationship.

4 Q. -- empathetic human interaction?

5 A. Relationship -- absolutely. Nothing at all. They need  
6 the training, they need the knowledge, they need the  
7 skills and then they need an appropriate -- they need  
8 an appropriate ability to make an attachment with that  
9 child that enables that child to trust and to engage in  
10 having a conversation.

11 I hear so many people saying: 'Oh, you can't allow  
12 attachment to happen'. Attachment enables growth.  
13 You're not creating a dependency by creating  
14 an attachment. It's almost like somehow there's  
15 an ethos around that if you allow attachment, you allow  
16 dependency.

17 Now anybody with children would tell you, I have  
18 children with a very secure attachment, so that they  
19 move on and leave home, thank goodness. I create  
20 independence. I create functioning adults. That's what  
21 we need to be doing with children in care. The  
22 challenge is undoing the harm that's been done to them  
23 by creating safe attachments that enable them to become  
24 independent functioning adults.

25 You wouldn't think that would be too difficult to

1 get across. Oh, no, no, no -- yeah, 'Oh, we haven't got  
2 time'. 'Well, Ofsted will come in'. Well, then fail  
3 Ofsted. Why are you covering up all the things that are  
4 going wrong? Open it up.

5 Q. Norma, thank you. I don't have any more questions for  
6 you. Is there anything that you want to add that  
7 I've not given you the opportunity to say?

8 A. I don't think so. No, I think you've asked me lots of  
9 things, yes. I'm very -- thank you, yes.

10 MR SHELDON: Thank you.

11 LADY SMITH: Norma, let me add my thanks. I'm so grateful  
12 to you for letting us explore your memories of the  
13 1960s, the 1970s and your direct involvement with  
14 Eversley and the other places we've asked you about, but  
15 also in allowing us to interrogate your knowledge and  
16 experience over such a long career that's relevant to  
17 our work. Thank you so much.

18 A. Thank you.

19 LADY SMITH: Do feel free to go and safe journey back home.

20 A. Thank you. It's a career I loved.

21 LADY SMITH: I think I can tell that.

22 (The witness withdrew)

23 LADY SMITH: Before I lose track of names, I just want to  
24 mention some that we've used today, but they're of  
25 people whose identities are protected by my General

1 Restriction Order and they mustn't be identified as  
2 referred to in our evidence out this room. And there  
3 was RME [REDACTED], there was RLD [REDACTED], also referred to  
4 at one point as RLD [REDACTED], RLL [REDACTED], RLI [REDACTED],  
5 RLO [REDACTED], [REDACTED] who is the deceased spouse of the  
6 first witness today and then also RLC [REDACTED] and that's RLC [REDACTED]  
7 the name of this morning's witness and she, of course,  
8 has a pseudonym 'Sandra' and isn't to be referred to by  
9 that name, and also [REDACTED], [REDACTED], her  
10 mother was referred to at one point. Is that them all?  
11 Thank you. Very well.

12 Now, Ms Forbes, where we going next?

13 MS FORBES: My Lady, we now have a couple of read-ins.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 MS FORBES: And the first read-in is a statement from

16 an applicant who's anonymous and is known as 'Robin'.

17 And the reference for her statement is WIT.001.002.0654.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 'Robin' (read in)

20 MS FORBES: My Lady, 'Robin' has previously given live

21 evidence to the Inquiry and that was during Phase 8 and

22 it took place on 4 June 2024, which was Day 449 of the

23 Inquiry. The reference for the transcript of her

24 evidence is TRN-12-000000082. And she gave live

25 evidence primarily for Beechwood and Dr Guthrie's, which

1           were part of the Phase 8 study.

2           So, as a result of that, my Lady, a lot of her  
3           statement has already been brought to life by her live  
4           evidence, so I'm only really going to do a brief summary  
5           to her going to Eversley and deal with her time at  
6           Eversley as a result of that.

7   LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8   MS FORBES: My Lady, 'Robin' tells us she was born in 1965  
9           and talks about her life before going into care from  
10          paragraph 2. But in summary, she has given live  
11          evidence about that life before care. She was brought  
12          up in Glasgow. She lived with her parents initially and  
13          there was eight children altogether. She described  
14          a very chaotic upbringing with alcoholic and abusive  
15          parents. Her father was sexually abusive and her mother  
16          was physically abusive and her father would feed them  
17          alcohol and sell them to other men sexually.

18          She would run away a lot. And on one occasion her  
19          mother's physical violence resulted in an injury,  
20          an obvious injury, to her face and when she went to  
21          school, a teacher saw that and got social work involved,  
22          although I think they had been involved previously in  
23          relation to her mother going to refuges in Dundee, but  
24          it was after that that she ended up into the care  
25          system. She describes a social worker called

1 Maggie Mearns who she describes as being her saviour and  
2 she drove her from school after this injury was noticed  
3 to her house, left her in the car, and went and spoke to  
4 her mother. Then came back and told her that she was  
5 taking her into care.

6 What she said in evidence was that she was in a few  
7 homes around this time. Eversley is one of them.  
8 Downcraig is apparently another and then there's another  
9 one she can't remember. She doesn't tell us anything  
10 about Downcraig in her statement. But she says the one  
11 stands out would have been a big house calls Eversley  
12 and she tells us about that from paragraph 14 onwards,  
13 and at paragraph 14 she says:

14 'I remember being driven up to this big, beautiful  
15 mansion sitting on its own on a hill. Maggie Mearns  
16 explained to me that I was going to this place on  
17 a short-term basis, until they found a more permanent  
18 solution. I was just glad to get away from my family.  
19 I wasn't interested in what sort of place I was going  
20 to. It looked beautiful to me, compared to what I had  
21 come from. We went inside and Maggie spoke to a woman  
22 and man who appeared to be in charge. I don't remember  
23 much about the woman. I remember the man's name was  
24 Marshall. I don't know if this was his first or second  
25 name. He was sort of burly and about 5 feet 2 or

1           3 inches tall.

2           'The office was just as you went in the front door  
3           and there was a bedroom next to it with bunk beds. This  
4           was an emergency bedroom for kids who were there on  
5           a short-term basis.

6           'I don't know whether Eversley was a local authority  
7           home. I think it must have been run by social services.  
8           I was only there for about two nights.

9           'I can't remember any big teenagers in the home so  
10          I think it was for kids, boys and girls, about 12 and  
11          under. I think there were about seven kids there.  
12          I can't remember any other staff apart from the woman  
13          I mentioned and Marshall. I wasn't there long enough to  
14          be introduced to many people.

15          'I think there were about three or four shared rooms  
16          in the home. I think I was in a room with other girls.  
17          I don't remember much about the food. There were loads  
18          of things like books and toys and there was a nice big  
19          garden at the back. I don't remember interacting with  
20          anybody or doing anything there. The only vivid, proper  
21          memory I've got is being in the emergency room next to  
22          the office.

23          'I was taken into the emergency room by the man,  
24          Marshall, after the social worker had gone. I was in  
25          the room alone with him. I remember the room well. It

1 had old-fashioned cornicing. It was lovely. He told me  
2 to take off all my clothes and then he touched me on top  
3 when I was naked. I was starting to develop and felt  
4 quite embarrassed, because I was a wee, fat thing and  
5 was probably smelly as well. It wasn't groping, just  
6 touching and moving my flab about. He didn't say  
7 anything to me. He was the authority so I didn't  
8 question what he was doing. You don't when you're that  
9 age. I thought I was getting strip-searched because  
10 I was dirty. I was being checked to see whether I had  
11 brought something in or because he was looking for  
12 bruises. That's all that was going through my head at  
13 the time.

14 'I wasn't in the room long. I remember two little  
15 lads coming to the door. One was about my age and the  
16 other was around 8 or 9. I don't know if it's because  
17 of something they said or the way they were acting, but  
18 I do believe that they knew something was going on.  
19 I know that things have come out about abuse in Eversley  
20 and I don't know whether I'm imagining things but,  
21 looking back now, it seems to me that they were trying  
22 to make sure that Marshall was disturbed. It was like  
23 they knew there were more untoward things going on in  
24 there and they were trying to protect me.

25 'What Marshall did wasn't anything like my dad had

1 done to me. There was no penetration. It didn't seem  
2 too sexual at the time. It's only later on in life when  
3 I started trying to make sense of what happened in my  
4 childhood, that I realised it had an impact on me.  
5 I think it might be why I didn't disclose what my dad  
6 had been doing to me. I think it made me think that all  
7 adults were like that and that realisation put the  
8 blockers on me. In fact, I would say that although what  
9 he did to me wasn't as severe as what my dad did, it was  
10 as important in terms of impact.

11 'When I look back now, I feel I was ready to blurt  
12 out to Maggie Mearns what my dad had been doing to me.  
13 I was a child and didn't know if I would be believed and  
14 I was frightened of the consequences, but I felt safe  
15 with Maggie. I believe that had I not been put into the  
16 Eversley first, I would have disclosed it. Although  
17 Maggie Mearns helped me to get sanctuary and took me  
18 away from my house where far worse things were happening  
19 to me than ever happened in care, I do feel that I was  
20 failed by the system as the opportunity to find out  
21 about the abuse was missed.'

22 'Robin' then says that after those few nights in  
23 Eversley, she was taken to Tollcross in Glasgow and then  
24 she tells us about Beechwood and Dr Guthrie's. And, as  
25 I've said already, she's given evidence about her time

1 in those places as well as her life after care and all  
2 the impact. So really I'm just going to go to  
3 paragraph 140, where she makes the usual declaration and  
4 she's signed her statement and it's dated 8 August 2018.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

6 MS FORBES: My Lady, I'll pass over to Mr Sheldon.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 Mr Sheldon.

9 'Sharon' (read in)

10 MR SHELDON: My Lady, the second read-in is the read-in of  
11 'Sharon'. The reference for her statement is  
12 WIT-1-000000909.

13 'Sharon' was born in 1967. She gives us details of  
14 her early life. She names her mother and father and  
15 says that she had three siblings. She says in  
16 paragraph 3 that:

17 'From what I can remember, life at home wasn't very  
18 good at all. My dad worked as a lorry driver and was  
19 away from home a lot. My mum and dad were both  
20 drinkers. We were poor and we never had enough food.  
21 We used to steal or blag food from our neighbours when  
22 we could because we were always hungry. I've now seen  
23 some of my social work records and there are references  
24 to my siblings and I being malnourished.

25 'One of my earliest memories was during my time in

1 the house in Bargeddie. My mum was drunk and fell  
2 asleep smoking. She set her bed on fire and I had to  
3 scream to the downstairs neighbour for help. The  
4 neighbour came and put the fire out. I can't remember  
5 if my mum was injured. I must have been around 2 years  
6 old when that happened.'

7 She says that there was social work involvement with  
8 the family from very early on, she thinks before she  
9 turned 2. And in paragraph 6:

10 'At some point during my very early childhood, we  
11 were evicted from our house in Bargeddie. My mum and  
12 dad weren't paying the rent. That's when we started  
13 moving in and out of homeless units and children's  
14 homes. The first children's home I remember was  
15 Hamilton Children's Home. That was followed by Dunavon  
16 and Coatshill in Blantyre. We were in all of these  
17 places within the space of a year or two.

18 'Sometime after Coatshill House, my mum got a house  
19 in Newmains. I think I was about 4 years old when she  
20 got the house, because I was living there when I started  
21 going to primary school for the first time.

22 'I have no memory of my mum talking to us about  
23 going to Hamilton Children's Home or of being taken  
24 there. I just remember being there and the day we left.

25 'I was around 2 or 3 when I went to

1 Hamilton Children's Home. I went with my mum and  
2 siblings. My dad didn't come with us. I didn't know if  
3 he was away working or if he had left by this point. I  
4 think he must have left because I don't remember seeing  
5 him at all after we went into Hamilton Children's Home.'

6 And as she's already suggested, my Lady, she had  
7 a short stay in Hamilton Children's Home. **Secondary Institutions - to**

8 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

9 Page 4, paragraph 16, she thinks they were only at  
10 Hamilton Children's Home for a matter of months and went  
11 to stay with her grandmother and ultimately that  
12 arrangement broke down and they ended up in  
13 Dunavon Children's Home. Again, that was quite a short  
14 stay. This is around 1969 or 1970, my Lady, **Secondary Institution**

15 **Secondary Institutions - to be published**

16 And if we go to page 6, she talks about a placement  
17 at Coatshill House in Blantyre. Again, this is in her  
18 very early life. She says:

19 'I couldn't say exactly how long we were at  
20 Coatshill House. My mum ended up getting a house in  
21 Newmains through the social work department and the five  
22 of us moved into the house together...'

23 When she was 4 or 5 years old. And taking that  
24 short, my Lady, she just says, paragraph 26:

25 'My memories of family life in Newmains are not

1 good. My mum was still drinking. In fact her drinking  
2 was getting worse. She would disappear for three or  
3 four days at a time and leave my brothers, sister and I  
4 on our own. [And] my eldest brother would have to look  
5 after us.'

6 27:

7 'There was never enough food in the house and we  
8 were always hungry. I remember one time eating raw  
9 brussels sprouts with blue mould on them because there  
10 was nothing else for us to eat. Life at home was pretty  
11 dire.'

12 And she gives some more detail about that. And at  
13 paragraph 30, she says:

14 '[She remembers] the social worker coming to visit  
15 us while we lived there. He would read my mum the riot  
16 act, telling her to keep us clean and fed. She wouldn't  
17 listen and things would just carry on as they had been.'

18 And she then goes on to describe an incident when  
19 she's around 6 years old, so around 1973, when she was  
20 attacked by a man she didn't know. And taking that  
21 short, my Lady, she's seriously assaulted by this  
22 individual and indeed knocked unconscious. She says,  
23 paragraph 33, that her mother must have called the  
24 police and she's told afterwards, paragraph 34, that the  
25 man who had attacked her had raped her while she was

1 unconscious:

2 'The police [she says] told my mum that the only  
3 reason I was still alive is because the guy must have  
4 thought I was dead.'

5 Paragraph 34, the social worker realised things  
6 weren't going to change and the children were put into  
7 foster care in Lanark. And she describes first of all  
8 a placement in Lanark, which on the whole seems to have  
9 been quite a good experience, and at paragraph 46 says:

10 'There wasn't any really warmth or affection shown  
11 to us, but at the same time they looked after our health  
12 and kept us fed. I often say they didn't hug you but  
13 they didn't batter you either. They certainly didn't  
14 treat us like we were their own kids.'

15 They then leave foster care and I think it's clear  
16 they can't have been there for very long. She says,  
17 paragraph 50, aged 7, she went to Dale House. **Secondary Insti**

18 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

19 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

20 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**. And if we turn to page 15,  
21 she says that they then moved to Carluke Children's Home  
22 when Dale House closed down.

23 Paragraph 63, she says she had three stints in  
24 Carluke Children's Home between the ages of 7 and 16:

25 'In between the periods at Carluke, I had two foster

1 care placements and a short period at Downcraig House in  
2 Castlemilk.'

3 And taking matters short again, my Lady, Secondary Institu

4 Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
5  
6  
7

8 And turning to page 21 she says -- sorry, 22 -- yes,  
9 sorry, 21, my Lady, just a note that she says that  
10 whilst she was living in Carluke, there was a foster  
11 care campaign and seems to have had two fairly  
12 short-lived placements based from, as it were, the  
13 Carluke home.

14 She says, page 22, paragraph 89, that she left  
15 Carluke when she was 16, but she gives some more detail  
16 about foster care placements in Wishaw and Paisley. And  
17 then at page 26, she tells us about her time at  
18 Downcraig House and it appears that this would be about  
19 1980, my Lady. So she's about 13 by this stage.

20 LADY SMITH: Right, okay.

21 MR SHELDON: She says:

22 'Downcraig House looked like a new build when I went  
23 there.'

24 And pausing briefly, my Lady, Downcraig seems to  
25 have opened in around 1975 and closed about 1986.

1 LADY SMITH: Right.

2 MR SHELDON: Eversley opened in the 1940s and closed in 1980

3 and children from Eversley and, indeed, some of the

4 staff moved from Eversley to Downcraig, including John Marshall - RLD

5 John Marshall - RLD and they seemed to then have SNR Downcraig

6 following on from Eversley. And I'll come back to that

7 issue, my Lady. At all events, she says:

8 'It was a home for boys and girls of school age. I  
9 shared a bedroom with three other girls. Even though I  
10 wasn't there very long, I did go to  
11 Castlemilk High School. It was a woman who SNR the home  
12 and I remember her husband would be around more than she  
13 was. His behaviour made me feel uncomfortable. He  
14 would spend his Saturday nights in the home with kids  
15 sitting in his lap. I just found it strange that he  
16 didn't have anything to do with the place but he was  
17 always hanging around. The only other thing I remember  
18 about daily life there was that the staff would take us  
19 roller skating in Glasgow on a Saturday.

20 'While I was living at Downcraig, my social worker  
21 changed. It wasn't Lydia anymore, it was a man called  
22 Ron Harris. He was my last social worker and I felt  
23 like he did nothing for me. I bumped into him in ASDA  
24 one day long after I'd left care and I told him exactly  
25 what I thought of him.

1           'I was sexually abused by a man while I was at  
2           Downcraig House. I don't know if he was a member of  
3           staff or if he was a kid who lived there. He was  
4           a good-looking guy and dressed nicely. I don't know his  
5           name. He would take me into a room within the home and  
6           do everything to me except rape. I was 13 years old and  
7           he was a good bit older than me. It happened multiple  
8           times over the four months I lived there. It seemed to  
9           be the running joke that this guy would fancy one girl  
10          one day and then move on to someone else the next.  
11          I don't know if any members of staff knew about what he  
12          did to me, as I never told anyone what happened.'

13                 And she then says she moved back to Carluke  
14          Children's Home after four months at Downcraig and  
15          stayed there until she left care aged 16. And in  
16          relation to that she says:

17                 'I managed to get myself out of care at Carluke when  
18          I got the live-in kennel job. I was only 16 years old  
19          and I wasn't given any support after I left.'

20                 She says:

21                 'I've only seen the social worker, Ron Harris, twice  
22          since I left and one of those times was when I bumped  
23          into him in ASDA.

24                 'After a few months of working at the kennels they  
25          started mucking me around and not paying my wages. They

1 thought they could get away with it because they knew  
2 I had nowhere else to go. I had to leave that job and  
3 I was effectively homeless. I went to the social work  
4 office to see Ron Harris. I was waiting for him when he  
5 arrived at work and I remember he was more concerned  
6 about not having had his morning coffee yet than the  
7 fact that I was homeless. He managed to get me a flat  
8 in Motherwell. I was 17 years old when I moved into the  
9 flat and it was the first time I'd ever lived on my own.

10 'It was great when I first got my flat as all I'd  
11 ever wanted was my own place. After a while I found  
12 that I was really lonely. That's when my mental health  
13 started going downhill and I started self-harming when  
14 I was 18. After about five years of being that way and  
15 it getting worse and worse, I had to go and get  
16 psychological help. I knew that if I didn't get help,  
17 I was probably going to end up killing myself. I went  
18 to my doctor in my early 20s and he put me in touch with  
19 a psychologist in Glasgow [who she names and says that]  
20 It helped just to talk to someone about everything that  
21 happened to me. I wasn't prescribed medication.'

22 She says she met her husband when she was 16. They  
23 got married when they were 25 and they've been married  
24 for 25 years and they have two children and she's  
25 currently working at a gardener, but has some physical

1 health issues, including a bad shoulder and a bad leg  
2 and she says she believes the leg pain 'I get' [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

5 In relation to impact she says:

6 'I think the biggest the lasting impact of my time  
7 in care is my complete lack of self-esteem. I quickly  
8 realised that all the people I'd been involved with  
9 during my time in care; the staff, other kids and  
10 various social workers, just weren't interested after  
11 I left. It was really lonely and for a long time I felt  
12 like I had no one.

13 'I suffered from flashbacks as an adult due to the  
14 physical and sexual abuse I went through. Specific  
15 places or smells would bring back memories from my  
16 childhood. I still won't go out for a walk on my own,  
17 even with my eight dogs. I will only go out if there's  
18 another adult with me. It took me a while to trust  
19 people and get to grips with my relationship with my  
20 husband. He was kind to me and never violent towards  
21 me. I just wasn't used to that.

22 'Speaking to the psychologist really made me see  
23 that I couldn't let my abusers win. I was going to get  
24 on with my life and that's what I've done. After I had  
25 my eldest child, I had this great feeling inside of me

1 and I kept waiting for it to go away but it never has.  
2 I've never had any difficulty showing my kids the  
3 affection I was never shown.

4 'Despite all the things that happened to me in care,  
5 I still think I would have had a worse life if I had  
6 been left where I was with my mum.

7 'The only thing I have reported to police is the  
8 sexual abuse I suffered when I was living in Downcraig  
9 House in Castlemilk. The only reason I told police  
10 about it is because two CID officers turned up at my  
11 door one night and asked me about Downcraig House.  
12 I told them about the man who abused me but I didn't  
13 know his name and I don't think anything came of it.  
14 I also told the officers that they should be looking  
15 into the woman who **SNR** the home and her husband, who was  
16 always hanging around the kids. I believe that that  
17 woman and her husband were prosecuted for something to  
18 do with Downcraig House. I've never reported any of the  
19 other physical or sexual abuse and I haven't received  
20 legal advice about claiming compensation.'

21 And just to pause, my Lady, it doesn't seem  
22 therefore that 'Sharon's' abuser would have been John  
23 Marshall. She's not making that link in that passage.  
24 It seems to have been someone else but we know that  
25 there were certainly other abusers operating in Eversley

1           and possibly Downcraig as well. And for completeness,  
2           my Lady, there's certainly no record of Mrs RLD  
3           ever having been prosecuted.

4   LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5   MR SHELDON: 'I got a hold of my social work records a few  
6           years ago. I don't think what I have are all of my  
7           records as there's nothing in them about the man  
8           attacking me and raping me in the field while I lived  
9           with my mum. The earliest note in my records refers to  
10          the time my parents were evicted from the house in  
11          Bargeddie. That was before I was attacked in the field,  
12          so I don't understand why [I think] there is no mention  
13          of it. The reason I wanted to get my records is because  
14          I was told by a friend that if I can prove the attack  
15          was reported to the police, I can claim criminal  
16          injuries compensation.'

17                 And she said that she also wrote to her doctor to  
18                 get a copy of her medical records:

19                 'But they only go back to when I was 8 years old.  
20                 I don't have any other documents or photographs from my  
21                 childhood.'

22                 On lessons to be learned, she says:

23                 'I think that children who are in care are the ones  
24                 who need to be looked after the most, particularly when  
25                 they leave care. No one can explain to you how lonely

1           and scary it is when, your whole life, all your  
2           decisions have been made for you and then you're on your  
3           own. There needs to be support put in place for care  
4           leavers and that support should continue until it's not  
5           needed anymore, not when someone decides you're too old  
6           to receive it.'

7           And she's made the usual declaration, my Lady, and  
8           signed the statement in February 2022.

9   LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

10   MR SHELDON: And, my Lady, that concludes the evidence for  
11           Eversley and Downcraig, although of course there will be  
12           some material to look at with the Glasgow representative  
13           in due course. I think that's the 28th.

14   LADY SMITH: Susanne Miller?

15   MR SHELDON: That's right, my Lady, so that's 28 May,  
16           my Lady.

17   LADY SMITH: Yes. But next week we move on to Fornethy, I  
18           think, don't we?

19   MR SHELDON: Fornethy, yes, and I'll be handing the baton on  
20           to Mr MacAulay and Ms MacLeod.

21   LADY SMITH: Yes. Well, thank you very much and I will rise  
22           now until 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning. And meanwhile  
23           I hope everybody has a good weekend.

24   (3.56 pm)

25                           (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am

on Tuesday, 19 May 2026)

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