

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PBG

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is PBG. My date of birth is 1947. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background

2. I have no qualifications. Between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, I worked in dress making. I was a machinist. I was married before and had a son called with my ex-husband. has now passed away.
3. I divorced and married eight years later. We've been married for fifty years now. Both our birthdays are in and we were married in the . We don't celebrate our birthdays, they're too close to Christmas. worked in security at Glasgow Airport. He worked shifts. He retired when he was sixty years old.
4. is two years older than me, he's seventy-seven now. We have two sons' together called and MON. sister passed away and her daughter, came to live with us. She was ten or eleven-years-old at the time. was only six months older than and my other two boys were four and five at the time.
5. That was in our old house at number round the corner from where I live now but in the same street. By the time we moved here some six or seven years after taking in , both and had moved out of the house.

## Becoming a Foster Carer

6. Myself and [REDACTED] have been foster parents for thirty-two years. I must have been about twenty-eight at the time I started. I stopped when I turned sixty.
7. I suppose it really started because [REDACTED]'s sister died. I never actually met her, she had moved down to Manchester before [REDACTED] and I got together. She died in Manchester. At that time, we didn't even know she had a daughter. We were notified about her daughter, [REDACTED], at that time and also told she was in foster care in Manchester. We said we would take her. That was where it all actually started from.
8. She was ten or eleven years old when we took her in. I don't remember the full process but social work in Manchester were involved and they came up here to see us quite a few times.
9. I can't really remember the process to be honest. I think we had to go to meetings, it's so long ago. We were staying in number [REDACTED] at the time. Our local social work is North Ayrshire Social Work Department but I don't remember what their involvement was. I think it was handled more by Manchester Social Work and as I said, they came up here to speak to us a few times.
10. [REDACTED], his mother and [REDACTED]'s other sister from Canada went down to Manchester. I think they hoped the sister from Canada would take [REDACTED] but that wasn't going to happen so we agreed we would have her.
11. The life [REDACTED] had down there was terrible and [REDACTED] couldn't get out of Manchester quick enough.

## *Training*

12. I didn't have any training or qualifications before becoming a foster carer. There were certainly lots of checks made on us.
13. I can't remember if I needed any references to become a foster carer. I couldn't even tell you how long the process took. It did take a long time before [REDACTED] came to stay with us. The foster care in Manchester was different from up here. The foster children were kept separate from the foster families own children. [REDACTED] couldn't understand how we all lived as one family when she moved up here.
14. Once [REDACTED] was living here the local social workers would come now and again to see how things were with [REDACTED]. I had [REDACTED] here for six or seven years before I took any other kids.
15. I suppose that's when we saw more of social workers up here. When we started taking kids from round here. There would have been checks and assessments carried out then. We also had reviews every so often but again I'm not sure how often that was, maybe once a month the reviews were. I really can't remember.
16. I don't think I was given any training or advice on taking children with different needs or children who had suffered different types of abuse. There was no child protection training either, not that I can remember.
17. I had no training on disciplining children. That would probably be because all the kids I had were quite young. We moved from number [REDACTED] down here over thirty years ago. We moved with four kids all from the same family. The oldest one was five or six. So with [REDACTED], [REDACTED]'s son [REDACTED] and the four other kids there were six of them.
18. I don't know if we had any training on emergency foster care or training for short and long term fostering. I really don't know, it's so long ago.

19. We weren't given any instructions or even a guide book on foster caring or what our role was. Not that I remember, I don't think so. We weren't really told what was expected of us. We just went to the review meetings every month where they would go over things. We used to go to one in Ardrossen. That is around nine or ten miles from here. It wasn't in a social work office. It was just a building and we were in an upstairs room. There were social workers there.
20. I really don't think foster parents get told enough about fostering. They only tell you the good bits. I don't mean that in a bad way. They tell you the good bits but they don't explain to you how things could go bad. They really don't tell you enough.

#### *Foster Care Arrangements*

21. I would say I saw myself as being self-employed. I worked for myself.
22. I didn't really get to pick what children I got or for how long I would have them. I think it started off more short term and then some of the kids I had for two years. The majority though were for short term. The longer term ones weren't scheduled to stay here for two years or more, it just went on and on. I was never told how long they would be with us for.
23. I was used for emergency care. I didn't mind that at all. To be honest, emergency care, short term care, long term care, it didn't bother me.
24. I think our social work support was provided by May Henderson. She was my social worker for a good few years. She was fine. I would sometimes see her a lot and other times it would be a good wee while in between seeing her. She was based in Kilbirnie Social Work. We also had Bridie McHugh. She was our social worker too at some point.
25. I had no other support. I would say the support was alright sometimes and other times it wasn't. The social workers would visit me at home but not often.

26. I didn't do foster caring for the money, that's for sure. Back then you didn't make much money out of it.
27. I do think foster carers should have qualifications. I think that would help. Every child is different but you get kids coming from a bad background. I was lucky, all the kids we ever had were really good.
28. We didn't do it as a profession, that not why we did it. I don't know what should be changed really. It's so different from when I did it. I think a lot of people now do it as a profession, we just didn't do it for that.

#### *Financial Support*

29. We were never paid a wage as such. The money wasn't good years ago. It wasn't a job to make money. At the time we did it they gave us bed sheets and things like that. We were given an allowance for clothes and things. Also for birthdays and Christmas. We also got an allowance for school clothes but that stopped before we stopped fostering. We were never paid a set amount per kid or anything like that.
30. If we needed new mattresses or beds we would get that. We wouldn't get any support to buy the kid's toys, we had to pay for that ourselves. I think the support was adequate. It wasn't hard to cover the things they needed.
31. Saying that though, we took the kids on holiday. They were family so we always took them with us.

#### *Foster Home Household*

32. In the other house, I had my three boys plus [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was only six months older than [REDACTED] who was ten or eleven when she came to live with us. My other two boys, [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED] were four and five at that time. I think [REDACTED] lived with us for five or six years or so before she moved out along with [REDACTED]. So there was just [REDACTED] me and our two boys, [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED]. That's when we started fostering other kids.

Then we moved down to this place. [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED] were around ten and eleven by then.

33. When I started fostering I spoke to [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED] about it. They were both quite happy about it.
34. I can't remember how it all came about. I suppose we initially had contact with social workers because of [REDACTED] but I can't remember how it all started. But it would probably have been through May Henderson or Bridie McHugh from North Ayrshire social work.
35. We initially had a child from Drumchapel in Glasgow. They couldn't find a foster carer for him. When he left we had all his toys. [REDACTED] phoned to ask what was happening to the toys but they never bothered coming back for them.
36. We also had the [REDACTED] Three boys and a lassie, siblings, all five and under. They were with us when we moved down to this house.
37. We've had an extension build to this house but it wasn't like that when we first moved in. The house was a lot smaller. We had a coal cellar off the living room but that was all knocked down. The kitchen was very small. The toilet is still in the same place by the front door.
38. Upstairs we had a front bedroom, a back bedroom and a side bedroom.
39. The house was in a mess when we first came in to it. Maybe not a mess but it was painted throughout in orange with the same paint, it was everywhere. We didn't make any changes specifically for the foster children. The youngest one was in the front room with us in a cot. The other three foster kids were in the side room and my two boys were in the backroom.

### *Children Fostered*

40. We've actually fostered one hundred and sixty children over the thirty-two years we fostered. I did have a diary, which had the name of every kid, when I got them and when they went away written in it. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
41. [REDACTED] was the youngest. I got her when she was five days old. She's now my daughter. The two oldest were LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I'm not sure how old they were when they came to us. Maybe eight and ten.
42. The most foster kids I've had at any one time was four. I've actually had a few fours and each four were siblings.
43. I've never been related to any of the foster children. The only one would have been [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED]'s niece. I never knew any of the kids we fostered before they came to us. They were all placed here by the local authority in North Ayrshire.
44. The only foster child who changed her name was [REDACTED]. She didn't want people at the school to know about her so she changed her surname to PBG-SPO. LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did too but don't ask me how. I don't know how or why they changed their name to PBG-SPO. I really can't remember why. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s names were changed to PBG-SPO but we adopted them. That's the only children whose names were changed.
45. We got [REDACTED] just before his second birthday. I'm not sure how long we had him before we adopted him, around two years possibly. We had to go to court to get him and that took quite a wee while. His parents didn't turn up. We were at court three times and they didn't turn up. The sheriff eventually signed the care order and we got him. The sheriff said, "[REDACTED] is now yours."
46. [REDACTED] had special needs. As far as I was told his mother didn't like boys. She had had a girl before him. When he came here he couldn't speak and didn't

understand anything you said to him. He was also terrified of dogs. He had two brothers and they had the same condition as [REDACTED]. It runs in the genes for the boys but not girls. He's borderline autistic.

### *Placement Preparation*

47. I would first be notified by a phone call and just asked if I could take the child or children. We could be phoned anytime, even through the night. We have had emergency placements and received the child a few hours later.
48. I feel I always had the opportunity to refuse children if I wanted to but I don't think I ever did.
49. I don't think any child we fostered was ever deliberately matched to me as a foster carer. They all fitted in well to the family though. Sometimes I was told about the child's background, sometimes I wasn't.
50. I don't think I was ever given any care history or child's educational history. I don't remember getting any medical information either. I really can't remember. They just came and placed the children.
51. There weren't many of them, but some would still be in contact with their parents. After the children were placed with me, they would tell me that. When [REDACTED] came here we were told another foster family had her four siblings. We took [REDACTED] to see them. We didn't know them but we just did that to let her siblings know who she was.
52. We were never given any sort of care plan. It was all young children I had. We never really got anything like a care plan or anything that told us about the history of the child.
53. Quite a lot of the children we had were emergency placements. The kids were taken off the parents and brought straight here. Other children had previous carers but I



never met any of these carers. I never met any of the children before they came here to stay either. I was never asked to go and meet with any of the children and they never came here to visit.

54. I never had any problems settling the kids in. They were fine. My own children were fine with it too. I think the kids settled in easier because of my own kids being here. They would sit with the kids and play with their toys with them. They interacted with the kids well.
55. Most of the kids we had went back to their parents. Most of the kids we had were taken from their parents or carers very quickly and brought to us here. There wouldn't have been time for introductions of arranged meeting. It all happened so quickly. As I said, quite a lot of them came directly from their parents in an emergency.
56. I was always told if they had come directly from their parents.

#### *Daily Routine and Sleeping Arrangements*

57. A lot of the kids I had were in their cots. I would get them up, come down and get their breakfast and clothes on. I was here with them all day, in the house or out the back with them.
58. All the kids I got were pre-school except one, the wee boy [REDACTED] the oldest one of the four siblings. We had their lunch around 12:30 pm. Dinner was 5:00 pm. Then I would get them ready for their bed, bathed them and sat with them for a while. I would take them to bed but it was all different times. It depended on their age.
59. The two older children, LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] never did any chores around the house. They did nothing. My sons never really did any chores either.
60. The two older girls slept in the side bedroom. My boys were in the back room and we were at the front.

61. [REDACTED] was a bed-wetter. I don't remember any of the others wetting the bed. If [REDACTED] wet the bed she was told to bring her sheet down. She was only here three weeks before she stopped wetting the bed. During those three weeks I think she wet the bed nearly every night. Then she just stopped. But I would just ask her to bring her sheet down. That was it.

#### *Washing and Bathing*

62. The bathroom is still in the same place now at the bottom of the stair. It's a different bathroom now but it's still in the same place.
63. The kids more or less always had a bath just after dinner time. I used to bath them at night. The older kids had privacy in the bathroom. It had a lock on the door.

#### *Clothes and Shoes*

64. I think we had to buy their shoes. To be honest I can't remember. We never had any particular shop we would go and buy the clothes in.
65. All the kids had their own clothes and I would wash and iron them. It depended on what age group they were really. We had to buy new clothes for some of the kids that came, it really did depend on the age group. Some of the kids went away and we had clothes left over. We used those clothes on other kids we got.

#### *Mealtimes*

66. The kitchen we had was very small. We had units built in. The kids got their dinner and ate it in the living room here. We didn't have a table or chairs then. I had my drier and my washing machine in the kitchen. I didn't have an automatic it was a twin tub. I think I was the last in the area to get a twin tub. I had always to bring it out to do the washing and I was washing every day.

67. The kids had to sit with their dinner on their knee to eat it. I actually had a square coffee table in the living room. In some photos I've got, the kids are sitting eating at it. I put mats down so they weren't too messy.
68. I did all the cooking and the food was alright. If a child didn't want to eat their dinner that was it, they didn't eat it. But I roughly knew what the kids ate. As far as I can remember we all ate the same, more or less. I would make mince and tatties and different things like that.
69. If they didn't eat their dinner, I wouldn't make them eat it but I didn't have many kids that didn't eat. We all ate together, all the kids and [REDACTED] and I. All the kids, foster kids and my own kids got the same food. [REDACTED] and I ate the same too.

#### *Leisure Time*

70. There wasn't much for the kids to do in our area. LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would go to a swimming pool in Kilbirnie. We had a fair that sometimes came and sometimes there would be things on in the local park. That was roughly all there was for them to do here. There was no cinema.
71. We always had lots of toys and books for the kids. They could watch television too. They could play in the garden out the back. [REDACTED] had to level it all off and slab it, make it safe. Then we had the paddling pool out there, chairs were out and we used to sit out there and have a wee picnic.
72. I think LYG [REDACTED] went to the Brownies, I'm not sure now.
73. The kids had their own things. Everything they got for their birthdays and Christmas was theirs. I don't remember if the kids got pocket money. I couldn't say for definite or whether it was just if something was on and they were going to it, they would get money for that. If the ice-cream van came round, they would get money for that.

74. [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED] were the same. They didn't get pocket money until they were much older.

#### *Trips and Holidays*

75. We took a child to Florida with us when he was eleven months old. [REDACTED] is twenty-five in [REDACTED] so that must have been about twenty-four years ago, in 1998. We've been four or five times. We took other children away, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to Canada with us.
76. We've taken kids to London, Newcastle, and Whitley Bay. We went to Pitlochry. We always had the foster kids with us. It didn't matter where we went. One time we didn't take kids with us. It was boring.
77. We never got any extra money from the social work to take the kid away, we paid for it.

#### *Schooling*

78. The only kids we had that went to school were LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Some of our kids went to play groups. I had to stay there with them.
79. LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] attended at the local school. They came here from a children's home. I'm not sure where they went to school before they came to us.
80. When they left here they must have gone to a different school. I'm not sure if changing school affected their education. LYG [REDACTED] was brighter than [REDACTED].
81. [REDACTED] came here as a foster child but we adopted him. He had special needs. He went to a brilliant school called James Reid Special School in Salcoats. That was fantastic. He went to the local school for a couple of months but he couldn't handle it. That would have been arranged through the social work I think.

82. He was a very quiet, withdrawn wee boy but we could handle him. He's thirty-five now and still lives with us.
83. I'm not sure how long LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] stayed with us. I'm not sure if [REDACTED] stayed for two years, LYG [REDACTED] stayed longer.
84. I would go to their parent's evenings at school. I would go to sports days. They weren't really given guidance to equip them for being adults. They would do their homework sitting at the wee table in the living room. I couldn't really support them with their homework. I could look at it but I couldn't do it. It was different from when I was at school so I couldn't do their homework.

#### *Healthcare*

85. I don't think they really had any healthcare problems. They were all registered with local clinics. There were no regular check-ups, not round here anyway. There was a doctor nearby, five-ten-minute walk away.
86. There was a local dentist too and all the kids got registered.
87. I know kids have a little red book with medical information but I don't know if my foster kids ever came with one or not. [REDACTED] did have one but I had her from when she was a baby. I'm not saying I didn't have one but I just can't remember. Maybe their own parents had them?
88. If any of the kids had any medical problems, I would tell the social work about it. I wouldn't keep a record of it.

#### *Christmas and Birthdays*

89. Our Christmas depended on how many kids' we had. We would always put the presents out in separate piles so their parcels didn't get all mixed up. We loved Christmas and would have turkey and all the trimmings.

90. We would have birthday cake and presents for all the kid's birthdays. LYG's presents were kept separate because her birthday is on [REDACTED]. She got a birthday cake and birthday presents separate to [REDACTED].

*Discipline*

91. We didn't really have anyone to discipline because they were all kids, bairns. [REDACTED] was the only one I had to keep on top of. I didn't discipline them. When [REDACTED] did what she did, she knew what she had done.
92. [REDACTED] stole out of every local shop. It didn't matter what it was. I didn't discipline her. What I did was I took her back to the shop she had stolen out of. I told the shopkeepers what she had stolen so they knew what she looked like if she went back. [REDACTED] was there with me. That was to every shop.
93. But it wasn't worth my while, she just kept stealing. I couldn't discipline her for something she was constantly doing. There were a lot of shops in the area at that time. Nothing seemed to get through to her.
94. I knew because LYG [REDACTED] told me every time she stole. It was more or less to let us see she was the good one and to get one up on [REDACTED]. I didn't know until quite a while after it that LYG [REDACTED] was outside the shop when [REDACTED] was in stealing. I asked her where she was on one occasion [REDACTED] stole and she told me she was outside. That's how I found out. I asked her what happened with the stuff [REDACTED] stole and if she had eaten it and she said that she had. I told her she was as bad as [REDACTED] in that case.
95. [REDACTED] was probably eleven or twelve at the time, I'm not sure. We even tried to get the local policeman to help. He knew everybody but even that didn't stop it.
96. The social work knew about it and one of them asked us if we could give her a bit more pocket money so she didn't have to steal. We said everybody in the house

was the same and she wasn't being singled out and given more than the others were getting.

97. We were never given any advice on disciplining. The social work always seemed to stick up for the kids. Everyone in the village knew me so they more or less let [REDACTED] off with it every time. I think that got to her knowing that she got off with it. I didn't keep any record of [REDACTED]'s stealing.
98. The children were never physically punished. I did hit [REDACTED] one day with a slipper. I don't know whether I hit her with it or threw the slipper at her. I can't remember. I was getting so uptight with this constant stealing. That was the only time I ever did that.
99. I don't know if that was the time I had gone into the side bedroom. There were big cupboards in there. I don't know why I was in her cupboard. There was a pile of stuff in there. There was everything. There was more stuff in there than in the local chemist. I never usually went in that cupboard. I don't know if LYG [REDACTED] had told me that day or not. The amount of stuff in there was ridiculous. Stuff she wouldn't even use. It was all out of the local chemist.
100. She continued to steal after that. Not sure if she was ten or eleven at that time. I got called to the school three times because of her. The first time it was because she had stolen lots of things out of a shop. Another time was because she had stolen money out of the teacher's desk. There was another time, [REDACTED] had told someone she was sexually abused. The school got the police in. [REDACTED] said her uncle [REDACTED] had sexually abused her. I told them that she didn't call my husband uncle, she called him her dad. But she said her uncle had sexually abused her when she was one-year-old and when she was sitting in her pram.
101. The police just stood and shook their heads as she said she was one year old. The social work was informed about that. I think that was just before she went to the high school, so she would have been eleven.

### *Relationship with Foster Children*

102. I got on well with all my foster children. I treated them all just like my own kids. I showed them affection and supported them when they were down. I didn't have many problems with them really.
103. I would say there was a good relationship between the foster kids and my own children. ■ got on well with them as well. The foster children were treated the same as my own children. There's no way I would treat them any different.

### *Contact with family*

104. Some of the foster kids had contact with their parents when they were here. One child's mum came here to see her. I'd say she came here three or four times. I didn't mind that as I got on great with the mum. ■■■■■'s mum was here once or twice. But that was it, she just didn't come back.
105. There were some other parents came but not many. I can't remember the kids ever going to visit their parents. We didn't always know about the parents. Sometimes I would see the parents at the social work meetings. These were every three months and sometimes I would see the parents there. Sometimes the bairns wouldn't even go to the parents.
106. I would try and speak to the parents but some of them just didn't want to know. The kids were too young to speak to anyone on the phone. I don't remember any parents phoning us. The kids were so young they didn't really understand their situation. They were quite happy just playing.
107. I think all the foster children had their own social workers. I don't really remember speaking to the social work about the kid's parents. I really didn't know too much about them.



### *Siblings*

108. We fostered siblings quite a few times.
109. I don't remember LYG and [REDACTED] having contact with their sister. Their brother was in a list D school nearby but I don't know if [REDACTED] ever went to meet him. I took [REDACTED] to see her sister and three brothers. I also took [REDACTED] to see his mother and his sister and two brothers were also there. I can't remember where that was. [REDACTED] didn't know them. A social worker had to pick us up and take us there, [REDACTED] was working and I didn't drive.

### *Visitors*

110. Visiting depended on the family, the person you were dealing with. When [REDACTED]'s parents came to visit, we were happy about that. If any parent was coming to visit, the social work would ask me first and I never refused. There wasn't many of them that came. The fact they would know where we lived didn't bother me.
111. The children's social worker didn't visit us very often. They would phone and ask if everything was alright and we would tell them if something was wrong. We had the kid from Drumchapel and we've had them from East Ayrshire, we're North Ayrshire. The social work would phone and ask us about them but the kids were too young to speak on the phone.
112. [REDACTED] and LYG [REDACTED] social worker would visit. They didn't visit very often but they did come. If they wanted to speak to the girls alone they would take them away somewhere and take them for a drink or something. I think Liz Johnstone was one of their social workers before they went into the home.
113. I would say all the kid's social workers got in touch now and again.
114. [REDACTED] didn't really get on with the social worker managers. He didn't believe the things they were saying. He walked out a meeting once and asked one of them to leave

our house. That was Moira Campbell from Largs. She wasn't our social worker but was involved in some things. She was one of the head social workers. For some reason she wanted to take bairns from here and place them somewhere else.

115. We never had any inspections or visits to look at the placements. I think they knew everything was alright. When [REDACTED] and LYG [REDACTED] came the social workers did come to the house and [REDACTED] took them upstairs to show them the girl's bedroom. [REDACTED] had decorated it and they thought it was nice. That was the only time I can remember our house being inspected. That was the girl's social worker that came.

*Review of care/placement*

116. I think I went to social work reviews every three months. A social worker would come and get me and the kids and take me to the review. There was a panel and they would decide whether the kids were to stay with us or go back home. I didn't really have too much of an input at the meetings. They asked me how the kids were getting on and how I was coping. That was all. I was there just for the kids and to talk to the parents.
117. I don't remember ever going to a children's hearing. The social work knew about [REDACTED] stealing before she came to us and they did tell us about it. She was here about two years I think but I don't think there was ever a children's panel for [REDACTED]. I'm not saying for definite because I don't know.
118. If social workers wanted [REDACTED] and LYG [REDACTED]'s views they would probably ask that when they took them away for coffees or whatever. I never asked them how they were feeling because they always seemed alright to me. I'm not sure how often they went out with their social worker, a couple of times, I don't know. That was to give them some space and be able to tell the social worker if there were any problems.
119. In my opinion you have to watch what's being said. I've got a grandson who has just turned four two days ago. Some of the things he comes out with. If you weren't

here, you would believe what he says. My grandson would come in and say his mum shouted at him. I know his mum doesn't shout at kids. You just can't believe everything kids say. You have to watch what kids are like. I'm not saying they always tell lies, they don't, but you have to look into it.

120. Kids are good at saying things. I can understand the social work department believing the kids. They have to. But I've always believed the social work believed the kids no matter what they said. Instead of enquiring into it and trying to find out the truth. The social work always believed them. I know they've got to do their job, I'm not saying that, but they have to try and find out the truth before they go any further. I feel that was never done.
121. I know they have to listen to the kids to see what they are saying. I just don't think they should believe everything they say. They need to enquire into it and not just accuse the people. It's not just me I'm talking about. I'm talking about different things that have happened with other foster carers I was friendly with. Things were said and they believed the kids. One thing I remember was a kid had said that they didn't get a knife and fork to eat their dinner. It was a load of rubbish. Just silly things but it's kids saying it. Do you believe them?

#### *Records*

122. I was never given any advice on keeping records. If there was anything like health issues I would just phone the social work. I wouldn't write anything down about it.
123. I did keep a record of every kid I ever got, when they arrived and when they went back home or for adoption. If I knew the child's mum and dad's name, I would write that in the book as well. That was my book and only I had access to it.
124. The police took that book. A policewoman came in here and asked me for it. I don't know how she knew about it. I phoned [REDACTED], tried everything but it's never been returned to me. We've never had the photographs the police took back. We've had nothing back and that was sixteen years ago.

125. For me this all stems from when I threw LYG [REDACTED] out the back door. I told her not to come back. That was twenty-one years ago. It was something to do with money, I can't remember. LYG [REDACTED] was made bankrupt, twice. It was also to do with [REDACTED] LYG [REDACTED]'s wee girl. I watched [REDACTED] until LYG [REDACTED] came home from her work. I'm the old fashion type, five o'clock is dinner time. Some days LYG [REDACTED] would come in here quite the thing and eat her dinner. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], the foster child I adopted, would eat their dinner quite the thing. But when LYG [REDACTED] had a boyfriend, it was different. The boyfriend would stand round the corner. She would come in and drag the bairn away. She wasn't allowed to finish her dinner or anything.
126. I always knew there was a guy there when she did this. I was getting angry because it wasn't fair on [REDACTED]. There was only a year between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and they were really pally. I was fed up with the way she kept treating the bairn. I couldn't take it anymore. It just blew up from there and I put her out. I missed the bairn, I must admit. I classed her as my granddaughter. Really, it stemmed from there.
127. Keeping records would maybe be a good thing. Although would the kids at that age like what's being written down? We didn't keep records, not then. I don't know what it's like now.

#### *Leaving the Care System*

128. I didn't prepare the kids for leaving. The social work would tell me when the kids were leaving and they would come round and pick them up. The kids didn't really understand what was happening. Most of them were too young to know what was what.
129. I don't know why the kids were taken back to their parents. At some meetings I went to, the social worker had already told me the panel were going to say to put the kids back to their parents. They would tell me the kids would just be brought back into care again. So the social work must have known. I didn't know what was going on.

130. I don't think I ever had kids returned to us once they had been taken away. We had a couple of wee ones from when they were very small until they went for adoption.
131. I did keep in touch with some of the foster kids after they left. I'm still in contact with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [REDACTED]'s thirty and [REDACTED]'s twenty-seven now. Their mum and dad used to bring them back and forward. I keep in touch with them and give their bairns things for their birthdays.
132. I also keep in touch with a wee boy called [REDACTED] who went for adoption, well I keep in touch with his mother.
133. When LYG [REDACTED] left here she went to Dalrymple Place. I don't know where [REDACTED] went to. I can't remember [REDACTED] leaving. [REDACTED] used to phone LYG [REDACTED] and tell her she should be in the same place she was in. [REDACTED] would tell LYG [REDACTED] that she just needed to rip her trainers and she would get a new pair and that she just ripped her jumpers and they had to buy her new ones. That was all LYG [REDACTED] would tell me when she came off the phone having spoken to [REDACTED]. I think that is why LYG [REDACTED] went back into care. [REDACTED] taunted her so much telling her how good things were.
134. LYG [REDACTED] used to phone and ask us to come and see her. We visited her a few times there. It was about a ten-mile drive from here. She wanted to keep seeing us.
135. I don't know how long LYG [REDACTED] was here after [REDACTED] left. It was all written down in my book.

#### *Complaints*

136. I don't think there was any complaint system for foster carers if they weren't happy about something. If the social work said the kids were going back, there was nothing you could do about it.

## Convictions

137. I have no previous convictions.

## Allegations of Abuse

### *Awareness of Abuse*

138. I have never seen any behaviour by foster carers that I would say was abusive. Not in my thirty-two years of fostering.

139. There is no discipline I saw in the past that I would now consider abusive.

### *Reporting of Abuse*

140. I had a pal called [REDACTED] who lived down the road. If me and [REDACTED] argued about something, she would say she was going down the road to her auntie [REDACTED]s. That would be the same for LYG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], they could always speak to [REDACTED]. They called her Auntie [REDACTED] too. [REDACTED] was a good listener and I think the kids would feel they could speak to her.

141. I would also speak to [REDACTED] if I had any worries or anything. We were close, more like sisters. I knew her from when she was fourteen, she died five years ago.

142. I think this is why LYG [REDACTED] has brought all this up. She knew the ones that knew her are not here now.

143. I never saw or reported anything that concerned me about things happening to foster children. The only thing I reported was [REDACTED] stealing. That was causing me concern. I told the local policeman who I was friendly with. He was good and good

with my two boys too. I contacted him and he came round to the house. [REDACTED] was never reported for anything. The policeman just tried to help.

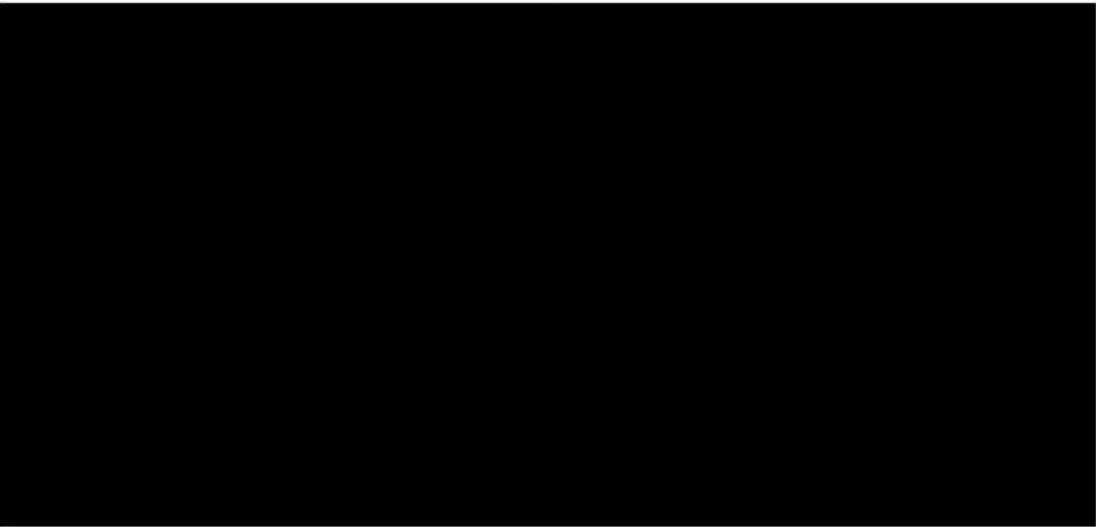
144. I'm not aware of anyone else reporting concerns they had about foster children.

*Allegations of abuse for which there has been no criminal conviction*

145. Apart from LYG [REDACTED], I've never been complained about in relation to abuse of foster children.

146.

147.



*Prior Statements*

148. I haven't given any other statements about my time foster caring.

*Specific allegations against that have been made to the Inquiry*

149. LYG [REDACTED] has said in her statement to the Inquiry "We sat at the dinner table in the kitchen for meals. We got cereal for breakfast. It was disgusting and we never got a choice. PBG [REDACTED] put it out and that was it, take it or leave it. I can't even look at cereal now. We weren't allowed to drink. She'd tell us there was no time for a drink and I think this was to stop us wetting the bed and control our fluid intake. If you didn't eat the cereal, it would be put down to you again for lunch and dinner." The thing is I didn't put their cereal out to start with. They put their own out. They were big

enough to do their own. I never punished LYG. That's one thing I never did. I did not abuse LYG. I've never done that with any child I have ever had. I mean if they didn't eat their breakfast they didn't eat it. I remember those times well and my memory has not been affected by the passage of time. This has been said because of revenge. If a child was treated that way, I would say that would be abuse.

150. LYG has said, *"If you didn't like the food, you had to eat it. PBG bought a whole cow's tongue one time and boiled it and peeled it in front of us. This was quite traumatic to watch. I was about ten at the time. She put it down to us for lunch and I couldn't eat it. I was gagging. I put it in the bin when she wasn't looking. She found it in the bin and then served it up to me again for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I was supposed to be going to Inverary with a wee friend from school and I wasn't allowed to go as a punishment for putting it in the bin."* I maybe cooked a tongue. I would take the skin off it. I did that for and her partner about two years ago. The look of it was enough for them. I asked them if they wanted to try it and they said no. I would never have made anyone eat tongue because it's not a thing that people like. I don't think I would have ever done that in front of LYG. You couldn't get it like that. I don't think Morrison's does it now but you used to get it in quarters. I wouldn't give anyone tongue. It's not everyone that likes it. That allegation is wrong. It's just rubbish. The passage of time has not affected my recollection. Not to that sort of thing. She's just saying everything to try and get back at me. If a child was treated like that I believe that would be abuse.

151. LYG has also said, *"There was never any affection from PBG. We were never told that we were loved, we were never hugged, and if we hurt ourselves, we had to just get up and get on with it. I was absolutely petrified of her. Her tone, her look, her posture, everything about her was threatening. She constantly shouted. She never spoke, it was just pure aggression from her all the time."* I've got a lassie of twenty-five who would tell you herself and if I was to do that to her she would go off her head. She never sat on my knee. She did as a baby. Even her two bairns will not give me a kiss, cuddle or anything. It is ridiculous to turn round and say that. What would she want me to say, I love you? The passage of time has not affected



my memory. This has been said to get revenge. In terms of that being abuse, I'd say yes and no. It isn't everyone that wants that. My [REDACTED] would not have sat on your knee as a child. Or give you a kiss or a cuddle. No way he would have done that. It's not every kid that does that.

152. LYG [REDACTED] has said, "We had to wear [REDACTED] and MON [REDACTED]'s hand-me-down clothes. We were dressed in boys' clothes and we got sent to a barber for a £2 haircut. Other kids used to laugh at us. When I read my files, I saw that PBG [REDACTED] got money for absolutely everything for us, clothes, bedding, furniture, and we didn't even get pocket money. These people were supposed to be adopting us, but I think she was getting too much money fostering us, and that's why the adoption didn't go ahead." That is lies. The social work tried to push us into adopting. They kept asking us to adopt them and we said no way. My reason was I knew the problem and there was just no way we were taking that on. That was the reason we didn't adopt. They knew what [REDACTED] was like before she came here. The bit about the boy's clothes, I have photos there of them with the clothes on. There is now way they are in boy's clothes. My memory has not been affected through time. I'm not that thick. It's as I've said, for revenge. I would say that would be abuse if a child was treated like that.

153. LYG [REDACTED] has also said, "We got a bath every second or third night. PBG [REDACTED] sometime put MON [REDACTED] in the bath with me, and [REDACTED] with [REDACTED]. The boys wore their swimming trunks and we were naked. We never had any privacy in the bathroom. Even as a teenager we could close the door over, but we were never allowed to lock it. The bathroom door was all glass and see-through, with just a net curtain which was gathered in the middle. This meant that when the light was on, you could see right into the bathroom. Anyone on the stairs, in the living room, coming out of the kitchen or at the front door could clearly see into the bathroom." That's rubbish. I didn't realise we had [REDACTED] when LYG [REDACTED] was here. It was a green door on the bathroom. We did not have a glass door until [REDACTED] was quite a big age. I don't know the dates they left here. I have a photograph when [REDACTED] was around four and the glass door wasn't there then. I don't know why

these things have been said. It's just badness. If that was true, I accept that would be abuse.

154. LYG further said, PBG got me and up every Saturday morning at about eight o'clock and we had to scrub the kitchen and bathroom from top to bottom and clean the living room. I understand the need for kids to do chores, but this was on a totally different level. and MON were allowed to stay in bed and they didn't have to do anything." That is a joke. I had lino in the bathroom and the kitchen. The kitchen was small. Where do you scrub lino? To get up and do the housework is a load of rubbish, absolute rubbish. They did nothing. I never asked any of them to do anything. They didn't even wash or dry a cup, nothing. My memory of this has not been affected through time. It's the same answer, revenge. I don't know if that would be abuse. It depends what people class as abuse but I wouldn't make bairns do housework.
155. LYG has said, "My experience in this foster care placement was the worst I had in my whole time in care. I got battered by PBG for little things like coming home from school with dirty socks. It wouldn't be just the one slap, she'd slap you repeatedly on the body and head. I was terrified to even breathe. You'd be left with bruises quite often, but you would hide them. There was never any major injury. I can see now as an adult that PBG was very aware of what she was doing." That's lies, that is absolute rubbish. It's not possible time has affected my memory. This has been said for revenge. I accept that if a child was treated like that it would be abuse.
156. LYG said, "I ran away and hid behind a tree round the corner from the house one time, and PBG beat me with a Boys' Brigade belt when I came back. I don't remember why I ran away. I remember the buckle skelping me on the back. I had marks on my back, but I never showed them to anybody." I don't understand her at all. It's just wrong. It's not possible I've forgotten over time. I'll say it again this has been said for revenge. I accept that would be abuse if true.

157. LYG [REDACTED] has also said, *"I had problems with bed-wetting. PBG [REDACTED] would make me change my sheets when I got up in the morning and she'd laugh at me and ridicule me. She would be really nasty and make me feel horrible. The emotional abuse was unreal. She'd say I was, "boggin" and disgusting and that I should have got up and used the toilet. We were not actually allowed to get out of bed until she said we could. I was terrified to get out of bed. I was actually violently sick one time in my bed, and I had to stay there for hours until she came. I wouldn't even had dared to alert her to the fact that I had been sick; the risk of being battered was too huge."* This is just revenge to get back at me for putting her out the house. The passage of time has not affected my memory. If a child was treated like that it would be abuse.
158. LYG [REDACTED] has said, *"When I was about ten, PBG [REDACTED] put a terry towelling nappy on me, because I had wet the bed, and sent me to Sunday school in it. I remember I had a wee skirt on and I had to try and hide it from the other children."* Can you picture a lassie going out with a terry towelling nappy on? I don't know how it would fit right. What is the first thing you would have done if you went away out with it on? You would take it off as soon as you could. Take a pair of pants with you and put them on. It's lies and said for revenge. The passage of time has not affected my memory of this. It would be abuse if happened. It's not very nice is it?
159. LYG [REDACTED] has also said, *"[REDACTED] got battered more than me because she used to steal. I would laugh because I was glad it wasn't me. It was terrifying to see this, but I was also relieved it wasn't me. PBG [REDACTED] didn't hit [REDACTED] or MON [REDACTED]. They were often present when we were being beaten."* It's lies. The passage of time has not affected my memory. She has said this for revenge. I would accept treating a child like that would be abuse.
160. LYG [REDACTED] has said, *"I would say the sexual abuse happened at least twice a week. It happened on the stairs landing, on the stairs, in the bath, when PBG [REDACTED] put MON [REDACTED] into the bath with me, and in my room when I couldn't get out to play because it was wet outside. As far as I'm concerned, there is no way in this world that PBG [REDACTED] didn't hear what was going on. She wasn't in the house the first time it happened, but she was downstairs at other times when it was happening on the landing, the stairs or in*

my bedroom. You could hear every single creak in the living room below. She had three older brother and I believe that she was abused herself and therefor thought it was acceptable. When I first met with the inquiry team, I said, "I didn't have a lot of anger towards her because I understood the reason why she thought that. I don't accept it and never will, but that's what happened to her, it's probably all she's ever known". However on reviewing my statement, my views have changed. I am angry now and I believe that **PBG** needs to be held responsible for her actions and her lack of actions to protect me as a child. Regardless of what may or may not have happened to her in her childhood that doesn't make her behaviour acceptable. I didn't become a perpetrator of abuse despite what I suffered. If she genuinely cared for young people, no-one would have suffered verbal abuse, never mind sexual abuse in her care." That is terrible saying that. That is absolutely shocking. I'm not even answering to that. Did you hear **██████████** coming down the stairs for his lunch? Well you should have heard him. It's not possible the passage of time has affected my memory, no it's not. You know what it is, said for revenge. That would be abuse if a child was treated like that.

### **Helping the Inquiry**

161. There have been so many people accused of things. When they said those things, the social just shut us down like that. Without finding out or enquiring into it. I feel the social work department were a lot to blame.
162. I had one child going for adoption at the time. The couple adopting him were visiting him here. **██████████** will by eighteen or nineteen. They left him here for a couple of weeks after the allegation. It was to save putting the child somewhere else until he went to the couple. They just left him here until the couple got him. That was it, because of the allegations, we never fostered again. That wasn't our choice.
163. Why would **LYG** come back here? Why would she leave her daughter with me to go to her work? We took her daughter **██████████** to Spain with us. Why would she allow us to do that? Why would you leave your child with someone who was abusive in the way she's described? I can't fathom that out. Because if someone was like

that to me, there is no way my child would be near them. We have lots of photos of LYG [REDACTED] enjoying herself. Photos of her with all her own clothes on, not with boy clothes on.

164. I felt sorry for [REDACTED]. There was only a year between her and [REDACTED] and they were so close. [REDACTED] missed her. I'm angry. Imagine saying that about my three brothers, that is shocking. One of my brothers is awfully clever and he would take her to the cleaners. I think it an absolute disgrace, terrible.

**Other information**

165. 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..... PBG [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 15.9.22 .....