



cc PS/ED  
Colin MacKeogh  
Rachel Bryson  
Gerald Byrne  
Jeanne Freeman

KW x 1/56



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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31 January, 2003

Cathy Jamieson MSP  
Minister for Education and Young People  
The Scottish Executive  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

YPLAC distribution  
Jella Renart, SWSI

Gerald  
To note in relation to discussions  
on past institutional abuse.  
Grateful for advice + reply if necessary

for info.

CATHY JAMIESON  
- 5 FEB 2003  
PRIVATE OFFICE

Gen [redacted] 5/2  
This is [redacted] [redacted]  
What do SWSI  
think about it?

Dear Minister

**HISTORIC ABUSE AT QUARRIERS**

Following the latest articles about Historic Abuse, in "The Sunday Herald", on [redacted] 2003,  
I wanted to take the opportunity to write privately to you, to bring you up to date about how we are trying  
to respond to these issues at Quarriers.

Although the events referred to occurred between 30 and 60 years ago, we take very seriously, our duty  
to try to meet the needs of those who may have suffered abuse at Quarriers in the past. This includes  
those who came under the Sunday Herald's scrutiny most recently, because they were denied access to  
full information about their birth families. Whilst this practice was apparently widespread during the era  
in question, in the misguided belief that children would be better off without their families and would  
benefit from "a fresh start", it is a particularly difficult issue to address. As I am sure you appreciate,  
calls for a major enquiry are quite unrealistic, because our records do not include any information about  
what former boys and girls may, or may not have been told about their natural families. To establish the  
scale of the problem, it would be necessary to trace many thousands of individuals, a good many of  
whom may now be dead, proactively and in breach of their right to privacy and confidentiality.

Our only alternative course of action, is the one which we been following for some time. We have tried  
through a variety of means to communicate the message to the general public that we welcome enquiries  
from former boys and girls on any issue, including alleged abuse and the denial of information. In this  
respect, The Sunday Herald publicity is helpful. Should any criminal offence be alleged, we seek the  
permission of the individual to refer the matter to the Police, and have done this, in at least one case. The  
key point is, however, that there seems to be no alternative to waiting for enquiries to be initiated by the  
individual former boys or girls. So far, despite all the publicity, and Police activity, the number of such  
enquiries has been limited in number and well within the capacity of Quarriers' current arrangements, to  
deal with them. I would be glad to provide detailed statistics on this, should you find it helpful.



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Registered Office : Quarriers Quarriers Village Bridge of Weir Scotland PA11 3SX. VAT Registration No 263 5009 75.

Over the last year, Quarriers has taken the following steps to try to address the wider issue of historic abuse:

- We have publicised our long-established policy of open access to their records, by any former boy or girl.
- Using all available means of communication, we have tried to indicate publicly that we acknowledge that abuse did occur at Quarriers in the past, that we apologised for the harm done and that we are ready to discuss these issues, sensitively with anyone so affected.
- We have appointed an experienced childcare social worker, with specialist knowledge of issues arising from care backgrounds, to the post of Quarriers Aftercare Worker, to take on the work generated from the above. To date, the workload has only required this to be a part-time post.
- Senior managers at Quarriers have also become directly involved in dealing with this issue and I have myself met with a number of former boys and girls alleging abuse at Quarriers, when they have requested this contact.
- We have also continued with work to address the related issue of child migration from Quarriers, which began in 1995. During the intervening period, we have provided information to a large number of Canadian descendents of former Quarriers child migrants about their roots, have supported the establishment of "Quarriers Canadian Family" and have participated in three reunion events in Canada. We have striven to meet accepted standards of professional good practice in relation to this work. A further reunion, scheduled for the autumn of 2003, is currently being planned.

All of the above work has been willingly funded by Quarriers, from voluntary sources. We believe that it is our duty to do so. Should the demand for such involvement increase dramatically, then we might need to seek help from the Executive, with what is, after all a societal rather than a purely Quarriers problem, but there is no evidence of such a growth in demand at present.

My contacts with my peers in both voluntary and statutory care agencies would appear to indicate serious concern about the possibility of ever widening allegations affecting more and more agencies and other client groups who have been institutionalised in the past. I believe that it would be extremely helpful if the Executive were to initiate and promote the production of good practice guidelines to help agencies, including Quarriers to respond appropriately to these issues. x

I hope that you find this helpful,

Yours sincerely



Phil Robinson  
Chief Executive