

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FDH [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FDH [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1971. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. Before I went into care, I lived with my mum, my brother and sister at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Gilmerton, Edinburgh. My mum's name was [REDACTED]. I had a big brother, [REDACTED] and a little sister, [REDACTED]. My little brother, [REDACTED], wasn't born then. [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED] 1970, [REDACTED] was born in [REDACTED] 1973 and [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED] 1975.
3. My dad's name was [REDACTED]. He was in the Army. My dad is a Geordie, from the North of England. My mum and dad had met in a pub or club in Edinburgh. My mum was an alcoholic. She has always been a drinker. My mum and dad married in [REDACTED] 1970. My mum was already pregnant with my brother. [REDACTED] was born in Edinburgh and I was born in England because my dad was posted there. My mum's dad lived at [REDACTED] Edinburgh. I remember [REDACTED] and I staying at his house and rats running over us.
4. As far as I know, it was never a great marriage. My dad went absent without leave from the army. That was part of the reason that my siblings and I ended up in care. I think the fact that my mum was an alcoholic was part of the reason that my dad left her.

5. My mum had no income. My brothers, sisters and I were put on the "At Risk Register". My mum was not caring for us. [REDACTED] and I were never properly potty trained. We did the toilet wherever we were. When social workers came to the house, all they could smell through the letter box was urine. We were malnourished, dirty and not properly dressed. My mum was arrested for leaving [REDACTED] and I alone in the house. Mum had gone to the pub and a neighbour phoned the police. We had to go into care overnight. Another time, [REDACTED] had got a hold of a box of matches and set fire to the kitchen.
6. The only real memory that I have of my mum is of being at home with her and [REDACTED]. My mum left us with a young girl so she could go out. To me, the girl was just a child. My mum sang us the song, "Save all your kisses for me" before she left us. [REDACTED] and I were crying because we didn't want her to leave us but that was obviously her lifestyle. I don't remember my dad at all as a child.
7. Our living conditions were dire. I was so young, it was all I knew. I didn't feel like I wasn't being loved. I first went into Clerwood Children's Home when I was three, in 1974. I went to Clerwood for a second time when I was four, in 1975. I was moved to South Gyle Children's Home in 1977. I went into foster care in 1978.

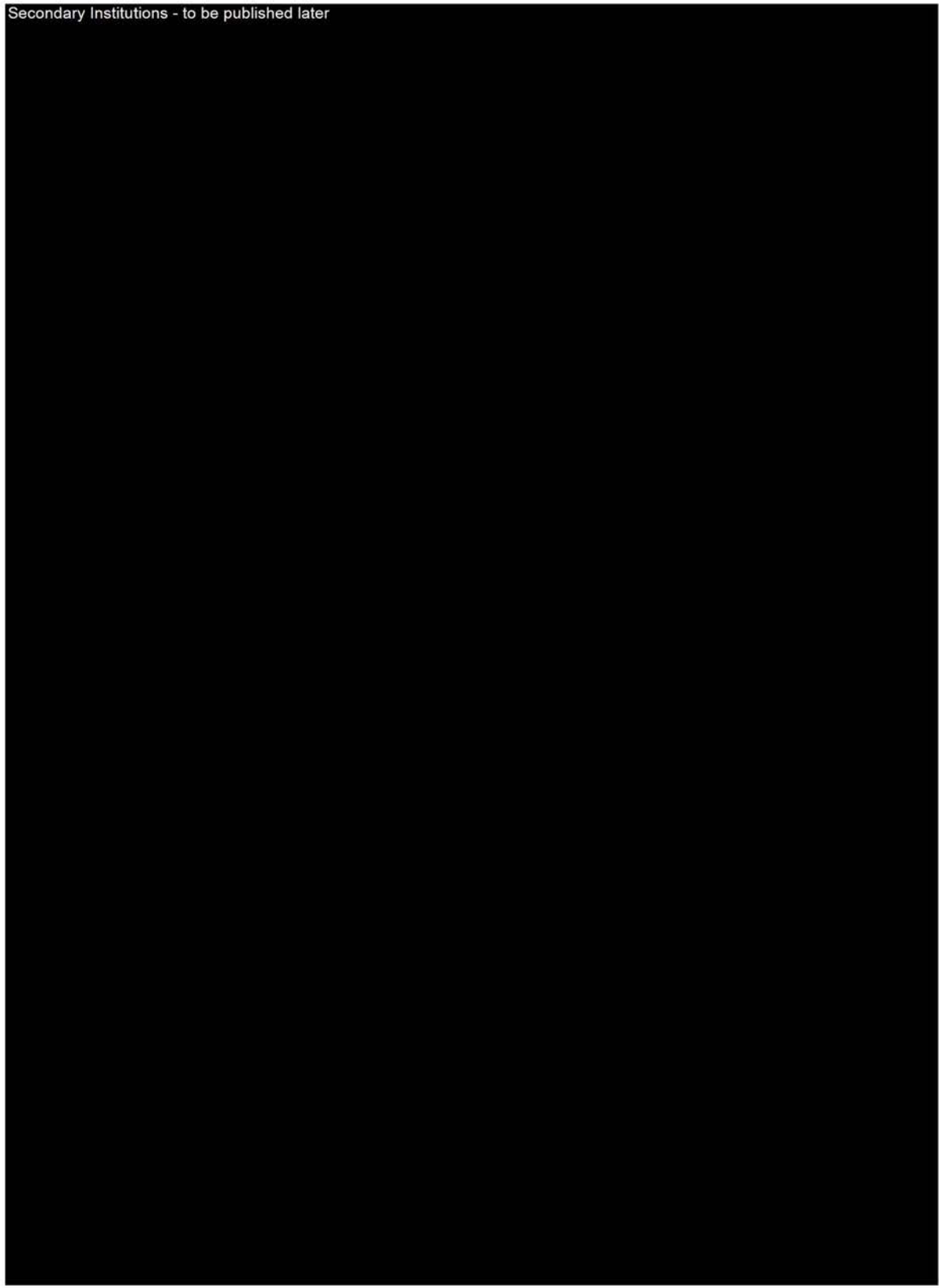
Clerwood Children's Home, Edinburgh

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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South Gyle Children's Home, 2B South Gyle Gardens, Edinburgh

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving South Gyle Children's Home

37. I wanted to stay at South Gyle because Auntie Wullie and Uncle Walter showed us love. I wasn't bothered about moving on. I knew, realistically, it wasn't meant to be long term. Auntie Wullie and Uncle Walter were friends with **FKQ/FKV**. That was why we ended up going into foster care with the **FKQ/FKV** in **1978**. **FKQ** and **FKV** wanted to take two sisters from South Gyle. Auntie Wullie and Uncle Walter persuaded **FKQ** and **FKV** to take the four of us.

38. I think the thought of taking on four children was daunting for FKQ and FKV. They weren't sure their house would be big enough for all of us. Our family were probably the best ones to be re-homed first because our mum had given up parental rights. We were fostered by FKQ and FKV with the potential of them adopting us.
39. To prepare us for leaving South Gyle, FKQ and FKV would come to the Gyle for visits. My brothers, sister and I spent time with them over a couple of months. We would go to the park with them, Auntie Wullie and Uncle Walter. We had settling in visits to their house in Penicuik. We went for visits for a half day, a day, weekend and overnight. The summer came and went and we had to go back to school. By October we moved to FKQ and FKV so that we weren't moving school too far into the new school year. When we went to FKQ and FKV we did have things to take with us, like clothes and bits and pieces.

Foster Care, FKQ/FKV, Penicuik

40. They came to pick us up in their car. FKQ and FKV house was in a terrace. You had to walk past all the other houses to get to theirs, it was second from the end. You could almost see the neighbours twitching at their curtains. It felt like we were on show.
41. The house was nothing fancy. It was a council house. When you came in the front door, the stairs were in front of you. On the ground floor there was a kitchen and a living-room. The bathroom was at the top of the stairs. There were three bedrooms upstairs. I shared a room with [redacted]. We had two single beds. At some point, we moved from [redacted] because it was a bigger house. There were still three bedrooms but a bigger garden.
42. I don't think FKQ and FKV had fostered before they fostered us. FKQ had some experience with children. She had helped a widower with his children, [redacted] and [redacted]. [redacted] and [redacted] came round to visit with their dad. FKQ was in

her thirties. I found out later **FKQ** had lost a baby in her twenties and couldn't have children.

Relationship with Foster Parents

43. I didn't like going to live at **FKQ** and **FKV** I didn't like being taken away from South Gyle where I was comfortable and happy. It felt quite strange because we were being told that these people were going to be our mum and dad. I thought, no, that is not happening. The connection wasn't there.
44. I was seven and **FKQ** was eight. **FKV** and I were getting a bit more independent. For us, it was just another change. **FKQ** and I could see, quite clearly, that the situation was, take the four of them or take none of them. The focus was on **FKQ** and **FKV** all the time. **FKQ** and **FKV** were always saying that **FKQ** and I should set an example to the little ones and we should know better. **FKQ** and I always got the blame for things.
45. At first **FKQ** and **FKV** had a very gentle approach with us, getting to know us. The routine wasn't strict. There was no shouting. Looking back, we were being lulled into a false sense of security.
46. We were encouraged to call them 'mum and dad', more by **FKQ** than **FKV** and **FKQ** were only little so they did call **FKQ** and **FKV** 'mum and dad'. That was the big thing because, as far as **FKQ** I were concerned, that just wasn't happening. **FKQ** and I didn't know how long we'd be with **FKQ** and **FKV** It was just another move to us.
47. We had a new social worker. When the social worker came round, **FKQ** would say that **FKQ** and I were not calling them 'mum and dad'. I would say that I didn't want to. The social worker encouraged us to call them 'mum and dad'. The social worker would say that we were going to be staying there, we were not going back to our mum

and we should try to be like a real family. [REDACTED] and I were stubborn. It wasn't the life we wanted to live. We wanted to be back with our mum.

Routine in Foster Care

48. Once we were in school and settled and [REDACTED] was in nursery, things became more of a routine. I went to Eastfield Primary School at first. In primary three or four a brand new school was opened called Ladywood Primary and I went there. We came home from school and we did our homework.
49. You helped with preparing the evening meal. If you didn't help preparing the meal, you would wash the dishes and tidy up. The tea was on the table for [REDACTED] coming home from work. We'd all sit at the table and have our meal together. The food was home-cooked stews, soups and mince and potatoes. At the weekends, we made biscuits and cakes. You were encouraged to eat but there was no punishment for not eating. After tea, you would polish your shoes and go for a bath.
50. There was one bath between the four of us. If you were last, the bath was cold and filthy. [REDACTED] would get mad about stupid things. There was a mirror on the back of the bathroom door. It got steamed up at bath-time. Someone wrote [REDACTED] in the steam. [REDACTED] was only at nursery and couldn't write his name. [REDACTED] wanted to know who wrote it and we all denied it. I don't know who wrote it, it wasn't me. I wasn't allowed to go to Brownies. We were sent to bed until she found out who had done it.
51. At Christmas, [REDACTED] would ask what we would like from Santa. I would never get what I asked for, I'd get something else or something [REDACTED] had asked for. One year [REDACTED] wanted a pram, so we both got prams. I didn't want a pram. It was almost like [REDACTED] was taunting me, building up my hopes to bring them crashing down.
52. The first birthday I remember was when I was ten years old. It was the first time I was allowed to have classmates round from school. I don't remember any birthdays after that. Presents would be things you needed, which I can understand. In the back of my mind, I knew [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had income coming from the social work department.

I wondered if they spent that money on us or used it to pay for the rent. We never got pocket money.

53. At the weekend you had to clean your bedroom and one other room in the house, before anything else was done. [REDACTED] would do the hall because that was the easiest. When I was eight I was taught to iron. I'm not saying that was bad because later on in life, I had these life skills.
54. FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] sent us to Sunday School every week. There was no choice. None of my friends went to Sunday School. My friends would get to go the cinema in Penicuik. I didn't get to go because I didn't have money. If I was allowed to go up the street to meet my friend, it was a treat.
55. Clothes were a sore point with me. Our clothes came from jumble sales and charity shops. I would sometimes get [REDACTED] clothes. It was very seldom I would get new clothes. I was teased at primary and high school about the shoes and trousers I wore. Going back to school, FKQ [REDACTED] would tell you which shoes you were getting. The shoes had to last the school year. You would get cheap trainers for the weekend or I'd be given [REDACTED] old ones. I got a skirt and a top for a cousins wedding. I thought I was the bees knees because it was the first new outfit I'd had.
56. In primary seven, at school, I was really competitive, especially at sports day. I wasn't really into sports but I did the hurdles. I got the belt from the headmaster once for being cheeky, after he called me the wrong name. I went to Penicuik High School for first year. Another new high school, Beeslack High School, opened. I moved there for second year to fourth year. I was easily distracted at school. Until I ran away from foster care, I went to school, I behaved, I did what I was meant to do.
57. We were given information about starting your periods and having sex at school. When I started my periods, FKQ [REDACTED] made a big song and dance about it. The whole street knew.

Leisure time and holidays

58. FKQ had odd jobs but mainly worked [REDACTED] as a cleaner. One good thing was that I got free [REDACTED] lessons and learned [REDACTED]. When that job stopped, the [REDACTED] stopped. I went to Brownies and later the Guides. [REDACTED] went to Cubs and [REDACTED] went to gymnastics.
59. At high school, I played brass instruments. I played the trumpet, the coronet and the tenor horn. Music was my one outlet.
60. FKQ and FKV had a caravan. We would get away for weekends and holidays. It was nice. Nothing bad happened at the caravan. You could run about in the caravan park. [REDACTED] and I would go off fishing. We would play card and board games. We had a wee dog called Tink.

Abuse in Foster Care

61. Living with FKQ and FKV was like living behind closed doors. It was all a front for people on the outside. To everyone else, we were an idyllic family. People thought FKQ and FKV were a wonderful couple for taking on four children. When no-one else was around, it became a whole different way of living. The abuse began within six months of us moving there and continued until I ran away six and half years later.
62. With FKQ it was physical abuse. Nobody had ever actually physically beat me like that before. This was a new experience to me. I was about eight years old. FKQ would hit you with her hand, everywhere on your body. FKQ hit me right across the ear, the face, the head, the arm and the legs. If you tried to duck away, you got it worse. I had red marks and bruising. [REDACTED] and I were hit at least once a week, if not more.

63. [REDACTED] was sneaky. Something would happen between [REDACTED] and I. I knew to keep my voice quiet because I didn't want FKQ [REDACTED] shouting and asking what was going on. I'd say to [REDACTED] quietly, "Gonna stop doing that" and [REDACTED] would shout, "Stop hitting me!" I hadn't done anything to her. FKQ [REDACTED] would come rushing upstairs and whack me, saying to leave my sister alone.
64. One particular time, [REDACTED] was out with his pals. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were kept up out of bed until [REDACTED] came home. This was to show us what would happen if you didn't toe the line. [REDACTED] came in very late. He had wee speedo trunks on, he'd been swimming in a nearby pool of water, we called it the Elephant Hole, with his pals. FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] just went for him, and I mean, went for him. [REDACTED] was battered up and down the living-room. This was the only time I saw FKV [REDACTED] hit [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were sitting on the couch. I said to FKQ [REDACTED] "You're no meant to hit us." FKQ [REDACTED] said, "Who's no meant to hit you?" Then, I just saw her coming for me across the room. FKQ [REDACTED] battered me too. FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] said to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] never to copy their brother and sister because that's what they'd get.
65. There were times I'd be in my bedroom, I'd turn around and her hand was right there, ready to hit me. It would be because I'd done something wrong, like not peeling the potatoes right or not cleaning my shoes right. The beatings were for stupid things, not things you should be hitting a child for. I never saw [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] getting hit. [REDACTED] and I were the targets. We were used as an example. FKQ [REDACTED] would find any reason to beat us.
66. One day, I sneaked the shoes I'd got for the wedding out of the house and put them on to go to school. FKQ [REDACTED] drove past me on the way to her work and saw me. When FKQ [REDACTED] came back home that night, I got battered for that. FKQ [REDACTED] took the shoes off me. I never saw the shoes again.
67. Soon after we moved to FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] when FKQ [REDACTED] was going shopping or taking [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] out somewhere, I'd be kept at home by FKV [REDACTED]. Sometimes [REDACTED] would be at home too. At first, I didn't think it was anything untoward. I thought, great, he likes me. Again, it was being lulled into a false sense of security. [REDACTED] would

be having a nap or be in his bedroom. FKV and I would be alone in the living-room. As time went on, the abuse started.

68. I thought, this is nice, I feel warm, someone's giving me a hug. I was about seven and half years old. FKV used all the psychological tricks. He'd say it was between the two of us, that it was because I was special, he loved me so much, he knew FKQ hit me and this was to show they did love me. FKV would say to me to not tell anyone or that I would be taken away from FKV. FKV knew it would break me to take away from me. I couldn't say anything to anyone.
69. The abuse happened at least every week. When I was younger, it wasn't full on sex. FKV would touch me and play with me. When I was twelve years old, it became more sexual. By the time I was fourteen, the abuse was getting more intense. My periods had started. I'd learned about body changes and that you could have babies. I thought, I'm not wanting to do this anymore. I wanted out of there.
70. I had started smoking when I was twelve. One time when I went home, FKV said I was stinking of smoke. I said I'd been playing 'Peanuts' with my friend's dad and the dad had been smoking. FKV got really angry at the thought I was interacting with another male.
71. ran away when he was fourteen because he had enough of the beatings. FKV would say, "Your brother's not here to protect you now, you're all mine." I was really struggling by that point. I realised wasn't coming back when I was fourteen. I thought, I don't need to stay here anymore. I ran away. It meant leaving and behind but I never felt there was any threat to them. It was always and I who'd been abused.
72. ran away when she was fourteen, just because and I had. There was nothing else going on. I spoke to at length when she left. I didn't tell her what happened to me but I poked and prodded for a reason why she left. I asked social worker to check that there was nothing going on that shouldn't have gone on. As far as I know, FKV did not abuse

Visits/ Supervision/Oversight/Inspection by fostering authority

73. After the first time that **FKQ** hit me, my social worker came out to the house. I asked to be on my own with the social worker but it was not allowed. Every time I asked to see the social worker on my own I was told that **FKQ** and **FKV** had to be there to know what was going on.
74. No matter how many times I asked, my brothers, sister and I were never allowed to be on our own with the social worker. The social worker was the one person who I thought could get me out of the situation. I was never given the opportunity to speak to a social worker on my own, until I ran away when I was fourteen years old.
75. My social worker changed two or three times. I never knew who I could trust. You always knew when the social worker was coming. It was like military precision. We were told to get changed and told how to behave. It was like the Queen was coming. We would lay on a show. It was all fake.
76. We had no contact with our mum in foster care. My mum had given up her parental rights. She didn't care. I would ask my social worker if they'd seen my mum or if she'd been in touch. It was very difficult because **FKQ** wanted us to call her 'mum'. **FKQ** would ask why we would ask that as she was our mum. It felt like you were betraying **FKQ** by asking and that you had to forget about your life before foster care.
77. In foster care, we still had an annual medical. The doctor would ask if you were happy, if there was anything you wanted to discuss or tell him. You were never allowed to speak to the doctor on your own, **FKQ** was always there. You couldn't tell the doctor anything about the abuse.
78. When **FKQ** ran away, no-one spoke to us to try to find out why he had run away. **FKQ** and **FKV** were seen as angels by the social work department because they'd

taken four children. We were allowed to see [REDACTED]. The social worker told us where [REDACTED] was and encouraged contact with him.

Running away from Foster Care

79. I ran away from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] when I was fourteen. The day I ran away I had music practise. I packed my tenor horn case with some clothes. I had to walk from Penicuik to where [REDACTED] was, at the Adolescent Unit in Mayfield, Dalkeith. I had to figure out how to get there by staying off the main roads, so nobody would see me and question me. If I saw a car coming, I'd hide in a bush.
80. I got to where [REDACTED] was staying. [REDACTED] was annoyed at me at first. I told [REDACTED] I couldn't take it anymore. I told him what [REDACTED] had been doing to me. [REDACTED] was the first person I told. He told me he wasn't going back and neither was I.
81. A member of staff asked me what was going on. I said I didn't want to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] anymore. I didn't tell them about the abuse, I couldn't. I told the social workers I hated staying at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and it wasn't nice. The Adolescent Unit phoned my social worker. My social worker was female, I can't remember her name. I was taken to a place at Mortonhall in Edinburgh, I think it's now called Howdenhall Secure Unit, to stay overnight. The social workers didn't try to find out why I'd run away. I just kept saying, if they sent me back, I'd run away again. I found out later that [REDACTED] didn't want me back.
82. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] made a point of expelling [REDACTED] and I from the family because we'd run away. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did everything in their power to stop us seeing [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] brought [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to Edinburgh twice after I'd left. Those were the only times I saw them for a proper visit. I think [REDACTED] was concerned that [REDACTED] and I would entice [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to leave too.

Reporting of Abuse in Foster Care

83. My social worker at Southhouse asked me why I was doing the things I was doing. I said to her nobody cares, I was just going to do what I wanted. My social worker asked what did I mean, nobody cares. That was when I first opened up and told her about the abuse in foster care. I can't remember the social worker's name. She ended up working at the children's unit in Craigmillar. The social worker was quite young and pretty. She had blond hair. This was the first time I'd been on my own with a social worker, without someone else there.
84. I told the social worker about FKQ and FKV I told her about the physical and the sexual abuse. █████ had left by then but █████ was still there. The social worker said █████ would automatically get pulled away from FKQ and FKV. Again, I felt like I was being brainwashed into saying nothing because it was going to affect my wee brother.
85. I was made to feel guilty because I'd be ruining █████ life. The social worker said █████ was happy and settled. █████ was having holidays abroad, money was not an issue. █████ was having everything we'd never had. Nothing happened about my report of abuse.

Life in Care, after Foster Care

86. I went to stay for a few weeks with FSC-SPO █████ I was fourteen years old. They were a lovely old couple living across the road from the Howdenhall unit. They did short term, emergency, foster care. Social work tried to get me to go back to FKQ and FKV I carried on going to school at Beeslack High School. I saw █████ and █████ at school.
87. █████ told me that our wee dog Tink was going to be put down. I asked my guidance teacher at school if I could go and see Tink. I turned up at FKQ and FKV door.

Nobody knew I was coming. I held the dog and cried. Then I left. That was the last time I saw ^{FKV} [REDACTED] I was almost sixteen.

88. Things started to go badly for me. I had lunch money, pocket money and bus fares. That was a whole new experience for me. I was smoking, I was drinking. I would go up town on a Saturday. I went to 'Coasters', a roller disco in Edinburgh, on a Saturday night. I would get the last bus home. I would be paralytic with drink. I stole alcohol from the various foster parents that I stayed with.
89. When I was fifteen years old, I went to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in West Linton. They were a lovely couple. The [REDACTED] had an daughter, she was much older than me. The [REDACTED] also fostered a badly disabled girl. The house was in the countryside. I had my own bedroom. There was an open fire. They had horses, dogs and goats. I helped see to the horses and muck them out. I went out horse riding. Disabled children came to ride the horses and I helped out. It was a pleasant experience. They were kind. It was what family life is all about.
90. I stayed with the [REDACTED] for a few months. I went off the rails. I wasn't doing what I was meant to do. I wasn't getting the last bus home. I went downhill at school. The [REDACTED] got fed up of my shenanigans. I understood why they got fed up. They had a disabled child to look after too and I was being rebellious and a brat.
91. I was sent to stay with a minister, his wife and their family at [REDACTED] I try to block that time out. I was always saying, "For God's sake" and getting into trouble for using God's name in vain. I didn't want to go to church on a Sunday. I rebelled about that but the minister and his family would drag me to church. I think the social work thought this family would make me toe the line. I felt I was going backwards. I went to my good friend, [REDACTED] who stayed in Bilston. I refused to go back to the minister's house.
92. The social workers were telling me what I needed to do but no-one was listening to me. That's when I went to Southhouse Adolescent Unit, short term. I was still fifteen. At Southhouse, a video recorder went missing. I knew it was given to some guys to

buy drugs. I was taken to the police station. The social work were showing me, this is what can happen to you. I didn't care. There were two girls at Southhouse who were having a bad influence on me, so I was moved again.

93. I went to stay with a woman, [REDACTED] in Drylaw. It was temporary foster care. [REDACTED] had two daughters. I shared a room with the oldest daughter. I hated staying there. The only good thing about that house was that one night I went out and walked the streets and a dog followed me all the way home. The dog had been ill-treated so [REDACTED] kept it.
94. I left school when I was sixteen. I passed maths, secretarial studies and arithmetic. I had started applying for jobs when I was in foster care with the [REDACTED] I knew my time in care was coming to an end. I got a job but only lasted a few weeks. Then I went to college. The Youth Training Scheme came into place. I got a job at John Menzies on [REDACTED] which I loved.
95. When I was seventeen, I got a phone call at work to say that FKV [REDACTED] had died. I didn't know if I was crying because I was happy or because I was sad. [REDACTED] was living in Livingston. He was really into drugs. I went to Livingston to tell [REDACTED] that FKV [REDACTED] had died.
96. I went to FKV [REDACTED] funeral at Mortonhall Crematorium. I wasn't part of the family group at the funeral. I was made to sit up at the back. FKQ [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were down at the front with FKQ [REDACTED] sisters and FKV [REDACTED] family, even though [REDACTED] had left too. [REDACTED] turned up late. If FKV [REDACTED] had hurt anyone else, he couldn't hurt anyone any more. His life was cut short. I had no sympathy for him.
97. I got involved with a guy called [REDACTED] I thought I'd be happy for the rest of my life. I left [REDACTED] home and went to live in a wee place called [REDACTED] near Falkirk. [REDACTED] and I lived with [REDACTED] brother, [REDACTED] and his girlfriend, [REDACTED] They had one child and [REDACTED] was due a second. [REDACTED] was in his mid-twenties.

Leaving Care

98. I pretty much snubbed the social work department after I told my social worker at Southhouse what had happened to me in foster care. I really wasn't interested. I didn't get any help from them when I left care.

Life After Care

99. In [REDACTED] I lived with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] pregnant wife and their child. [REDACTED] and I were there for a few weeks then one day, [REDACTED] went out and he never came back. I was left in this house, on my own. [REDACTED] started abusing me. He raped me. I only managed to get away because [REDACTED] had had the baby, they were all focusing on her and I quietly sneaked out of the house. I don't know how I had managed to get in touch with [REDACTED] but I had. [REDACTED] sent me £18 for my eighteenth birthday. I packed a few things in my bag and walked to Polmont Young Offenders Institution. From there I got a bus to Edinburgh.
100. I had just turned eighteen. I got back to Edinburgh. I went to the social work department in Leith for help. The social work department told me that, because I was eighteen, the department had dismissed all parental rights over me. They said there was nothing they could do for me. That was it, I was on my own.
101. I was walking about Edinburgh. I happened to bump into [REDACTED] I knew his brother [REDACTED] from the roller discos in Edinburgh. [REDACTED] family were in and out of Saughton Prison. [REDACTED] was staying at his mother's house because he had split up from his wife. His mother was called [REDACTED] she didn't stay at the house. [REDACTED] said I could stay with him. [REDACTED] was twice my age. I was 18 years old. He was 36 years old. We got closer. [REDACTED] hit me once and I was out of there, right away.
102. I found [REDACTED] again. [REDACTED] was sharing a house in Pilton with a guy called [REDACTED] I went to stay with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was a grass for the police. One night a brick came

through the window because [REDACTED] had been found out. It was a warning. I found out I was pregnant. [REDACTED] mum, [REDACTED] and his sister, [REDACTED] came to [REDACTED] door. They threatened to kick the baby out of me. [REDACTED] wanted me to get rid of the baby but I didn't want to. I climbed over a six foot fence to get away. I thought, I'm not having any more people battering me.

103. I went to an adolescent unit in Pilton. I stayed there for one night in one of the staff bedrooms. The next day, they got me into a homeless place on Minto Street. Later, I was put into another homeless unit in Niddrie. It had a section for pregnant women. I saw my pregnancy out there. It was nice. I had a bedroom and a bathroom. I shared the kitchen with one other lassie.
104. I gave birth to my son, [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED] 1990. I was eighteen. I started my life as a mother. [REDACTED] and I moved into our first wee house in [REDACTED] Leith, six weeks after [REDACTED] was born. FKQ [REDACTED] was back in my life. FKQ [REDACTED] was actually there when I had [REDACTED]. Our relationship wasn't great but FKQ [REDACTED] couldn't control what I did anymore, I was an adult now. Later, I had my daughter, [REDACTED].
105. I tracked down my mum and dad when I was pregnant with [REDACTED]. My dad was in Newcastle. My mum was in Edinburgh. I'd been living parallel to her. I could have walked past her in the street and not known who she was. I got a letter from my mum saying she was really sorry for what she did. I read it and threw it in the bin. The one question I asked social work was whether my mum and dad had wanted to see us or if they had sent us letters. They'd never made the effort to look for us. There was nothing whatsoever from mum and dad in the file.
106. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I met my dad at the adolescent unit [REDACTED] was staying in. My dad denied [REDACTED] was his son. I was nervous as hell. In walks this guy. He was a male version of me. My dad brought his wife and her two children with him. All my dad was interested in was his grandson, [REDACTED] not us. I didn't let him see [REDACTED]. I walked out. My dad turned up at my flat, asking to see [REDACTED]. I never let him in. I've never seen him again.

107. I got into an abusive relationship with a man called [REDACTED] when I moved to Dunbar. [REDACTED] was a taxi driver. He would bring bottles of wine to me. There were months of communicating just through that. He lulled me into a false sense of security. We were in a relationship for ten years.
108. [REDACTED] came back into my life. I shouldn't have let [REDACTED] back in. He was still into drugs and he was an alcoholic. I was going up to Edinburgh every weekend, paying [REDACTED] fines and giving him money which he spent on slot machines. [REDACTED] was in a mess. [REDACTED] was living with a horrible guy. I was focusing too much on them and not enough on my own children. I was taking the children to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] homes. The children were seeing drunkenness. It wasn't right. I cut myself off from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I didn't see [REDACTED] for ten years.
109. [REDACTED] daughter, [REDACTED] tracked me down. We found [REDACTED] in September 2009, through the Salvation Army. I went to see him at his flat. [REDACTED] was 39 years old and he looked about 79. He was in a bad way with alcohol and drugs. [REDACTED] had been in Barlinnie Prison for assaulting a guy. I only had a short time with [REDACTED] he died in [REDACTED] 2010. I saw my mother for the first time at [REDACTED] funeral.
110. I've worked for the same couple, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for almost seventeen years. I started as a cleaner and family help. Then I helped in their children's nursery. When I was 34 years old, I went into the administration side of their business. I help manage six nurseries. I get a lot of satisfaction out of my job. When [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were at school, I did accounting by open learning at home and I went to college. I did Business Management.

Impact

111. I don't have memories of a lot of things in my life. I've shut them out because I was thinking, is this really happening to me? I only remember the things I want to remember or the more significant things. Things like being told, you're now in the care of the social work, you're moving to another children's home and the whole settling in again.

112. [REDACTED] was born in Germany, that's where my dad was posted at the time. Even the Army weren't doing anything about our well-being. I can understand why that was in Edinburgh because we weren't on an Army base. In England and Germany we lived on an Army base. It's clear from my social work records that we were seen by doctors on the base. An indication of a child's well-being is how tidy and clean they are. The doctors noted we were underweight, had nits, the list goes on and on. People were seeing and writing about the neglect but no-one was doing anything about it.
113. We were on the at risk register but nobody took ownership of our problems in the UK. The resources were there in terms of social work, general practitioners and police. The attitude was, we've written it down, move onto the next child.
114. At the time I was put into care, the social work department very much tried to keep families together before taking children away. It was bad enough for [REDACTED] and I, why was my mother allowed to have two more children? It wasn't just two people's lives that were ruined, it was four, as well as the other people surrounding them.
115. When social work were trying to find a family for us at South Gyle, there was never anyone willing to take four children. People would want [REDACTED] because he was the youngest or [REDACTED] and one other. There was always that feeling of not being wanted. Now, if I get connected to someone in life, I don't want the connection to stop. I kept in contact with Auntie Wullie and Uncle Walter for years after I left the Gyle and I kept in touch with the [REDACTED] after I left their care.
116. What always sticks in my mind is the night [REDACTED] came back from the pool and watching FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] beat the living daylights out of him. I think about me saying, "You can't do that" and FKQ [REDACTED] flying across the living room towards me. I think, I could have stopped that but I didn't, I should have done something but I didn't. I wish I'd known what I know now, back then. I wish I could have acted the way I would act now. I was letting adults treat us in a way you shouldn't treat children. I knew that FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] weren't allowed to hit us. I remember hearing at a social work meeting that FKQ [REDACTED] and FKV [REDACTED] were not allowed to have physical contact with us. As

I got older, I despised **FKQ**, **FKQ** and **FKV** were being paid to care for children who they then abused.

117. When I was teenager, I was the brat from hell. I was a mess. I went out drinking and sleeping with guys. Anything I wasn't meant to do, I did it, from the age of fourteen to sixteen. If people tried to put boundaries in place, I would fight against them. I fought against the social work department, foster carers and society. There was no advice from anyone about contraception and keeping yourself safe. I didn't care about anything. I was going to live my life the way I wanted to. Nobody was going to dictate to me. I gave up on social workers.
118. I wish a social worker had sat me down and taken a hold of me. I wish someone had taken the time to speak me properly and said let's talk and that I couldn't behave like that. Instead, the social workers just put me down as another stroppy teenager who was in care. I wish I hadn't been a brat. I wish I hadn't rebelled against everyone.
119. When I was seventeen and **FKV** died, part of it died for me then. I didn't think about the bigger picture, whether there were other people to blame and whether the social work department could have done more to prevent the abuse.
120. When I got away from **FKV** in **FKV** I lost all of my possessions. All of my photographs, all of my belongings, everything to do with my childhood. I had pictures from Clerwood and the Gyle. I think there was one picture of my mum. **FKQ** and **FKV** had stuff too but they wouldn't give me any of it. They told me that I came with nothing and I was leaving with nothing.
121. The social work department abandoned me when I was eighteen and I came back to Edinburgh from **FKV**. The social work department didn't take any interest in me. They didn't ask where I'd been or if I was alright. They should have had a duty of care to me beyond the age of eighteen.
122. Alcohol is my demon. I was fourteen when I started drinking. There is a family history of alcoholism, as well as my drinking being related to being in care. You can block

yourself out with alcohol, to the point of blacking out. You don't remember a thing. There have always been spates in my life where I've been on medication so that I can't drink. I used to drink three bottles of wine a night. Then it was bottles of spirits, whisky and vodka.

123. I would drink until three in the morning, get up at six still drunk and get [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] off to nursery and school. I was working. I didn't need to drive to get to work. Once I started going into Edinburgh for work, I was conscious I would be driving the next day. If I had a relapse, I wouldn't go into work. There were times I'd get so drunk, I wouldn't know where I was.
124. Ten years ago, I was convicted of being in charge of a vehicle under the influence of alcohol. That's when I was at my lowest, my ex was at my ear and everything was going wrong. I had turned the engine on to charge up my phone. I was going to phone [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to say I wasn't going to make it home. I was banned from driving for six months and got a £400 fine. I have a criminal record now. When I put in my Protecting Vulnerable Groups Disclosure application for work, the conviction is disclosed. Luckily it hasn't affected my employment. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] my employers, have been very understanding.
125. When I was at my worst, I had a temporary social worker, Elizabeth, because of my drinking. My doctor had seen the state I was in and I was on medication. [REDACTED] was about eight years old and [REDACTED] was three or four years old. Elizabeth would come and see me. Elizabeth and I talked about what was happening at the time and how to stop drinking, we didn't touch on my past. I sorted myself out.
126. I went to a place in Musselburgh to determine my level of alcoholism. I am termed alcohol-dependent. When I start drinking, I forget to stop. It becomes a cycle, especially when I'm in company. I can drink at home but I only have a couple of drinks. I can control it now.
127. A lot of people said to me that I was going to repeat history, that I would end up like my mother. I was determined that I was not my mother. Just because I had a child at

a young age didn't mean I was going to make the same mistakes. When [REDACTED] was only a baby, I fell pregnant again. I got rid of that baby because I knew it was the right thing to do. I knew I shouldn't have a child so soon after [REDACTED] That would have been history repeating itself.

128. I've always said to my two kids, "I may not be perfect but I'll always be there for you." I might not have any money but I'm always on the end of a phone for them. I can't give my kids fancy holidays but I've always put a roof over their heads and clothes on their back. Whatever my kids wanted for Christmas, I near as hell got it. I wanted to give them the kind of life I didn't have. I showed my kids you didn't need a mum and dad, they just needed me.
129. My daughter has gone to university and got a First in Fine Art from Glasgow School of Art. It was a very proud moment for me when she graduated. My son has never been academic. He has two children. My son reminds me of the non-alcoholic version of [REDACTED] He doesn't take life seriously. He's not a bad lad.
130. Intimate relationships have always been difficult for me. Even though I found myself pregnant, I hated being with men. When I became pregnant with [REDACTED] I couldn't have [REDACTED] dad near me. He was the nicest guy you could meet. I moved out of Edinburgh to Dunbar. That's when I met [REDACTED]
131. I've been in one long term relationship, with [REDACTED] since I had my children. At first I thought, somebody cares about me. Then [REDACTED] played mind-games with me. He was emotionally abusive. I cut myself off from all of my family. [REDACTED] had me sleeping with every taxi driver in Dunbar. I couldn't go out. If I did go out, [REDACTED] wanted to know who I spoke to and he would follow me. It was like I thrived on having a destructive relationship but the truth was, I hated it. It was like I needed a dominant, angry, threatening person in my life. All I was used to was people telling me what to do, how to behave and how to act.
132. I've never been with anyone since [REDACTED] I don't trust guys. I don't want to be in a relationship. It's okay at the start of a relationship. Then you get into a cycle and there's

some form of abuse, mental, physical or otherwise. I don't distance myself from men. I can laugh and joke with them at work. I just don't want a man in my life. I'm independent. I don't need a man.

133. I've always felt that, because you were in care, you got the pity vote. I felt people were thinking I was a nobody, that I had drink problems, that I was sleeping with men. I told [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] my employers, about being abused. [REDACTED] was physically abused by his father. Just recently, [REDACTED] said to me I had to stop thinking about what happened in the past and using it as an excuse. It made me think, am I doing that?
134. If I'm having a bad day, I only have my friends to go to, nobody else. I don't have the support of a mother. I get angry when I hear people complaining about their mothers. The social work department deprived me of a lot. They didn't do enough for me.
135. I used to trust everyone but people used that to their advantage. People didn't care if I was alive or dead. Now, I don't know who to trust. I'll have friends, then I'll lose touch with them. I have two friends from work who'll phone me up and ask what is wrong if I haven't been in touch. They'll make the effort to contact me and to come and see me. I'm not used to having people ask how I am. They've made me realise that there are genuine people out there.
136. I don't trust authority. I have to deal with social workers in my work at the nursery. I make it clear that I'm not going to be brushed under the carpet. If I have concerns about a child, I'll be protecting the child. I'm probably more forceful with social workers than I would have been if I'd not been in care.
137. I'm not a great socialiser but I do have good friends from work. If social things are on, I have the option to go. I'm a very private person. I go to work, come home, feed the cats and go to bed. At the weekend, if I've nothing on, I get home on Friday night and don't go over the door again until Monday morning. I don't want to do anything. I shut myself away. I don't cook. I do all my eating during the week. I have lovely neighbours who make sure I'm alright.

138. I hate Christmas because of FKQ and FKV I'd rather treat it as a normal day.

Relationship with siblings

139. The ten years I lost with [REDACTED] is a big thing for me. I lost those years because of my ex. It was right in a way. I wasn't taking enough care of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I wish I could have found a happy medium where I could have had both. I see [REDACTED] daughter, [REDACTED] I keep in touch with [REDACTED] ex-wife, [REDACTED] and his daughter [REDACTED] through Facebook and text messages.
140. [REDACTED] is an alcoholic. She had five children. I only knew about two of the children. The children were taken into care because [REDACTED] was always drunk. I saw [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] funeral. The alcohol is killing her. [REDACTED] is in Newcastle. He has a wee girl who's about ten years old. I've never spoken to [REDACTED] I know he's very much in touch with FKQ [REDACTED] Being in care has affected my relationship with my brothers and sister.

Counselling

141. I've gone to Crossreach counselling. That was more to do with my drinking and my relationship with [REDACTED] Crossreach knew I'd been in care but not about the abuse. I just couldn't go back that far. FKV [REDACTED] was dead. I'd moved on. I just had to deal with the underlying issue, the drinking.

Reporting of Abuse

142. I was living in Dunbar when two plain clothes police officers turned up at my door. The police were asking [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] I did think, never mind [REDACTED] Secondary Ins [REDACTED] should I be saying to them about Penicuik? I put it to the back of my mind

and said no, I couldn't remember anything. I just let it go. The police were only interested in [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Records

143. When I was pregnant with [REDACTED] I decided to look for my mum and dad. I wish I had never started the ball rolling. I got a new social worker who helped me go through the old archives, to find as much paperwork about my past as she could. The social worker was lovely. It took months. I was allowed to go into a place and look at the files but not to take anything away. Anything related to [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] was blanked out.
144. I have some paper files in my possession now. I know it's just a fraction of what's stored by the social work department. When I got my records, what struck me was the severity of our neglect as small children.

Lessons to be Learned

145. As a parent, your responsibilities to your children never stop. There should be support for children, for whom the social work department have assumed parental responsibility, after the age of eighteen. I'm not saying it should go on indefinitely but certainly beyond eighteen. Even if it's just an ear to listen, the way you would go to your mother or an email to ask how you are doing. A child in care shouldn't be cut off dead at eighteen, as I was.
146. There should be someone in the social work department who knows you through the years and knows where you're coming from. Children are human beings. They have feelings. Children might be angry and abusive. There's a reason why children act like that. Social workers, teachers and police should find out why. It's all about spending

time with the children. Care should be all about the children. The children should feel like they're important. That way, you'll get more out of them.

147. There has to be some system out there to make sure that abusive people do not get through the net. People are still abusing children now, whether it's in care or in their own homes. Children are still neglected and living in squalor.
148. 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.

FDH

Signed.....

Dated..... 4/9/2018.