

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QCD

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is [REDACTED] QCD [REDACTED]. I will be 57 on my next birthday. I was born on [REDACTED] 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I hold an Higher National Certificate in Social Care and a National Diploma in Design.
3. I am separated and live with my daughter [REDACTED] who is sixteen years old. I am employed by Glasgow City Council as a [REDACTED].

Background

4. My real mother was [REDACTED] but she abandoned us when I was three years old. I don't know if she is still alive or not.
5. My father was [REDACTED] and my stepmother was [REDACTED], and they are both dead.
6. I have seven siblings. [REDACTED] is 61 years old, [REDACTED] is 60 and [REDACTED] is 59 – they are all older than me. Then [REDACTED] who is younger than me. [REDACTED] who is 49, [REDACTED] who is 46 and [REDACTED] who is 47 are my step siblings.

Before being put into care

7. Prior to going into care we lived at [REDACTED] Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow. I only have a couple of memories of before I went into care and there is no context to them. I am in a back yard or something like that with a lot of bricks about as if it's a building site. Also sitting in a darkened kitchen. These are the only two vague memories I have.
8. My mother abandoned us when I was three years old. I am not sure of the reasons. She just left us in the care of a neighbour one day whilst my dad was away working as an electrical engineer. From what I can gather we were in pretty dire circumstances. I am not sure how long we stayed with the neighbour.
9. We went to stay with our paternal grandmother for a short period of time. I have no memory of being at my grandmother's house.
10. She approached the Church to advocate as she couldn't cope with us. Her minister advocated with Quarriers Homes to get us placed in there. Thereafter me, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] were taken into Quarriers Homes on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1964 when I was three and a half years old.
11. My sister [REDACTED] was still a baby and she was adopted by my dad's sister.

Institution – Quarriers Homes

12. Quarriers Village reminds me of the village in Harry Potter, when he goes back to where his parents were, with the wee turreted cottages. That was what Quarriers Homes was like but on a slightly bigger scale. There was nothing else round about Quarriers Village because everything was contained in there. The school and everything was there. That was the whole philosophy of it. Round about that was countryside. You were completely enclosed and even if you ran away you were only running into countryside.

13. My first memory of Quarriers Homes was walking down a leafy street with a strange lady who said she was taking me to a nice place. Initially I didn't go to the same place as my three older sisters, probably as I was so young.
14. The records I received from Quarriers confirm I went there on [REDACTED] 1964 and stayed there until [REDACTED] 1966.
15. I can't remember much of the first place I stayed in Quarriers, except for being in a Wendy house and the staff trying to pull me out of it, and I was determined I was staying in there. I was later told I was going to join my sisters and I was taken to cottage 7. It seemed like a few months later. Maybe I wasn't old enough to go into cottage 7 until I was four and that was why they waited. That makes sense to me.
16. When I arrived at cottage 7, there was a Mrs [REDACTED] QBI there and she told me to call her "the cottage mother". I was pleased to see my sisters. I have no idea how many girls were in cottage 7.
17. Thinking back I would say Mrs [REDACTED] QBI was old, with grey permed flicky hair, stout, with glasses. When I think more about it now I think she would have been about 40-45 years old.
18. I never saw any males at all in the cottage. The cottage only had girls. I cannot remember how many children were there.

Abuse

The "stairs thing"

19. My first recollection of abuse at cottage 7 was on my first night there. There was quite a bit of activity and I got a bed next to my sister [REDACTED]. When I was talking in the dormitory the other girls were telling me to be quiet and not to speak. Then,

Mrs [REDACTED] QBI shouted "Whoever is speaking come downstairs!". The other girls told me to go downstairs and they were telling me I had to go and stand on the step. I knew that they knew about what was going to happen.

20. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI had this game where she stood at the bottom of the stairs with a belt and you were to go down to the third stair, she would count to ten, and then you had to make a dive upstairs again.

21. So I went downstairs and as I did she said "I've got this game". She told me the rules as I was standing there. I can't remember what words she used but I understood from what she said, was that she would count to ten and then I was to run back upstairs again. I didn't know what was happening or what she was talking about so I just stood there. You know the expression "I don't know which way to turn", well I didn't know which way to turn.

22. I didn't know that she had a belt, as I didn't see it. I didn't see the logic in going downstairs to run back upstairs until she started whipping me with it. I can recall it had a buckle and she hit me with the buckle end on my bottom and back of legs. I just had a nightie on. She didn't say anything, it was just a frenzied attack. I was so stupid I just stood there, when I should just have ran back upstairs. My sister [REDACTED] came out from the dormitory and pulled me up the stairs. By that time my back and legs were really sore and I was in pain. I didn't understand what had happened and tried to talk to my sisters. They told me to be quiet again. I was in shock too.

23. When I finally fell asleep that night, I wet the bed. My legs and bottom were stinging. It must have been a reaction with the urine on my skin. I got up and sat on the floor and I didn't want to waken my sisters.

24. The beatings from Mrs [REDACTED] QBI continued, if you made any noise or didn't eat your food. She honed in on the older girls. She was probably more wary of us because we had a parent who came to visit us. I would imagine anyone else

who stayed in cottage 7 around that time would report the same, that it was common practice.

25. The place was quiet, that's what she wanted. You had to be silent all the time.

The only time you could speak was in the afternoon after the chores were done, you could go outside. That was the only time I could have a discussion with my sisters. You could have all those kids there, but it was silent. If I walked into a situation like that now I would immediately suspect something was wrong.

26. You just felt as if you were nothing, nobody wanted to hear what you had to say, nobody cared. The only people that did care, you could only talk to them outside in the afternoon. We were always on edge.

27. I don't remember seeing or hearing again about other kids getting beaten on the stairs like I did on my first night. I didn't see any other kids playing the game or getting hit with the belt. Maybe it was just an initiation she had for new starts.

28. I presume there was some sort of understanding with everybody that they knew they couldn't make a noise. Occasionally you would actually hear her shouting upstairs "Do I hear people talking?" and you would just immediately freeze, but I never saw anybody else going to the "stair thing".

29. The other beatings I saw by her were just with her hands. She would hit them so fast all the time in an explosive burst of energy. She had big hands. She would grab you by the hair and literally hit you twenty times within a minute - it's the only way I can describe it. She had a particular way of hitting. She didn't hit your bottom, it was all about the head. She either grabbed you by the back of the neck or hair. Then there was this rapid hitting all the time. Depending what mood she was in it would be a slap or a punch, but definitely that was what you saw all the time.

30. You didn't see her hitting someone on the arm. It was always the same method of hitting. Explosive and kind of rapid hitting, that is the only way I can describe

it, always round about the head and she would be holding you by the hair or back of the neck. This happened to everybody. I am not saying that was her job but it seemed that every time I looked up there was the fear of this happening, or it was happening right in front of me.

31. I never saw blood or injuries on any of the other children following the beatings from Mrs [REDACTED] QBI [REDACTED]. After the belt incident on my first night I had red inflamed stripes on the back of my legs. I didn't see injuries on other people, because she always hit their heads. She didn't attack their faces and it was more like coming from the side and back of the head all the time. I didn't see any bruises. Everything looked normal. If somebody was to walk in, or if we were going to church or anything like that, everybody looked normal.

Wetting the bed

32. I wet the bed until I was twelve years old. Because I wet the bed they would give me baths the following day, so I was never with my sisters at breakfast. It was every day or every other day this happened, so this was a routine for me. I was put into a cold bath.

33. On one occasion I wouldn't sit down in the cold bath. Another helper came in and they held my arms and tried to force me into the cold water. They looked terrified and kept watching the door. When I went in the water, they were trying to get me to sit down in cold water, and I wouldn't go and I was screaming, and they were scared. In order to shut me up they took my legs away from me and put me under the water. They held me there with a hand on my chest and I can't remember anymore. Like us they were terrified that Mrs [REDACTED] QBI [REDACTED] could hear this.

34. Because I didn't go with my sisters to breakfast, as I was having my bath, I dressed late. I would go into a room where the clothes were on benches. There was only a couple of piles left. One of the piles of clothes was mine and I was meant to get dressed and go and get my breakfast.

35. On one occasion Mrs [REDACTED] QBI came in and started hitting me around the head. She would say "you are getting this because you wet the bed!". I understood I was being beaten because I wet the bed. It was inconvenient, I was always inconvenient. This "wasn't good enough" and it was "inconvenient."
36. On one occasion, I was trying to put on my Liberty bodice, which was a padded vest. All the girls in Quarriers Homes wore them. You always had to wear it. I was so small, and after having had a beating from Mrs [REDACTED] QBI for wetting the bed, my hands were shaking. I couldn't get the rubber buttons through the hole. She started pulling me by the hair and hitting me about the head. I fell to the floor. She brought me back up again by the hair and continued beating me around the head.
37. This was a routine for me but not exclusive to me. I got so used to this happening, the cold baths and hitting. You learned very quickly to do as you were told. To dress very quickly, to go into a cold bath and you complied and fell in line.

Other staff

38. I got the impression that the other staff were terrified of Mrs [REDACTED] QBI as well. I don't know how many staff there were, I have no idea. It's strange as the staff were just like ghosts. There was no presence in them, I don't remember them. I just remember them as ghosts about the place. I don't remember ever seeing any of them challenging Mrs [REDACTED] QBI or being nice to the kids, or cuddling the kids. I suppose that is unprofessional. I don't remember the staff doing something nice with the kids, or favouring them, or praising them in any way, shape or form. They were just an extension of her.
39. I don't know if the other Aunties lived in, but there was an occasion when I had wet the bed in the middle of the night and I had had a nightmare as well. I was making a noise and they took me into this wee sitting room in the middle of the

night and it had a log fire or a coal fire. There were staff sitting round this fire and they were drinking tea and Mrs [REDACTED] QBI wasn't there. I was kind of standing at the door because I had to be changed into another nightie or not. I don't actually know but I there was definitely more staff there at night.

40. I presume the Aunties had a hand what happened, as much as I would like to lay everything at Mrs [REDACTED] QBI's door. I think she might have taught them, and they were terrified of her. But I also think they must have carried out some form of discipline. It's mad to think that she was the one that was going to give out these frenzied attacks to keep discipline and to keep this fear. They must have just complied with what she laid down.

Isolation

41. They kept you quite isolated so I don't know if there were other children going in the cold bath before or after me. There were other piles of clothes in the room.

42. You probably wonder how I could be isolated in a kids home, but to give you an example. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI hit me around the ear on one of these beatings and I got a searing pain in my head. I was taken to another dormitory which looked like a medical room. I was lying there in excruciating pain and I thought I was going to die in this whiteish room with a few beds. My sisters didn't visit and it was completely isolated. I didn't see a doctor and there was no pain relief. No one came in for long periods of time. I thought that this was the room you came to die in, because I had this very, very bad pain. I think the room I was put into when I had the searing pain in my ear was still within the cottage.

43. I don't know if there was a visible injury because we never looked in the mirror. I don't remember ever actually looking in a mirror when I was there. I've actually just realised I can't remember ever looking in a mirror in Quarriers.

Dunoon barn

44. On an occasion just before I left Quarriers I was taken to Dunoon on holiday and I was left in a barn. It was a heat wave. Everybody was playing on swings and the sun was shining. The staff put me into a darkened barn and I was told not to come out. I would imagine I was told this by the Aunties. Some of them must have come on holiday with us to Dunoon. It was so hot in the barn I could see blisters coming up on my arms and I think I passed out after that. Maybe I was too hot outside and they put me into the barn because they thought it was cooler, but in actual fact it was hotter.
45. I had to have my arms bandaged because they were covered in blisters. Whilst I had these bandages on, I couldn't go outside the cottage. I was told to help a lady polish the brasses. This woman had a lot of brasses on the floor and she was telling me to hand her them whilst she polished them.
46. As I was looking through the door out to the hall, my older sister [REDACTED] was polishing the banister coming down the stairs. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI was coming downstairs and was inspecting her work. I walked towards the door to say hello to my sister when Mrs [REDACTED] QBI grabbed her by the hair and started beating her. I don't know why. I stood there with my bandages and couldn't leave the room. [REDACTED] was getting pulled about the place and getting beaten.
- [REDACTED]
47. There was a particular girl, [REDACTED], who was friends with my sister [REDACTED]. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI hit her more than anybody else. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI hated this girl. I don't know what it was. She had it in for her. She absolutely hated her. She used to punch and beat her all the time, when she wasn't beating other kids. I remember "Googling" [REDACTED]'s name one time to see if I could ever find her. I couldn't. I even tried Facebook. It's impossible. I think she was there permanently - I don't think she had parents.

Routine

48. After breakfast I went onto my duties. All the kids had duties like polishing the brass, or sweeping the stairway or polishing the stairway. Everybody had different jobs to do. While you were doing the jobs and you could look over and see Mrs [REDACTED] QBI [REDACTED] beating another child.
49. I think everybody had duties round about the home. You couldn't be idle. You wouldn't walk into a room and find a kid reading a book. Everybody always had to be doing something and it was chores. I don't remember helping prepare food but I remember there was a regime around mealtimes and the more responsible tasks were given to the older kids, like [REDACTED]'s age. I don't remember myself ever having to put cutlery out or anything like that. But you weren't there to enjoy yourself and have time to yourself and do things.
50. On one occasion Mrs [REDACTED] QBI [REDACTED] wasn't around, or on holiday. A woman took over. We called her the [REDACTED] I loved her. She taught us how to make Danish toffee and she would sing to us. I can actually sing a song she actually taught us. She had broken English, and she said "I am going to show you how to make this" and "This is how you do this. You put oats into the mixture then, and that's what makes the toffee Danish". We all had a bit of toffee and it was the most wonderful experience.
51. She would teach us songs and she spent time with us, and she laughed with us and we laughed with her. She just turned a light on - that's the only way I can describe it. We pleaded with her not to go. It was just a very short space of time that she was there. We didn't tell her what was happening as the other Aunties were about and they would have told on us. We just knew that we wanted her to stay. "Please stay", but she was gone.

Mornings and bedtime

52. There was a big dormitory with maybe between eight and twelve beds in it and a couple of smaller ones. When I first went in I was with my three sisters. Then after a wee while it was only me, [REDACTED] and other girls. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were put into another smaller dormitory. They changed about who was in each dormitory.

53. The only time I went in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s dormitory was one night when we heard an almighty screaming. All the kids were up and we all ran through. [REDACTED] was sleep-walking. She was up on top of her bed as if she was trying to climb the wall and she was screaming. [REDACTED] tried to go in and help her but the staff wouldn't let her. They told us to go back to our beds.

Bed-wetting

54. Because I wet the bed I didn't get anything to drink after a certain time of night. There was a bathroom across from the dormitory and there was a cold tap there. I got into the way of sneaking out of the dormitory and getting a drink from this tap. The problem was when I turned the tap on the pipes made a bit of a noise and the taste of the water that came out of the tap was awful. It didn't matter because I was really, really thirsty.

Hygiene

55. I don't remember the routines regarding bathing and washing. I had a different routine from everyone else in the morning. I can't remember what happened when the other children wakened in the morning.

Medical Care

56. I must have received medical attention for the blisters on my arms. I can't remember if it was a doctor who bandaged my arms. I was in a lot of pain.

This was near the time that we were going to leave. My step mum had to take me to the doctors to finish off the treatment I was getting with a different doctor.

57. Me being bandaged and being in pain - it makes me sound really unfeeling and I don't mean it was alright but - that just was part of the treatment at Quarriers. It was painful but at least somebody was doing something about it. At least somebody was paying attention to the fact you were in pain. I don't know what they did in the 1960's for pain relief. I never got anything, I never got any medicines. I think you were meant to just tough it out and grin and bear it.

58. I think a lot of the time these types of things were dealt with by the Aunties, such as the time I got the searing pain in my ear. I don't remember ever seeing a nurse. There must have been a doctor because in the records I got from Quarriers, it says a doctor attended. I presume there was a doctor in the village but not within cottage 7.

59. I don't remember any health checks or medicals or dental care. I don't remember seeing a dentist until I left Quarriers and moved to [REDACTED] Road.

Epilepsy colony

60. On one of the afternoons that we could go outside, I went with my three older sisters, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to stand at the black railings. There was this big sign saying "Epilepsy Colony" and something like "Do not enter" and stuff like a skull and crossbones.

61. My sister [REDACTED] developed epilepsy when she was fourteen. She thought she had caught it from the Epilepsy Colony. She thought it was contagious and she thought she had caught it looking through the railings.

Food

62. When we were having dinner or lunch it was always silent. All I could smell was hot food and the plastic smell of tupperware.

63. If they gave you semolina, it would have lumps in it. You know how kids can be. Some people don't like textures in their mouth. I would immediately start retching. If you started retching you would get pulled out and taken out of the dining room, beaten, and put back in the room again. You had to finish it.

64. So we got into the habit, when the staff wasn't looking, of passing the semolina up to [REDACTED] my older sister, and she would try and eat a lot of it. [REDACTED] would pass me down her empty plate, so that she would take the beating or she would try and eat it. That was the understanding we had between sisters.

65. I cannot remember the main meals. I presume it was potatoes, meat and vegetables. I can remember the puddings. They were just like eating a plate of grey lumps. It was supposed to be semolina, sago or custard but it was disgusting. You saw people gagging into their plates but they still couldn't move from the table. You knew you couldn't move from the table until you finished everything. The only way was to eat the lumps or to try and sneak them up to [REDACTED]

66. I must have got porridge in the morning because I hate it now, and it was full of lumps as well. I remember that horrible feeling of sitting at that bench with a plate in front of me for hours, if you don't eat something. Everybody else would leave and you would just be sat there with your plate in front of you. You got the full treatment if you didn't finish your meal, so probably even if you were gagging you would still have eaten it.

Visits

67. My dad visited every fortnight, every second Saturday. We were not allowed out of Quarriers Village. My dad usually brought my Auntie [REDACTED]. Only two visitors were allowed. My Uncle [REDACTED] must have been there in the car and stayed outside. He must have driven them there. My Uncle [REDACTED] had a car too. When my dad had presents with him, it must have been either my Uncle [REDACTED] or my Uncle [REDACTED] that gave them a lift. I think there was one occasion when he brought [REDACTED] my step mother, but that was later on.

68. For visits there was a wardrobe with a sliding door in the corridor with lots of frocks in it. On visiting day they gave you a frock to wear. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI would smile at everyone on that day. She spoke to my dad. We told him that she was horrible and beat us and she was smiling away as if there were no problems at all.

69. I have provided to the Inquiry photocopies of black and white photographs which my sister [REDACTED] found after my stepmum died. The photographs are of my sisters and me at Quarriers. My dad is in one of the photographs. In the photograph with my dad in it, from left to right there is [REDACTED], me and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In the other photograph from left to right there is [REDACTED], me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

70. The photos were taken on a visiting day and the dresses we are wearing are the frocks I mentioned. That is not what we normally wore. The photos were taken by Auntie [REDACTED]. The wee hats and coats and shoes were just brought out for visiting. We had to look perfect. As soon as Dad left the frocks came right back off again.

71. We all have short hair in the photographs as we got our hair cut. We didn't get a choice. It was a bowl cut and everybody got their hair cut. I have no idea if the reason our hair was short was due to nits.

72. The photographs were taken outside a big hall at Quarriers and that is where you visited your parents. They didn't come into cottage 7. If it was a visiting day you were either inside the hall or just outside it. There weren't that many visits in it. You could go outside and have a wander around with my Auntie [REDACTED] and my dad.

73. On these visiting days, Mrs [REDACTED] QBI was gooey eyed when she met my dad because he was quite a handsome man. He did get a lot of female interest I suppose. From my perspective, seeing her smiling at him, when we never saw her smile, we thought she liked him. Thinking about it later on, there was probably an underlying manipulation happening there, to flatter his ego, so he didn't actually think worse of what he was hearing. So we were very reluctant to say anything to him in case it did get back to her, because that would probably constitute another beating.

74. The poor kids that didn't have anyone to visit them. As faulty as my family were, we were deemed to be the lucky ones. You just think to yourself, the horror for the other kids that were there and didn't have anyone visiting and had to put up with that. Of course we had somebody to tell, but somebody with closed ears. He didn't want to know.

75. We were always told that we were better off than the other kids because we had a parent who visited. We were constantly told "Do you know how well off you are having a parent?".

Gifts

76. My dad and aunt would bring presents for us. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI would come over and say "What lovely presents!". But as soon as they left she would take the presents off us and we would never see them again. I don't know why.

77. I remember my dad bringing me a twinkly necklace and my sister got a pram and something for my other sisters. I thought my necklace was the most beautiful thing ever. As soon as my dad left she took the presents away and I never saw my necklace again.

Religion

78. On Sunday we went to Church and then Sunday school, which was called Sunshine Corner, straight after. So you stayed on after the church. I don't remember that much about it but I know I was part of the Sunday school. I don't remember if it was optional or not. I am now an atheist, so it had no effect on me.

79. I remember one time looking up and singing hymns and thinking do they all go back to their cottages and do this to the children in those cottages? None of them know that this woman does this to us. She looked just like them and I remember thinking do they all do this as well? It's not like you could escape and say this is what happened to me like you see in movies.

80. I don't remember any separate religious instruction. The whole ethos was to do with religion, and I always got the impression that the staff and cottage mothers were very religious. Mrs [REDACTED] QBI could be religious and give the feeling of being religious when she was beating the kids. She always gave the impression that we were wrong and bad and they were righteous. They were always overseeing and looking down on us, to some degree to a spiritual end, which was a lot of shit as it had nothing to do with spiritualism or godliness or anything like that.

81. I don't remember saying grace before we ate our meal but I do remember bowing my head so I assume we did say it.

Holidays

82. Once we went on holiday to Turnberry to pick potatoes and Mrs [REDACTED] QBI didn't come to that. I was in a room with my sisters.

83. We also went to Dunoon as I've mentioned.

84. I don't remember any other day trips, or shopping or trips to the cinema. We were mostly kept indoors. We might have had the occasional Saturday afternoon outside the cottage. I mean directly outside, nowhere else. I spent most of my time with my three older sisters, outside on a Saturday afternoon when it wasn't visiting.

85. I don't remember any birthdays at Quarriers. The first birthday I remember was after I left Quarriers and was living at [REDACTED] Road.

86. I don't remember anything to do with Christmas at Quarriers. I can't remember coming out of Christmas with a present. I would imagine it would have been a church thing as they were at church all the time. I would imagine there must have been presents that my dad must have sent us but I can't remember getting a present and opening it or keeping something from a present.

Leisure time

87. I don't remember TV, radio, comics, books or toys. We were brought toys by my dad, but then they were taken off us. I can't remember ever sitting with any toys apart from when I first went into Quarriers and I played in a Wendy house.

88. I remember seeing a graphic novel on the benches with the clothes on it in cottage 7. I remember there was some kind of comic there. It wasn't the Beano, or the Dandy. It was a graphic novel with a horror story in it. I remember reading it and it was about these wee monsters under the bed. I got a nightmare about these wee monsters.

89. I don't remember organised games but I do remember being taken in a taxi with balloons and a trail of other taxis. I was taken in the taxi with a woman, a man and a child. I was sitting in the back of this taxi with these complete strangers and thinking "I don't want to do this." I had no interaction with these strangers. I was to get in the taxi with these people and their child, and they didn't speak to me and I didn't speak to them. I didn't know where I was going.

Inspections

90. I don't remember any inspectors, inspections or officials coming to Quarriers Homes when I was there. I think, like the time the Danish Auntie came, I think I would have remembered that. If inspectors were there they were just more grey shapes round about us.

School

91. I have concerns as I can't remember two years of not being at school. I definitely was not at school at Quarriers. I started school in 1966 at Burnbrae Primary in Priesthill, after I left Quarriers. I recall my sisters going to school at Quarriers but I didn't go to school. The school was in the Quarriers village.

92. What is now concerning me is I might not have been at school because of when my birthday lies - on [REDACTED]. I might just have missed the date when all the kids of that year go to school. It's possible there wasn't an intake for school at Quarriers when I was there, and I went to Priesthill in August 1966 when I had turned five years old, and that was why I wasn't in school in Quarriers.

93. However, that leaves two years of living at Quarriers when my big sisters were at school, and I have no recollection of what I did for those two years. There is only so much shoe polishing you can do.

Leaving Quarriers

94. I can't actually remember my last day at Quarriers but I remember how I felt sitting in the car. I felt there was nothing to be excited about. I don't know why, you would think we would have been running out of there, but I remember being in the back of the car and feeling really low and it's not consistent with coming from a horrible place to a new place. All I knew was that my dad had met someone and started up a home, and that meant we could get out of Quarriers.

95. I remember the journey home. They must have taken my sisters in another car as I remember being on the back seat with [REDACTED], my step mum and my uncle [REDACTED] and my dad were in the front seat. [REDACTED] had bought me this big golliwog. It was about the size of me. I opened the window and threw the golliwog out onto the motorway and wound the window back up again. I did it deliberately. I don't know why I did it. It may have been because I didn't know [REDACTED] and I didn't know why she was sitting next to me. The adults said we couldn't stop to get it.

96. I never saw Mrs [REDACTED] QBI again after I left. My sister [REDACTED] always said when she was a teenager that she was going to go and visit Mrs [REDACTED] QBI. We always thought it was going to happen, [REDACTED] turning up at Mrs [REDACTED] QBI's door, but of course it didn't happen.

Reporting of abuse

In Quarriers

97. When I was in Quarriers, the only adult that I thought I could have confided in was the [REDACTED] Auntie, but I didn't. She was only there a short time, maybe just a couple of days.

98. There wasn't anybody else to tell, everything was connected, you went to church and it was connected and they all knew each other. You went to Sunday School and it was connected to Church, connected to the homes, connected to the cottage mothers and fathers. It wouldn't matter if you spoke to the milkman, it would get back to the cottage mother. You wouldn't have been brave enough to say anything.

99. I didn't ever return to Quarriers and report what happened to me to them.

Family

100. We did tell our dad about what was happening but he just ignored it. We told him during, and after, the time we were at Quarriers. It was the 1960's - people hit their kids. Maybe he just thought it was a slap on the bum or something like that. We became very despondent that my dad never reacted to what we told him. He never said he would go and see Mrs QBI when we told him what was happening.

101. I confronted my dad when I was grown up about why he left us there. This was just after [REDACTED] had tried to commit suicide. He said "What was the option?". His reasoning was kind of would we have rather have stayed there for the rest of our lives. "I did the best thing by actually bringing you out of that". I couldn't go further than that and say "No, but you could have listened to what we were saying to you. You could have done more for us". You didn't do that with my dad. He may have said something late at night when he was really, really drunk like "You know I love yous. You know I didn't want anything to happen".

102. You have to understand that bringing anything up with my dad to do with Quarriers would have been creating another situation. You spent most of your time not creating situations so to dig further into it was creating another thing that was happening in the house. There was never a peaceful time - there was always something kicking off. If you were brave enough to instigate it with my dad, I would have had to have been older and that would have been the end of

the conversation. You didn't confront my dad, he was quite a formidable character.

103. I don't think any of us could consolidate the thinking round about why he couldn't sort this. I suspect it contributed to him drinking more, because of the craziness that was in the house all the time.

104. My step mum always pleaded ignorance to any things happening at Quarriers. "I didn't know. I wasn't told there were any problems". She knew we were in a care home and when we came to Priesthill she thought we were just badly behaved kids. I found this hard to believe.

Police

105. The next time I reported the abuse would be when I phoned Greenock Police in 2002. I don't know who I spoke to or what department it was. I saw the phone number on the telly. There was something like a documentary and it said "If you are affected by these issues, contact this number". I phoned the number and got straight through to Greenock Police.

106. I said Mrs [QBI] had treated us badly at Quarriers. I spoke to a woman who was very vague, and sounded as if she was in a rush. She asked for some context and I told her about the incident of counting on the stairs and being belted. It was if she stopped me there and I got the impression she didn't want any more detail. I said "She beat us up a lot of the time".

107. The person I spoke to said that there was a good possibility that Mrs [QBI] wouldn't be alive any longer. I said that I felt I had better say something, and she said if Mrs [QBI] was alive she would get back to me. Then she said "Cheerio". I just put the phone down and that was that.

108. I think the police response was rubbish. They didn't get back to me. I took no response to mean that Mrs [REDACTED] QBI had died and there was no point in the police phoning me back.

Social work

109. I didn't have a social worker. My dad hated social workers. I always wondered where that was from until I read the Quarriers records to do with the Church. He didn't like people coming in and interfering. They never had people over, never wanted anyone to come in and talk about any of this stuff. "Interfering busy bodies" as he would call them.

Counsellor

110. The only other person I told was [REDACTED] my counsellor. She didn't get the full story but got some of it. Today is the first time I have told the full story. Nobody has heard this full story before.

Life after institution

Relationships and family

111. After I left Quarriers we went back to [REDACTED] Road, in Pollok, all four girls and the new stepmum. My dad and [REDACTED] weren't married then. We were told to call her Auntie [REDACTED]. I don't think she knew what had hit her. She was twenty four years old and not only did she have new children, she has Tasmanian devil children. My dad had one of those weird jobs, like ICI, and they used to send motorbike cyclists with telegrams saying you have to be in Dounreay overnight. Then that would be him off for a few weeks and we would be left with [REDACTED].

112. We girls were absolutely crazy. I think it was just bad nerves. We fought with everybody, we fought amongst ourselves, physical fighting, rolling about just

absolutely getting torn into each other. This seemed to go on all through our teens - me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It a bit of an anomaly, because you would think we would have been close because we had the loyalty of seeing that each of us were okay. Maybe it was a wee bit of having our dad and the new kind of mum, and all we did was disagree and attack each other,

113. My mum, [REDACTED] always seemed to be in a bad mood all the time, no wonder when I think about it now. Do you remember the story about the Elves and the Shoemaker? It was a bit like that. I remember getting up in the middle of the night quite a few times, I don't know for how long. Sort of straightening up the living room and putting dishes out for the morning, breakfast bowls and things like that. I just naturally done it and didn't tell anybody I was doing it. In retrospect I think people must have heard me, but nothing was said.
114. So I suppose I was always the rescuer. The older kids were fighting all the time. I always tried to remain kind of neutral and safe. I didn't kick off and you very rarely heard me complain about anything.
115. [REDACTED] got chucked out of the house, then [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED]. My dad drank more, he had no answers at all. He was very much an alcoholic. I don't think [REDACTED] knew what to do with us, to be honest.
116. [REDACTED] then had [REDACTED] seven years after we left Quarriers. [REDACTED] was her child and her pride and joy, so all of her attention went to [REDACTED]. Then [REDACTED] came, and then [REDACTED]. We were getting chucked out, and they were arriving.
117. When [REDACTED] was leaving, it was particularly hard because she had a couple of suicide attempts. Because of my dad being drunk and my step mum not being able to cope I had to take [REDACTED] to hospital. She didn't die, and we got her out of hospital okay. She had a hard time dealing with her epilepsy. I used to think, secretly, that she got the epilepsy through being hit on the head so many times at Quarriers.

118. My Auntie [REDACTED] opened up bank books for us all when we went to [REDACTED] Road and she was putting money in them. My step-mum never had any money, and my dad worked away all the time. Money was borrowed from neighbours and vice versa. but you always knew when my mum was really skint, because you got certain meals - the big soup pots would come out and there would be soup with potatoes and God knows what in it and a pudding, rather than soup and a meal. When I saw the pots coming out, I always saying to my step-mum "Come on down to the post office and I will get you money out". Again, rescuing my mum, sort of. I gave her money and I don't know if my others sisters did it or not. There came the point in time when there wasn't any money in the account any longer.

119. It was like the coal strikes of the 1970's. There was no coal, and the coal heated the house and the water. I would always be the first one to volunteer to go with my dad to go up the railway and get either an old sleeper that he could saw up and put onto the fire, or get the coal that used to sit at the side of the railway tracks. It wasn't as good as the coal that you bought because it was gasless coal but you would just store all that. My dad couldn't do it himself, so he always needed someone to go with him and I would always be the first one to jump up. Things like that, you are constantly trying to make not a situation.

120. I left school when I was 16. I didn't get a job for about a year and a half which was unheard of at the time as everyone expected you to leave school and immediately get a job. It was helpful to my step mum because she then had started going back to work. When the kids were coming in from school I could make them their meal. When I was eighteen, I got my first job working in the Co-op as a sale assistant. It was about me again fitting into whatever.

121. I was about twenty when I left home. I would get involved in fights and things like that. I would defend myself but I was too timid to actually instigate any kind of fights or anything like that.

122. My dad died in 1992 of cirrhosis. He drank continually, but he wasn't a fall down drunk. He was always in control. He just drank every day. I can't remember seeing him when he hadn't been drinking but in the latter years it got heavier and heavier. It affected all our lives.

123. I had a flat in Shawlands in 1991. I got married to [REDACTED] in 1998, and I had [REDACTED] in 2000.

124. [REDACTED] died in 2009 of lung cancer. She was a smoker.

125. I didn't have any contact with my natural mother, so I don't know if she is alive or dead. I went through a phase in the 1980's, when I was being a bit of a rebel, of thinking it would be a good idea to trace her. But what would I have done if I contacted her and she had a whole new life and whole new family with grand kids? Would that be interfering? Would I be causing problems?

Childhood health

126. When I was seven or eight, I started getting migraine. I don't know if this was related to Quarriers. I've had it all my life since. You go blind and only see a certain colour, I went to the doctor's once about it because it accompanied symptoms of a panic attack. You start off as if you are totally drained of energy and you sweat profusely. Then you start getting what I call "the sparklies" coming in from your peripheral vision and meeting in the middle and you are literally blind. After that you start to feel nauseous, the headache comes on, and then the headache comes to my right-hand side.

127. In those days, in the 1960's they didn't give you any medication, you got put to bed for three days. Teachers would bring you home, and your mum would put you to bed.

128. The bed-wetting lasted until I was twelve and a half. I didn't think I wet the bed before I went to Quarriers but it says in the records I received from Quarriers,

in a letter from my gran, that “the second youngest wets the bed” so I presume that I did.

School

129. I didn't speak much to people for all of my primary school and didn't involve myself in anything. I won a prize once in primary school of tickets for the local swimming pool for the whole of the summer. I won these tickets but they just sat in my room because I didn't have any friends to go with. I didn't do anything that summer. I think I never put myself forward for anything. I crept into school and crept back out again.

130. It used to be a standing joke that I used to like covered up from top to toe. I remember there was a heat wave in the 1970's and I wouldn't go out, when I did, I would wear a duffle coat. There was lots of incidences like that, I hated any sort of attention. Even when my teachers at school would ask me to read a paragraph out of a book, I was absolutely mortified and I would stutter and stammer. So, I just hated any kind of attention.

131. Our marks in school, after we left Quarriers, were actually very good. Each one of us were always in the top three. But my sisters just attacked everybody. I would be walking through the playground and there was [REDACTED] battering hell out of somebody, or [REDACTED] over there. It was this ethos of fighting, fighting, fighting all the time. We weren't like that in Quarriers, it was just on coming out of there. They kind of protected me a lot of the time, so nobody ever asked why I was so quiet. It was like being a piece of wallpaper. I never really spoke that much and I hated any kind of attention.

132. In secondary school, when my older sisters weren't there, I had to speak up occasionally. But I didn't join any clubs and didn't have anything else to do with schools. I didn't bring friends home, didn't go to friends, and my older sisters had moved out the house. My O'levels were a disappointment. I didn't sit Highers and left school when I was sixteen. Our family was always of the opinion that you finish school and you go into work and earn your living.

133. My report card used to say that my marks were alright, but “Tends to be moody” because I didn’t speak in class. They would ask me to do something and I wouldn’t respond so I suppose they took that as a form of arrogance.

Impact

134. It probably is due to what happened in Quarriers that I am an atheist now. I am sorry to offend anyone, but I have no room for any organised religion because it’s just all a load of trash. Maybe I just haven’t evidenced some good that comes out of a collection of adults believing in the same thing.

135. I think the whole experience at Quarriers was continually threatening, so I suppose its emotional bullying. I think it’s a wee bit like if you use force to make rules stick then everyone is going to comply with them but it’s an ethos of fear all the time. You spend the rest of your life in fear of stepping out of line. It’s unsaid, untold and you have this pattern. I suppose it’s to do with authority in your later life. It kept me in line for a lot of years. It just carries on and doesn’t just go away.

136. I very rarely spoke after I came back from Quarriers. There were neighbours who actually thought I couldn’t speak. In my late teens I had a conversation with a neighbour and she said “That’s the first time we have actually heard you fully speaking QCD”. So I think there was a lot of emotional impact that carried on after Quarriers. I think I was traumatised.

137. I was plagued with terrible, continual nightmares. The nightmares took the form of being stuck to the bed. I would wake up and be in the room I fell asleep in and I couldn’t move. There was something horrible in the room, creeping towards me and the more I struggled, the more I became stuck.

138. We were always told in Quarriers we were bad and to some degree it was our own fault we were there, and especially me because I wet the bed. We carried it forward to when we went to ██████████ Road - I believed that if you were

always good all the time and if you don't get into these fights, and you just keep out the way, and try and help, then it's all going to come good, and they won't send us back to Quarriers. That seemed quite reasonable to me at that time and it still seems quite reasonable even now as a 56 year old woman.

139. I only found my voice when I was twenty-eight when I got into art. Since I was twenty-eight, I just went like a train and talked about anything and everything. It was as if I just wanted to offload everything and people round about found it a wee bit overwhelming. But prior to that I was always of the ethos that you just got on with things and you don't complain as complaining just means you got another problem. Don't complain, just get on with it.

140. Quarriers was a seriously steep learning curve for me and I think that it made me all my life want to be in a situation to be liked and to be accepted, irrespective of what it does to me. I suppose after I had my daughter [REDACTED] I became more selfish because it was no longer my needs, it was [REDACTED]'s needs. Having [REDACTED] grounded me in some way. In other ways, when [REDACTED] was younger, it made me think of my childhood again.

141. I still try to rescue and I do it at my work. I try and solve problems all the time. If you had known me for long enough I would probably try and solve your problems. I think this is with a view to being liked. I think that people would think favourably about me. Not necessarily "What a great gal", just approval, respect and valued. I don't think I have great self-esteem. I don't think I ever have. I think it could be that my problems could be related to my experiences in Quarriers. I put my face on in the morning even now, and do what has to be done. I don't look in the mirror again because looking in the mirror is horrible.

142. I am asked if I ever suffered flashbacks, I remember getting into trouble once with my boss. This would have been between 2003 and 2009. My boss was showing a bit of a disappointment and I can't remember what the scenario was. He said "That's not like you [REDACTED] QCD [REDACTED] You wouldn't normally do things that way." That just broke my heart. I went into the toilet and cried. I was going into the toilet

I felt like I was being slapped on the face. A lot of the times on the visiting days at Quarriers, the cardigans I wore were too big for me. When I looked down at my hands in the toilet it was like seeing the edge of my cardigan as if I had wee hands. It's not the feeling of being slapped in the face but seeing being slapped in the face, as if you are being slapped in the face without the pain. Then you immediately as soon as it happens dismiss it, because it doesn't make any sense to you. Your logical side kicks in and says "Don't be so stupid [REDACTED] QCD" and you dismiss it.

143. I have always had difficulty with sleeping. I maybe sleep four or five hours per night. I did years of working shift work, some night shift but mostly the pattern was day shift.

144. I replay the events of Quarriers a lot in my mind. I live with it, it's not away back there, I live with it. If you have a child, you think of yourself at that age, so it's as much as its years ago, it doesn't matter. I look at [REDACTED] she is sixteen, and I think of me at sixteen. Obviously there is a disparity, I look at [REDACTED] and I see me at that age and the things that were wrong back then.

145. In the care homes I worked in I used to be known for "walking the floors". That was to make sure no one was getting up to anything that they shouldn't be. By that I mean staff. At nights out they used to say "We can't get away with anything with you, [REDACTED] QCD" I was a Care Officer myself and I know there are times you can sit and have your cup of tea. But I don't want you to be sitting there and somebody is being hurt when you are supposed to be caring for them. So the walking the floor made sure that this could not happen.

Relationship

146. Before I met [REDACTED] I drank a lot and went nightclubbing a lot. I was out all the time, I was out four nights out of seven. I hadn't had sex until I met [REDACTED] Can you imagine that, I didn't have relationships? I went out with people but dumped

them. It was enough for me to know that somebody liked me, I didn't have to bring sex into it.

147. We were married in 1998. A queer thing was [REDACTED] was very outgoing and I wasn't. He was crazy, outgoing to the point of exhibitionism, because he was drunk half the time and so was I. I would probably say that my marriage difficulties were as a result of Quarriers. I drank in order to feel social and be able to socialise and be the person I wanted to be.

148. That all stopped when I found out I was pregnant. When the drink stopped the arguments started. I just didn't go out and just didn't do anything. I stopped having sex and that was the beginning of the end for [REDACTED] and I. I wasn't going to go back to drinking, because I had a baby and I was the only person that could protect this baby.

149. Because I had to go back to work, I had to put [REDACTED] into childcare and I couldn't deal with that. I worked shifts and my late shifts were 10am to the back of 10pm by the time I got home. Then I might be doing an early shift the next day and be in around 7am to get the report from the night shift senior and give a report to the staff coming in at 7.30am. I couldn't handle not being with [REDACTED] and someone else looking after her. She was only three months and I wasn't driving and I had to rely on [REDACTED] driving me to the nursery or him picking me up and driving me to the nursery. Sometimes he had been drinking and I couldn't handle that either.

150. There was quite a lot of responsibility with working in a care home, and it all became too stressful. This was all driven by my overprotectiveness and hyper-vigilance of [REDACTED] It was a massive responsibility and as a mum, I couldn't rely on [REDACTED] I tried to do it for so long and then I couldn't. I couldn't think straight. It emphasised the difference between [REDACTED] and I. Through all this chaos he could still go out and get drunk. [REDACTED] and me eventually split in 2007.

151. Where relationships are concerned there has been a lack of intimacy. I don't like anything getting too complex. If I was going out with someone, three weeks would be my limit and I would come up with these silly excuses. It is about trust, whether its carried on from my childhood, I don't know. I think the more you get to know someone, the more complex it becomes, and you add sex to that formula, I was always of the opinion, that it was no good, and too much. Even if I liked someone or not, it would never get past three weeks. They start to see my own vulnerabilities and I would have to explain them, which I wasn't going to do. I didn't want questions back about why I do things.

152. I think to some degree the way I was treated in Quarriers defined a certain trait and personality that I carried on with. If you don't feel valued I think you develop a personality that you completely rebel against everything, or you spend your time trying to be accepted. I think that 'trying to be accepted' took me only so far and maybe after that I just decided 'I don't want anybody' to get to know me. I have to be seen to be doing the right thing and that means going out with people, having fun and being acceptable to society. Anything other than that, people start asking questions, and delving deeper.

Parenting

153. My experiences at Quarriers impacted on my ability to trust. I haven't been out at night for sixteen years for the simple reason that after I had [REDACTED], I couldn't leave her, irrespective of what other people said. I remember going in a taxi once to a woman's night time event, and telling the taxi to turn around and come back. I didn't want to be like my sisters and have my child taken off me. For sixteen years, the only time I go out is if the girls at work are having a lunch because [REDACTED] is at school and I am going home to her at night. If I am going anywhere, [REDACTED] is going with me.

154. It is dead easy to disguise these kind of traits to anybody. No one person knows everything about me. As [REDACTED] was growing up it was very convenient because her whole week was filled up with this club and that club. So as far as

anyone at work was concerned I spent most of my time driving [REDACTED] around like a taxi driver, and I could talk quite legitimately about that.

155. [REDACTED] knows nothing about Quarriers. She only knows that me and my older sisters were in care when we were very young. I don't want all that infecting her. She's a cheery soul. I don't want any of that victim ethos stuff being part of her life, in any way, shape or form.

156. I will go to great extremes to make sure that [REDACTED] is protected and gets the best opportunities. Her secondary school have had that many complaints from me that they see it as vexatious every time Mrs [REDACTED] QCD phones. I will say, "In her art class, why are you not teaching her perspective and measurement?". I will constantly be speaking to the headmaster or emailing them to say something I didn't like [REDACTED] had two different teachers last week. Can you tell me why [REDACTED] is not getting her English teacher?". There is always something, I spent a lot of time doing that.

157. I think it is fair to say that what happened to me in Quarriers has affected how I parent [REDACTED]. A lot of people at work just think I am a protective mum, and I get comments like "You are going to have to take the cotton wool away, [REDACTED] QCD" and I just laugh it off. But I know where this is coming from, they don't.

Medical treatment and counselling

158. I went off sick from work when I was with [REDACTED] after [REDACTED] was born. I went to the doctor. I was a mess. He put me onto antidepressants. I tried them for six months. They took the edge off it. They also take the peaks off the highs, so you are in a zombified state and that was no good either. They were causing more anxiety to me because I wasn't on the ball looking after [REDACTED]. I came off the antidepressants but didn't tell the doctor. I was not diagnosed with Post Natal Depression after [REDACTED] was born.

159. Because I had been off work for a period of time I was sent for an assessment. That's where I accessed a counselling service. I think I went for about three months, once a week.

160. I am not currently receiving any support or counselling for what happened at Quarriers. I don't think it would do any good, to be honest with you. I think it's good to get this laid out like what we are doing now, but as for it helping me at my age, I don't necessarily know what the effect of that would be. It's like a lifetime later, you are kind of thinking what support would be helpful, I am 56 I will probably retire at 65.

Career

161. I can be quite articulate. I have actually been on the telly - [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I don't have problems addressing lots of people .

162. I have always had difficulty with interviews through the years. Interviewers are a small number of people judging me, I can't cope with it, I think they will find out who I really am and judge me. My words just tumble over each other and I make no sense. I stutter and stammer. It's something about the close proximity, I have nearly always failed interviews, outcomes are nearly always "performed badly on the day" The last interview I went for was in 2014. I got the word "misinterpretation" and I said it four or five times. I was getting my words completely mixed up. You could just see the surprise on people's faces as I am normally quite good at explaining myself. I felt they found me out. I am never good enough. All my peers have surpassed me because of this.

Records

163. I don't remember when I asked Quarriers for my records. I didn't mention the abuse and just asked for any records relating to me. I can't remember if I said anything, but when Josie Bell wrote back she said "I am sorry your experience

wasn't a pleasant one" so I must have said something. I was sent the records. I replied to her to say "This can't be all there is. Shouldn't there be further stuff?". She came back and said "Sorry it's not what you are looking for."

164. In the Quarriers records there is one page on doctors stuff. It says I had a pea in my right ear. That's a load of tosh! You were lucky if you got any food. If I had had a pea I would have eaten it. So you can see for yourself, the Quarriers records are just a lot of nonsense!

165. I have never visited Quarriers as an adult. I was in a meeting with Quarriers staff in Glasgow City Chambers last year and they actually invited me to go out to Quarriers Village. They said "It's beautiful, wait until you see it!". I said "Right, okay, I will do that one time". They said they would make me something to eat if I went out. They were lovely people, really nice and they said "There are little cottages", and I was sitting thinking "I know".

Miscellaneous

166. I think the reason I came forward to speak to the Inquiry is to do with my daughter [REDACTED]. Seeing [REDACTED] for the last sixteen years growing up has made me recognise such a contrast and disparity in care with my childhood. It's made me recognise that I know the wrong way to do it and therefore I do it the right way.


167. I don't think one person should have power over a group of kids like Mrs [REDACTED] QBI did. There should be monitoring and robust review to determine how the kids are being treated. At the reviewing stage I think there should be some form of psychologist / psychiatrist to actually have these kind of discussions with the kids that I am having right now. Someone who understands that a child will say "everything is alright" when it is not to keep themselves safe. That person can't

always be the same person each time, because as soon as you have that regularity, that one person has all the power again. I imagine a big team of reviewers in Scotland that are on a rota system going round interviewing kids. Kids need to be asked how they feel about things.

168. There has to be a phone at the end of the hall that the kids can use, and somebody safe to speak to at the other end. Not necessarily their parents, it could be like Childline - something neutral that has nothing invested in the kids' care. There should be some reporting mechanisms - a complaints procedure with a leaflet pinned up at the end of the hall where kids know that they can go to, and the staff know that the kids can go to. So the staff are aware that the kids can report back.

169. I think a lot of stuff can be learned from people sharing their past experiences - what to do, and what not to do. Its learning and also acknowledging people who have been in these situations and have not come forward before like me. Those people being able to say "This happened". I have been brave enough to actually tell somebody about this, albeit it's fifty years later. I suppose it's good to have that opportunity. I hope other people come forward and say what happened.

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

Signed.....
 QCD

Dated..... 13/01/17



