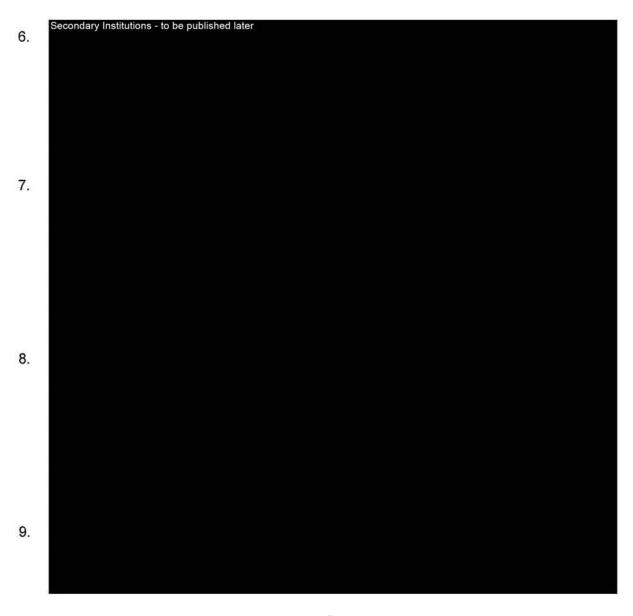
# Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

	Witness Statement of
	EQG
	Support person present: Yes
1.	My name is and my date of birth is 1968. My maiden name was which I used until I married. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
	Background
2.	My mum and dad are and and
	Life before care
3.	My father died quite suddenly when I was about seven years old, and I don't think my mother could cope with all of us on her own. She turned to drink and drugs and her life went into a downward spiral. We were living in Clydebank. The social work department got involved. I just remember
	a home. When she said this I ran away with and
4.	When we came back a while later we saw getting taken away in a car. The next day we went to our school, which was Elgin Street Primary School, as normal but when we were there our social worker Graham Beattie came and took us all
	1

away in his wee white Mini. He took us to Bloomhill Children's Home, Carman Road, Cardross

5. As far as I am aware my mum had signed forms for the social work to take us away. I have since been told by someone, but I can't remember who, that they shouldn't have done that because she was under the influence of alcohol.

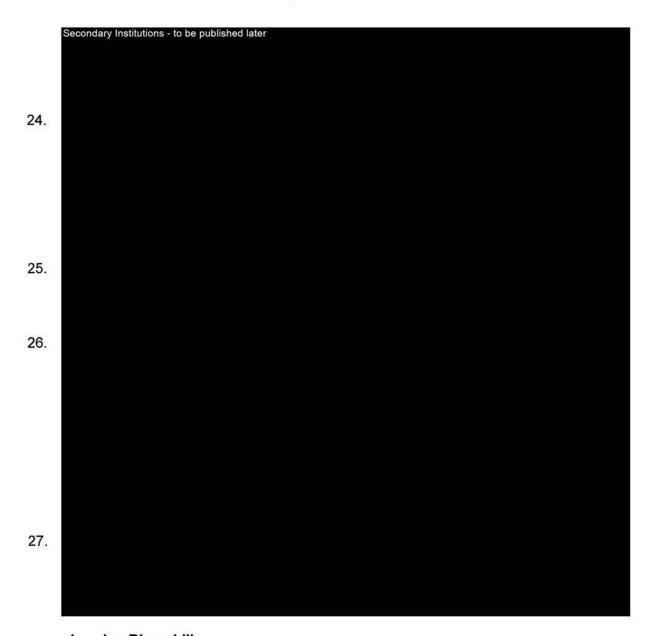
## Bloomhill Children's Home, Carman Road, Cardross



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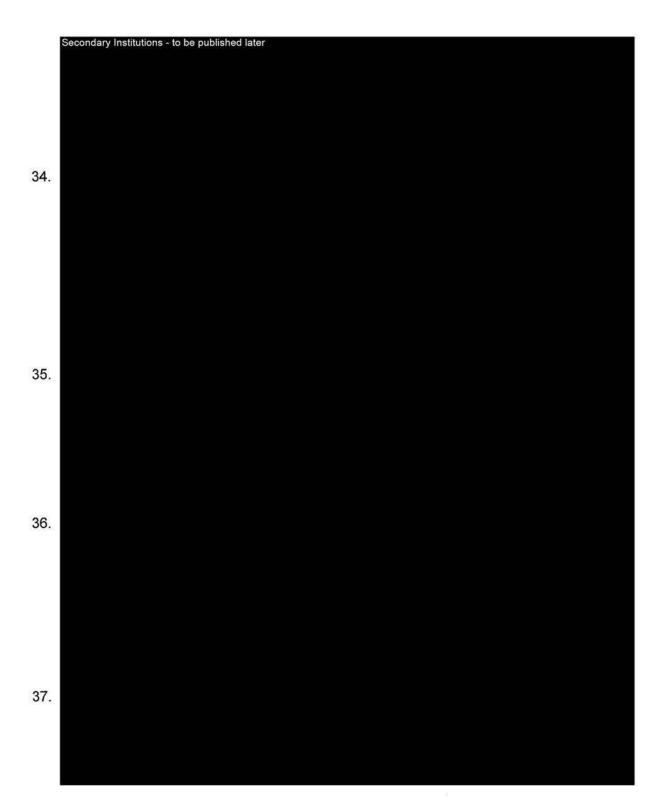


## **Leaving Bloomhill**

28. I think I was at the home for about a year, maybe slightly more. Graham Beattie, my social worker, came and picked me up and took me to Hill Park Children's Home. I have been told that we were moved because we asked to be closer to our home. Me and my sisters all went to Hill Park Children's Home.

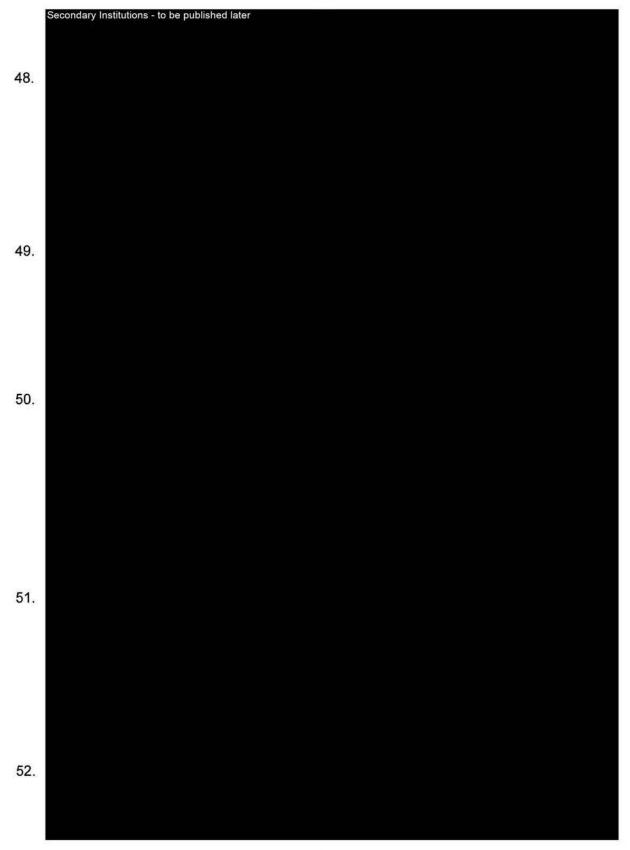
## Hill Park Children's Home, Stewart Drive, Hardgate

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

### Leaving Hill Park Children's Home

54. I was in Hill Park Children's Home for three years from primary 6 until my first year at secondary school. Me and my sisters all left the home at different times. Left first, then then about a year later I was taken to the foster carers. I think there were two children's panels. My mum wanted to take us back. The first time she didn't turn up, and the second time she was drunk.

## Life in foster care with EQI-EQJ family, Balloch

- 55. We didn't go to any children's panel. I think it was Graham Beattie's decision that we should go to these foster carers. Graham Beattie, the social worker, took me and my sister once to meet family. We went back a second time and that time we stayed overnight.
- Solution 56. My first impression was that straight away thought I was going to be embarrassed with them coming to the school parents' night. Their house was at bedrooms. I shared a room with my sister. All their children were much older and were married. I lived with from the age of twelve and moved out when I was sixteen. I was working before I moved out and when I left I got my own flat. I didn't change my surname when I was with them.
- 57. After about a year with EQI-EQJ we moved to a three bedroomed house at Bonhill. It had two bedrooms upstairs and one downstairs. Initially it was

me and living there. Me and had our own bedrooms. At some point one of their sons, came back to live with them so I had to share a room with my sister again. We still didn't have a television in our room but there was one in the living room so we just had to watch what they were watching. I was still going to Vale of Leven Academy School and everything there was okay. I made some friends there.

## Routine in foster care with EQI-EQJ family

- 58. I washed all my own clothes and did my ironing. Mrs sometimes got me to wash her stuff too. I didn't see it that she was trying to teach me life skills; she was just lazy. We had a bath when we wanted.
- 59. Mrs EQI did the cooking when I was at school. I can't really remember much about breakfast but I think we had to make it ourselves. We were given chores to do by Mrs EQI . We would clean and polish the house, do the dishes and generally keep our rooms clean and tidy.
- I started working in a wholesale jewellers in a shopping arcade when I was fifteen or sixteen years old.
- 61. In my spare time I just really went out with my friends, or if I stayed in I would just watch the television. There were no books for me to read or toys to play with. I had a record player. I got it as a Christmas present when we were at but I had to give Mrs all half the money for it. At Christmas we might get shower gel or things like that but it wasn't wrapped.
- 62. I never went on any holidays, or even any day trips with equipment. I don't remember getting any birthday presents or birthday cakes.
- Graham Beattie my social worker only ever came to see me once. I don't think the

  EQI-EQJ had a social worker. After being at for about a year and I

were allowed to go at the weekend to stay with my sister in Clydebank. I think Mrs EQI must have given us money for the train.

### Abuse in foster care with EQI-EQJ family

- 64. When we went to visit EQI-EQJ they told us that we would have our own bed but I ended up sharing a double bed with my sister. We were told we would have new quilt covers but the ones we got were the cheapest you can get that candlewick material and they were that horrible brown colour. They said in their scrapbook we would get a television in our room but we didn't.
- 65. When I got home from school or from work I got ordered by Mrs of to take the dogs out for a walk. I had to walk the dogs every night, all year round. If you didn't take the dogs out Mrs would make your life hell. She wouldn't speak to you and the atmosphere would be terrible. She also didn't like it when I answered her back. When I was working and didn't get home until later at night Mrs wouldn't have any tea ready for me to eat. They would have eaten and sometimes I had to wash their dishes before I could make my own tea.
- 66. I needed a new school shoes and one of them kept falling off but she never suggested we buy a new pair. If her own children needed anything they would get it.

  The FOI-FOJ were not interested in us and didn't even bother coming to any of our parents' nights at school.
- 67. After I had been living there for about six months Mrs EQI told me one time to go to a farm that was quite far away to get some eggs. I told her to go and get them herself. She started shouting at me and I told her that I didn't want to stay there anymore. I can't remember how I told him or how he knew, but a few days later Graham Beattie the social worker came and visited me.
- 68. I was never shown any love and affection by EQI-EQJ. She wasn't very nice to me. I think the dogs actually got treated better than I did. Mr EQJ. was okay with me

and tended just to agree with Mrs EQI It was obvious she wore the trousers in their marriage. Mrs EQI was always grumpy and moody. Sometimes they just wouldn't speak to me for days. She should have been a bit more sensitive with us. I never had a relationship with them and I have no good memories of the foster carers.

#### Leaving foster care

69. When I left EQI-EQJ I didn't even say cheerio to them, I just walked out with my stuff and didn't look back. I have never gone back to see them or even contacted them. I felt rotten leaving my sister with them, but I didn't really have a choice because the flat I was moving into only had one bedroom.

#### Life after care

- 70. A woman came to see me when I was still at supported accommodation. I think she was from the supported accommodation team. The flat was owned by Clydebank Housing Association and it was one house with separate rooms for us to live in, but we shared the bathroom, kitchen and shower room. I also got help to get stuff for the flat, but once I had moved in I didn't get any more help. I liked having the freedom in my own flat but I ended up turning night into day. I didn't cope very well on my own. I wasn't buying food and I usually just took my washing to my sister shouse. I never saw my social worker after that one time he visited me at
- 71. When I was seventeen I started going out with We are now married and have been for 28 years. I now work part time as a facility assistant at a local primary school. We have two children aged 28 and 24.

## Reporting abuse in foster care with EQI-EQJ family

- At the Vale of Leven School I was probably quite rebellious but no one ever asked me why.
- Graham Beattie, my social worker, came to see me when I told him I didn't want to stay with EQI-EQJ family anymore at He spoke to us upstairs in the house and told us we hadn't given it long enough because we had only been with the family six months by then. I told him I was not happy at that home. He never followed up that visit, and I don't think I ever saw him again.
- 74. I never saw anyone else from the social work department. I could have phoned Graham Beattie when there were issues with EQI-EQJ but I didn't want him to think I was phoning about every single thing so I suppose I just got on with it.
- 75. I lied to my husband initially about what I had been through and haven't really gone into detail with him about my past family life. I just really told him small bits. He knows I am giving a statement to this Inquiry but he still doesn't know everything. I have talked to my sisters about it, but only in private.

#### Impact

- 76. Because of what has happened to me I am not very good at showing affection or telling anyone that I love them. My own daughter has even made comments about my lack of affection. I do lots of things for my children to show that I love them, but I just can't hug them or tell them that I love them. I think it is just because we have never been shown any love or affection. I think that is the only way it has affected my ability to bring up children. I also have an issue with trust.
- 77. I may occasionally have flashbacks about my time in care if I see something on the television or on the news. I recently drove past Cardross. You couldn't see the home

but it did bring it back to me. What has happened to me has probably made me a stronger person, because I won't let things happen to me.

### Treatment / support

78. I have not had any treatment or support because of my time in care. My father-in-law passed away about two years ago and I found that really hard to deal with. I was given sleeping tablets which helped me.

#### Lessons to be learned

79. I think the authorities need to listen to children more. We also need to ensure that people who work in care homes and who want to be foster parents are doing it for the right reasons. They also need to be better trained. Not all children in homes are bad and it could be for other reasons. People should understand that.

#### Records

- 80. I have never tried to get any of my records.
- 81. 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.

