

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LBV

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is LBV My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background

2. I have lived at my present address for four years. I am not working at present but I was previously employed as a bus driver.

### Life before going into care

3. My parents are both deceased. Their names were and I have three sisters. From oldest to youngest, the four of us are , myself and then
4. My mum and dad married and he was soon battering her. My mum went to stay with her mum in Sighthill, Glasgow. My granny died of cancer and my mum was taken into hospital after a nervous breakdown. We all went to stay with my dad in . We then went back to my mum when she got out of hospital: then then me. was staying with one of my mother's relatives in Baillieston, so she was out of the picture.

5. My mum got a house from the Christian Action in [REDACTED], Pollockshields. We went to [REDACTED] Pimary School. When we stayed in [REDACTED], my mum got the jail for a day for fighting with a neighbour. We were put into Castlemilk children's home for one night.
6. We then went to [REDACTED] Pollockshields, but she went on the wine again. Eventually, we all stayed with my mum. So we were running about neglected. We didn't think we were neglected, we were having a ball. We got taken into Nazareth House in Aberdeen in [REDACTED] 1968.
7. I think our social worker was a Miss Stevens. I don't think we went from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] right to Aberdeen. I don't know if they put us somewhere beforehand.
8. We went to Nazareth House in [REDACTED] 1968. All four of us went. I was eight or just turned nine. There was a year between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] then another year between [REDACTED] and me. [REDACTED] is four years younger than me. Miss Stevens was from John Street social work department.
9. My mum was an alcoholic. They just came and took us from her. There was no court involved.

### **Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

10. I was in Nazareth House, Aberdeen for about three months. I can't remember the first day at all. I remember there were two sets of stairs. The boys went up one set and the girls went up the other. I remember walking up them and I shouted to [REDACTED] who was going up the other set. I got a slap in the ear from some nun. I was told I wasn't allowed to speak to my sisters.
11. [REDACTED] knew Sister [REDACTED] LTX real name was [REDACTED] LTX as [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

12. While I was there, I only saw my sisters briefly, when we were at school. We got the bus to St Peters primary school. Sisters [LTX] and [FAF] would slap you if you spoke on the bus at all.

### **Abuse at Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

13. We got this pudding while we were there. We used to call it frog spawn. I can't remember what it was called, I think it was tapioca. It had bubbles in it. If you spat it out, or vomited you were made to eat it. It was kept until the next day and then you were made to eat it and if you were sick you got slapped about.
14. There was a sister [LFB] in Aberdeen. Along with Sisters [FAF] and [LTX] she would slap you at any time. You didn't know what you did wrong, if anything. It was just part and parcel of the place. Sisters [FAF] and [LTX] were the worst. You'd stand with the urine soaked sheet around you if you wet the bed. That was just normal.
15. I was nervous so I wet the bed. You had to put your pants on your head and you'd be put in a cold bath. They'd hold your head under the water then you put the same wet pants on and wet sheets. It happened nearly every night because you were so nervous. You'd get battered about the place.
16. You would go to the toilet just before going to bed. You would try not to drink too much so you wouldn't wet the bed but you did because you were nervous.
17. You weren't allowed to speak or you would get slapped by Sister [LTX] or [FAF] on the stairs, in the bus, at any time for anything. You'd get hit all the time.
18. At Christmas time, we put on a school play and the nuns came to pick us up after it. The other kids knew they were going home to nice things at Christmas. We knew we

were going back to getting hit by the nuns. Thinking of those things upset me. I can't remember much about Aberdeen except getting slapped and forced under water.

19. When we were in Aberdeen my father had a house in [REDACTED]. He could have kept us, but he didn't. He came to visit us. He came on the Saturday and Sunday. He had a free rail pass through working with the railway and he stayed in a wee bed and breakfast place, but you never really thought, "Why don't you take us home".

### **Leaving Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

20. I can't remember much about day to day life in Aberdeen. I remember my dad coming up to visit, I think he came up once a fortnight, and the time at Christmas with the play. I don't know why I got moved from Aberdeen to Lasswade.

### **Nazareth House, Lasswade**

21. It was mixed in Lasswade. You could sit with your sisters and watch TV. We all wore Fair Isle jerseys. There was a swing outside. You could go out and walk about. I was in a dorm with boys and my sisters were in one next to us. The dormitories were sectioned off with a partition wall. There were two or three beds where I was. Sister [LFD] had a room, then Peter Blaney, a staff member, then our room. It was the same on the other side. I can't remember how many were in the dorm.
22. Downstairs was a kitchen, TV room and a dining room. I think there were kids there as young as six months old. When boys reached the age of eleven or twelve, they went to St Ninians. Once you hit the age of puberty, they didn't want us mixing. Girls could stay until they were sixteen.
23. The mother superior was in charge there. I don't know her name.
24. I went up there a couple of years ago, it's a nursing home now.

## **Routine at Nazareth House, Lasswade**

### *First day*

25. We got transferred to Nazareth House in Lasswade on [REDACTED] 1969. That's from the Nazareth House records. So we were in Aberdeen for about three months. This is from the Sisters of Nazareth archives. Sister LFD was in charge of us the whole time we were in Lasswade.
26. My sisters and I went to Lasswade together. We thought it would be better but it wasn't. We still got slapped about. I still wet the bed but it was worse down there. If I was nine, I'd be in charge of someone who was seven. Someone who was seven would be in charge of someone who was five. If the five year old wet the bed, everybody would get slapped. The nun would slap the oldest one, who would in turn hit the one below and so on. It was a domino effect.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

27. I can't recall the day to day routine at Lasswade. You'd get your breakfast then walk to school. I remember in the winter time there was a little gatehouse with a wee shield and a thistle on it and we used to try and hit that with snowballs.
28. You were made to go to chapel. I'm sure that was every morning. It was a little place within the home. I was an altar boy and I did the incense thing. We had to say our prayers.
29. You'd walk down to a shop in Lasswade, I can't remember the name of it. It was a supermarket and I remember going in and stealing sweets called "Treetts". They're called M&M's now, but they were called Treetts then, and a "Bar 6".
30. There was a swing in the garden, hanging from a tree. I remember one of the boys there, [REDACTED] broke into the tuck shop. I think he went to St Ninian's, then from approved school to borstal.

31. We watched TV. Batman was just out and I remember watching that. I remember seeing Top of the Pops. That was a big deal. I can't remember bed times or access to toys. I can't recall sports but for some reason I remember a rugby ball and rugby boots for some reason.

32. We used to polish the floors with big bumper things. I don't know or can't remember how often.

*Food*

33. In Lasswade we still got the tapioca stuff that was like frogspawn. It was horrible.

*School*

34. You'd walk up to St Mary's school. There was a protestant school and a catholic school and we shared the same playground. I remember walking up to the school and fighting the protestants. [REDACTED] used to stick up for me.

35. My teacher was Miss Lindsay. 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' came out in the cinema and she took me to see it. I sat and wet myself in the cinema because I was scared to go to the toilet. I was worried that if I went, I wouldn't find her again in the dark.

36. When we went to school we were called Nazis because we wore trench coats and wellington boots. We wore those at school and we wore different clothes in the home that they gave us. You weren't allowed to interact with anyone else out with the home.

37. Miss Lindsay was a good teacher. I couldn't have told her about the abuse. You just try to put it out of your head.

*Holidays*

38. Some children in Sister [REDACTED] LFF [REDACTED] group went on a caravan holiday to Dunbar but we didn't go. I was never on holiday in the place.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

39. I can't remember Christmases there or my birthday. I always wanted a Batman motor, but I never got one.

*Visits/Inspections*

40. Every weekend my dad would come and see us on a Saturday. But he had a house in [REDACTED] and wouldn't take us. He'd take us out to a park and down to Lasswade and into Dalkeith. He bought us sweets, chips and juice. When you got back, you'd share your sweets with other kids. I'd get a 'Bar 6', break it into six bits and give all my pals a bit.
41. One time, my mum turned up to see us. She was drunk and I thought, "how is she going to get home, steaming drunk?" There was a woman who worked [REDACTED] Mrs [REDACTED] L J H [REDACTED] she put my mum up for the night and she got the train back to Glasgow the next day. My mum only visited us the once.
42. I remember the social worker Miss Stevens, but she never visited us. I can't remember ever seeing her.
43. One time my mum and dad took us out of the home. We went home for about a week. I don't remember the reason but we went back to Nazareth House. Miss Stevens came and took us back.

*Healthcare*

44. We never got treatment for injuries. We didn't get taken to the doctors. You got this blue violet stuff dabbed on you if you cut yourself, I think by a nun. I can't remember a nurse being there. You got your head combed with a bone-comb.

**Abuse at Nazareth House, Lasswade**

45. One time when I was an altar boy, I had a button undone when I was in church. It was five or six in the morning. I got my head stotted right off of a wall by this old priest. When you served the mass, it was at six in the morning. There was a mass every morning and a priest from outside would come in. I had a button undone in my cloak and the priest slapped me across the ear. He was an old bastard.
46. When a nun died, and a couple did during my time there, you were paraded past the dead nun. I think you had to touch her.
47. We took rhubarb one time and stole some sugar to dip the rhubarb in. We got caught and Sister **LFD** battered me with an aluminium bar across the legs. I was told to say I'd fallen off a swing because I had bruises on my legs and my dad visited us every other weekend.
48. We were made to get eggs because they kept chickens and there was this old nun, she was like a witch. If you dropped an egg you got battered with a stick by the old nun. The nuns wore these black shoes and I remember them kicking me up the backside with these black shoes on. That's just came into my head just now.
49. I can't remember the name of the old witch nun, she was in her seventies. There was a Sister **LFF** there who would kick you, but it was mostly Sister **LFD** who abused us as we were in her group.



50. In Lasswade, with Sister LFD wetting the bed got the same reaction as Aberdeen. You would try to cover it up. If you did wet the bed you wouldn't say anything and sleep in the bed with the stale urine smell for two or three days, so that you didn't get a doing every day.
51. When you did say you'd wet the bed, you used to all line up in the shower room. It wasn't as bad because they had showers in there, but everybody that did it would stand in the shower room with the wet sheets around you. It was the same regime, battered.
52. I had to eat the tapioca stuff again there. Sister LFF would kick and slap you too. Sister LFF made me eat my vomit once. Sister LFD was evil but my dad would talk away with her when he visited.
53. [REDACTED] had long auburn hair, with ringlets and she moved once and got slapped, like a German slap by Sister LFD. The slap was like back and forth with the front of the hand and then the back of the hand. It was her that gave [REDACTED] German slaps. Every day you'd see kids getting slapped.
54. I have been mentally, physically and sexually assaulted. When I arrived at Lasswade I was split up from my sisters and put into a dormitory with other boys. Peter Blaney was a member of staff at Nazareth House. I don't know exactly what he did and I can't say how often he stayed there.
55. One day, when I was eight or nine I was taken to a room by Peter Blaney. He told me not to tell anyone that I was there with him. I remember him forcing himself in me. I didn't know what was happening, I was so scared and felt him trying to force his penis up my anal passage.
56. I remember the pain was so bad that I was crying and told him to stop. He realised when he was finished and coming out of me that I was bleeding and there was blood on his penis. My back passage couldn't stop bleeding, I was very sore and I could hardly walk. I was told to go to one of the nuns and say that I had sat on a wall and

the glass had cut my backside. He told me that if I told anyone he would come and get me. I told the nuns that story and I got slapped for sitting on the glass wall.

57. There were times he would force me to have sex with him and force me to have oral sex with him. He touched me and masturbated. It was a horrible experience.
58. I was delighted when new kids came in because he would focus attention on them. He left me alone for a couple of weeks. But then he would come back to me for it.
59. A highlight in the home was being an altar boy at Christmas because people from the outside would come to the chapel. I was meant to be doing it, then I got blamed for putting shaving foam on the bed of Peter Blaney. He stayed overnight sometimes and was in a bed next to our dormitory. I got blamed so couldn't be an altar boy at Christmas. A boy with the surname [REDACTED] brother, got to do it, so I battered him. I'm sure Blaney got charged for interfering with the [REDACTED] I think the police told me this.
60. The abuse would happen during the day because Sister LFD slept near us at night time and she would hear things. I was embarrassed and ashamed. I don't know exactly when it started. He sexually abused me three times, i.e. raped me, then done other stuff on top of that, in between that. It carried on until I left in 1971.
61. Peter Blaney sexually abused me in the beds in the dormitories upstairs when everybody was downstairs. There was a little sewing room there, the shower room, our dorm, then further along [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] dorm.
62. As I've said, you'd be in charge of a younger child and had to make sure that they were ready for school. If they weren't, then you got slapped, so you'd then slap the younger one. I remember there was a conveyor belt of ages of kids looking after each other. There was this girl who was daft, I can't remember her name. She was eleven at the time and she put a young boy, who was three or four, in a scalding hot bath and his skin came off. He got taken to hospital. He's seemingly still scarred. I've

spoken to his sister, she stays in [REDACTED] The girl wasn't right in the head but she was in charge of him.

63. The girl and her brother had been there for years and years. There were kids in the home from six months old, right until they were sixteen. So we got it not so bad, only being there two and a half years.
64. We were at St Mary's school and me and another boy, I can't remember his name, decided to run away. We walked from Bonnyrigg, I can't remember where we got to, but we asked what bus took us to Glasgow and the police came and took us back. Everyone was watching a film, "Amen" when we got back. We got battered and battered by Sister LFD and put into a small room for hours and hours.
65. They classed it as an orphanage. It wasn't an orphanage, we had parents and others did. Basically you got battered if you wet the bed and you got battered if you didn't. It was a survival thing. Older kids would batter younger ones, but [REDACTED] was quite tough. She was a tomboy and would look after me a bit. I saw my sisters getting battered by the nuns.

### **Leaving Nazareth House, Lasswade**

66. We left in [REDACTED], 1971 but the Nazareth House records say 1970. They are wrong. When I came out of Nazareth House, we all got back together, my mum, dad and sisters. Nazareth House records state I went to [REDACTED] with a William McCaw. I've never heard of him! I don't know how I got home.
67. I can't remember leaving Nazareth House. I've not spoken to my sister about this. When we got out the home, I went to St Columbus primary school, so did [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to a convent school.

68. My mum and dad had got back together. The first Christmas I remember was in [REDACTED]. Sitting round the table like a family. I remember listening to the radio. Then my mum went on to the wine again and we got scattered to the four winds.
69. In 1972, all the girls went back to Nazareth House, I went to stay with my friend [REDACTED] and his parents, [REDACTED]. I was about eleven years old. I remember coming home from school and there was corrugated iron covering my mum's house because she'd been evicted. My mum wasn't paying the rent. Me and my mate [REDACTED] took all the corrugated iron off it and we stayed in that house.
70. I remember there was a cobblers shop next to us and the woman used to give me £1 to take a box of shoes on the bus to Goldbergs. If you bought shoes out of there and the heel fell off they'd send them to this shop to get repaired. When I was on the bus I remember seeing my mum and [REDACTED] walking along the road with a mattress because my mum had got a house around the corner. My parents had separated again. My dad was in [REDACTED] and my mum was in [REDACTED].
71. My mum got out of hospital and went to the house in [REDACTED], I can't remember where [REDACTED] was. She then wanted to go back into hospital and she asked her friend, [REDACTED] to look after me. I stayed there and all the girls were still in Nazareth House. My mum came out and got a bedsit in [REDACTED].
72. I was still going to St Columbus High but I battered somebody and the headmaster didn't want me back. So I then enrolled at Holyrood secondary school. I went there for 24 days out of 300. I was never at school.
73. I was still with [REDACTED] was working in Nazareth House, [REDACTED] was back with my mum in [REDACTED]. When I was eleven I would go and visit my sisters myself.
74. [REDACTED] left Nazareth House and went to stay with a friend, [REDACTED] was fifteen and was staying with my mum. [REDACTED] stayed at Nazareth House herself. One day, during

the week, my mum gave me £2 and I went to see [REDACTED] I took her back to my mums and nobody came looking for her. I was still with [REDACTED] The roof fell in on my mums bedsit in [REDACTED] and mum and [REDACTED] came to stay with [REDACTED] too.

75. [REDACTED] got paid for keeping me. She used to get me to go and get her benilyn codeine. She used to drink it by the gallon. [REDACTED] and I just didn't go to school. I became more streetwise when I'd been out of Nazareth House.
76. My mum then got a bedsit in [REDACTED] with [REDACTED]. All this had happened over the course of a few months to a year in 1972 to 1973.
77. In 1973, I wasn't going to school and I tried to cash a cheque so I went to Larchgrove Assessment Centre in Edinburgh Road, Glasgow, for three to six months then I went to St Andrew's approved school in Shandon, Helensburgh. Mr Crichton was my social worker from the social work department at 118 Oswald Street, Glasgow, and it was through a children's panel. I was fourteen.

78.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

79.

80.

81. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### Reporting of abuse

82. I couldn't tell the nuns about the sexual abuse because they wouldn't believe me. I couldn't tell my dad because the nuns told him that we were well cared for. I never mentioned it until my daughter [REDACTED] was sixteen years old, so that she could look after the boys and my kids wouldn't be taken from me.
83. I gave a statement to the police in 1997 and also 1999 and I have a precognition statement from 2006.
84. I gave a statement to the police on [REDACTED] 1997. It was taken by DS Cowan at my home address. I gave a statement to Ross Harper solicitors on [REDACTED] 1999. I told Ross Harper the story.
85. In 1997, I heard it on the radio about abuse in Nazareth House. I reported it and Lothian and Borders police, a DS Cowan and DC McKay, who I think is dead now, came up to my house and I told them the story.
86. I told the police that there was an incident while I was there when Peter Blaney threatened to pull my trousers down and slap my arse. The police told me that he had been taken to court and got twelve years in jail for abuse. They didn't mention anything else, but on the way out the police officer said that Peter Blaney stays in Kilsyth. That was it.
87. I didn't want to tell anyone about the sexual abuse because I had three children. I did my best to keep it from my children. I had a choice whether to tell someone or risk losing my kids, because they say the abused becomes the abuser.

88. I can confirm I reported this to the police but they said he'd already been convicted of sexual abuse so he wouldn't be convicted of committing any more. They told me they wouldn't charge him because he'd been convicted of similar crimes but they'd keep a log of it.
89. In relation to the sexual abuse, I did read out what I have said in this statement from a precognition but I remember it like it was yesterday. I gave a statement to a solicitor but a female officer from Lothian and Borders Police came through to Saracen Street and took a statement from me, the exact same statement, but I've heard nothing else about it. This would have been in 2007 or 2008.

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

90. I came out of care in 1975 and with a name like [REDACTED] I was never going to get a job in Glasgow council. It was a protestant/catholic sort of thing. While I was in the approved school, [REDACTED] went to stay with my dad and my mum went back. When she was in [REDACTED], the social work took [REDACTED] away and put her in [REDACTED] children's home in Pollockshields. They had to cut all her hair off as it was full of lice.
91. My mate [REDACTED] dad, got me a job in the shipyards in 1975. I got £27.00 wages a week. There were no more dealings with the social work department after St Andrew's.
92. I was seventeen when I went to jail. I got remanded from Barlinnie to Longriggend Young Offenders. There was no abuse there. I broke into shops and stripped lead from roofs, that sort of things. There was no violence involved.
93. My mum went to an Asian shop once and was half a pence short for ten sovereign cigarettes and the shopkeeper embarrassed her in front of other people so I went down and battered him. I got a £50 fine and that was the last time I was in trouble. That was in 1976.

94. We still stayed in [REDACTED]. One time, my dad went for my mum and I got a hatchet out of the coal bunker and I told him not to go for her again. And he never hit her again.
95. I joined the Territorial Army when I was 20 or 21. I was in the signals for twelve or thirteen months, then the paras. My mum had cancer by then. She died and I gave up the TA.
96. My ex-wife is from [REDACTED] I am divorced. We have split up and she has returned there. We have three children, two boys and a girl. I brought my three kids up myself.
- [REDACTED]
97. I ended up on my own with my kids when they were two, five and nine. My wife went to [REDACTED]. She seen a guy there, so I left her. We had went to [REDACTED] three times with the kids. She told me on the plane coming home that she'd done something so we came back and we separated.
98. I had some problems with my wife and the police were involved but she eventually went back to [REDACTED]. We took her to the airport and she went back to [REDACTED]. Her sister had been watching the kids and she brought them round to my house and gave them to me.
99. I had the kids but we were stuck in a wee room and kitchen. My ex-wife came back six months later but wasn't interested in the kids. I went up to the social work department and in 1998 we got a bigger house so [REDACTED] had her own bedroom.



**Impact**

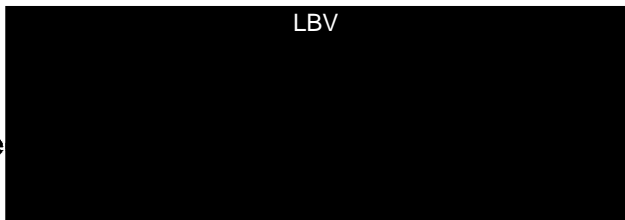
100. My life in care has made me a stronger person. To me, history repeats itself. I split up with my wife, I struggled, but my sons [REDACTED] were always smart. They never missed a day of school because I had it in my head that the social work would come and take them away from me.
101. It made me harder, stronger and more cynical. It makes you more wary. I wouldn't say I was a bad person. I brought up my three kids and they are all doing well. When we got married, we had [REDACTED] and everything was great.
102. My daughter [REDACTED] calls me a sociopath. I was strict with my kids to protect them from what happened to me. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
103. I have never told anyone except the police, future pathways and the inquiry about what happened to me. I have never had any counselling ever. I reported my abuse to the police in 1997 because I'd heard about abuse in Nazareth House on the radio.
104. I got in touch with Ross Harper in 1999 to raise a court action for the abuse and some form of remuneration. Cameron Fyfe dealt with everyone. We went in front of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB), and got £1000. I had told the lawyers firm about the sexual abuse but they hadn't told the CICB. So I went through it again in 2006 and I got £12,000. I got my kitchen done up and gave the rest to my kids.
105. There should be physical checks on people working in homes, vetting. Not just checking computers and paperwork.

**Records**

106. I got my records from Nazareth House. It is one page. I have my social work records but they mainly speak about approved school. Miss Stevens was my main social worker initially.

**Other information**

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

LBV  


Signe.....

Dated.....

1/11/19

