

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MSS [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is MSS [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1972 and I am presently forty-six years of age. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I know now that I was born in Bellshill, but all I can remember of that time is standing beside an old cabinet with my twin sister [REDACTED]. I'm not even sure if that's an actual memory, it's maybe just from seeing an old photo.
3. I have since learned that my mum was called [REDACTED] and my dad was [REDACTED]. I have five sisters who are [REDACTED] who is about six years older than me, [REDACTED] who is five years older, [REDACTED] who is four years older, [REDACTED] who is about two years older than me and [REDACTED] who is my twin. I also had a brother [REDACTED] but he was killed after being run over by a council truck right outside our house when he was five years old.
4. As far as I'm now aware, I don't think my mum and dad could tolerate the pain of [REDACTED] being killed. They split up and my father went with another woman called Mrs [REDACTED] not long after. When that happened my sisters and I were put into care and, other than my twin [REDACTED] I never met my sisters again until I was eighteen years old.

5. I think my older sisters were put in a care home in Hamilton somewhere and then went to stay with different aunts. [REDACTED] and I were sent to Nazareth House at Lasswade near Edinburgh. That was 1975 and we were three years old.

Nazareth House, Lasswade

6. I can still picture Nazareth House in my head. There were a lot of trees in the grounds and, as you approached the main building up the drive, there was a courtyard in front and doors round to the right that led inside.
7. On the ground floor on the right was a TV room which had some couches and chairs strewn around it. There was also a nurse's room on this landing and another couple of rooms opposite the TV room. Down in the basement was a laundrette at the back door.
8. A wide set of stairs led from the ground floor up several short flights to the top floor. On the top landing there were heavy doors all around that led to the dormitories, which were partitioned off into several smaller rooms. My room was just a wee space with two beds in it. I never remember anyone else being in the other bed.
9. The Sisters of Nazareth ran the home and the person in charge as far as I'm aware was Sister ^{LTX}[REDACTED]. There was also another nun called Sister Peters, or something like that. She was quite nice. I'm not too sure about the names of any of the other nuns, the only name that's stuck with me all these years is Sister ^{LTX}[REDACTED]. If I think of her, I think of a witch in glasses. She was evil and she was an absolute bitch. Her face was constantly angry and she terrorised the kids.
10. There were boys and girls there, ranging in age from about three up to fifteen or sixteen. I'm not sure how many there were.

11. Life at Nazareth House in Lasswade was like walking on eggshells all the time. I don't remember laughter and I don't remember fun. All I do remember is living in fear of doing something wrong.

Routine at Nazareth House, Lasswade

Mornings and bedtime

12. As soon as we woke up in the morning, we had to kneel at the side of our beds and say our prayers. If we got caught not kneeling at our beds we'd get a hairbrush across the back of our hands or over our heads from Sister LTX or whichever nun was getting us ready in the morning. I remember the hairbrush was round, black and the jagged bristles would put holes in your skin.
13. It wasn't just Sister LTX there were another few nuns that did this as well, but I can't remember their names. Sister LTX was always there in the morning though, giving out the rules.
14. The nuns would get us ready for school or for nursery, where I went when I first went to Nazareth House. When they did, they would do so nastily. They'd roughly pull the hairbrush through our hair and haul our clothes on.
15. All I remember of bedtime is that it was the same, we had to kneel at the side of our beds and pray before we got in. I don't know what time that would have been.

Bed Wetting

16. It wasn't good if anyone had wet their bed. It happened to me a few times, but it wasn't just me, there were a lot of other children who wet their beds as well. I saw all those other children getting bullied in the morning too. We were terrified, every one of us.

17. I had to take my sheet off the bed and walk about in my underwear down to the laundrette. I remember washing the sheets in the twin tub machines in the laundry, plunging them into the machine with a big stick.
18. Then we were put in a cold bath and Sister LTX or whichever nun it was, would scrub us hard with scrubbing brushes, trying to get the smell of urine off us and telling us that we were disgusting. We were called every dirty name under the sun. Whichever nun it was would call us 'worthless', 'dirty' and 'disgusting'.

Washing/bathing

19. I think the bath was upstairs where the bedrooms were. Nothing particularly sticks out about the washing regime. I only remember getting a bath after I'd wet the bed and it was only ever me in the bath, getting scrubbed by a nun. I don't even remember how many baths there were or if there was just one.

Mealtimes/Food

20. My first memory of Nazareth House is eating a bowl of Weetabix with sugar on top when I arrived. That's about all I remember, I don't remember any of the breakfasts, or what the rest of the food was like, or what happened if any kid didn't eat it. All I can remember is a few tables round about me with other children sitting at them.
21. Only one thing has come back to me, which was choking on the fat from some bacon, which I'd been trying to force down too quickly. I don't remember getting in trouble when I brought the fat up again because I chewed it some more and forced it down.

Clothing/uniform

22. I think we wore shorts most of the time, but I don't remember if we wore our own clothes, or had to wear a uniform. We certainly had uniforms for school, but I don't recall what our everyday wear was.

Leisure time

23. Even though there was a TV room on the ground floor, I don't actually remember watching the television. There were no toys and I don't remember playing with anything or what we did in any free time we might have had.
24. I remember getting marched along to the vestry that was part of Nazareth House a few times on a Saturday. I don't know why or how often, but I would always be in my underwear and there were a few nuns and priests there. I don't remember if I had to perform tricks or something because I seem to recollect having to stand on my head and doing backflips.

Trips and holidays

25. We went on a couple of trips that I can remember. Once on a minibus to Dunbar and another to Burntisland. These were just daytrips and all I can really remember of them is singing on the bus.

School

26. At first I went to the nursery and I remember I wasn't well one day with the mumps and got to stay off. For some reason my twin sister [REDACTED] got to stay off as well, although I never saw her. Maybe [REDACTED] had contracted mumps as well. It's only after speaking to her later that she told me she was kept off too.
27. I remember going out the back door and down a brae to St Mary's Primary school in Lasswade some days. I can visualise the school now and the shops down in the village.
28. I don't remember anything about the school, what the classes were like or anything. All I can recall is getting bottles of milk in the morning.

Healthcare

29. There was a nurse at Nazareth House who had her own room on the ground floor. She wasn't a nun, but I can't describe her any more than that she wore a white uniform.
30. I seemed to be in the nurse's room a lot and I can remember getting an injection in the backside while I was there. I seem to remember getting a lump of sugar when I got that injection.
31. When [REDACTED] and I were seven, we were both sent to the hospital for an operation because we both had a squint. We both went at the same time and got our eyes fixed. I don't remember any other health problem I had, or seeing a doctor or a dentist.

Religious instruction

32. Religion was strictly followed at Nazareth House. As well as prayers first thing in the morning and last thing at night, there was a church and the vestry in the grounds, although I don't actually remember going to church.

Birthdays and Christmas

33. I have no recollection of anyone having a birthday while I was at Nazareth House and other than midnight Mass, I don't remember anything about Christmas either. I'm sure all the children would get walked down the path to the church by the nuns for midnight Mass. We'd all have to get out of our beds and it was exciting walking down the path in the dark.

Visits/Inspections

34. I think my Dad visited twice. I remember meeting him in the courtyard at the front of Nazareth House. He brought me presents of a football one time and a Lego set the other time. As soon as he'd gone one of the nuns burst the ball. I didn't see the nun burst it and I don't know which nun it had been, one of the other kids just told me. I

never saw the Lego set again either, it was taken off me as soon as dad left. I don't remember which nun it was that took it.

35. [REDACTED] my twin, was never there when dad visited, it was just me. I've since spoken to her and she can't remember him visiting her at all.
36. Nobody else came to visit, none of my other sisters or anyone else. I don't even remember any social workers or anybody else coming and speaking to me.

Siblings

37. I can never remember seeing my twin sister [REDACTED] at any time other than at school. Every night I heard a little girl crying and I often thought it was my sister, although I'm not sure who it was.

Personal possessions/Pocket Money

38. We never had anything of our own and I don't remember getting any pocket money, although I do remember going to the sweet shop down the hill in Lasswade.

Abuse at Nazareth House, Lasswade

39. There was one older girl who I remember used to do things to me. I don't remember how many times it happened or how long it went on for, but she always used to sit next to me in the TV room. When I was about five, she put my hand down her trousers or shorts and put her hand down mine. I remember getting a fright when I touched her pubic hair.
40. I don't know if she was another resident at Nazareth House or one of the carers and I don't remember her name. All I do remember is that she was about fifteen, white and a big-boned girl with long, curly, blonde hair.

41. Getting hit with the hairbrush by the nuns was an everyday occurrence. If it wasn't the brush, it was something else, the strap they wore on their tunics or a ruler, whatever they had to hand.
42. One morning after I'd wet the bed, Sister LTX deliberately jammed my fingers in the door. I'm not sure when it was, but she was mad at me and I wasn't quick enough.
43. Everybody that wet the bed got the same treatment I did. There would be screams down the corridor every morning from children getting scrubbed in the bath. I never saw the other kids getting bathed, but I knew what was happening.

Reporting of abuse while at Nazareth House, Lasswade

44. I never spoke to anyone about what the older girl did to me in the TV room or how the nuns were treating me. I didn't know what the girl did was wrong and I didn't know who I could speak to anyway.

Leaving Nazareth House, Lasswade

45. I think I was seven or eight when I left Nazareth House. All I can remember is and I getting put in a car by a lady who I take it was a social worker. I had no idea where we were going or what was happening.
46. All I remember of the journey is meeting a big hay bale lorry on the road somewhere and then arriving at a house. It was only when we arrived that I realised we were getting fostered, although I thought it was only going to be temporary. I have no recollection of being told before that we were going to be fostered or of meeting the foster parents, Mr and Mrs MTD/SPO

47. When we arrived, [REDACTED] and I were introduced to the [REDACTED] family by the lady that had driven us there. All their children were there and it seemed fine at the time. It felt good to be away from Lasswade.

Foster care with [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED] Wishaw

48. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] names were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but they wanted [REDACTED] and I to call them dad and mum. They had a house at [REDACTED] in Wishaw along with their own five children.
49. It was a big semi-detached house with a front and back door and four bedrooms. Downstairs was the livingroom and kitchen and one of the bedrooms, where Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] slept. Upstairs was a bathroom and three bedrooms. Outside there was a big garden at the back and front and a fence between the neighbours.
50. [REDACTED] was like a warzone. Every Saturday morning an Orange Walk would go by the front of the house and bricks and bottles would get chucked at the house because we were Catholic. There was never any serious damage, but it was like a little Ireland.
51. Mr [REDACTED] was an alcoholic and yet Mrs [REDACTED] was a fulltime foster carer. She would be given kids that the social work needed looked after, sometimes new-born babies would be brought to her at midnight.
52. Mr [REDACTED] was in and out of prison at Barlinnie a lot of the time. I don't remember him being at home much of the time, but when he was, he was a nasty drunk. He was an alcoholic bully. He was so bad that he would drink methylated spirits and aftershave and hide the bottles around the house. He was never there as a foster parent, it was always Mrs [REDACTED] who took care of business.
53. One time Mr [REDACTED] pulled a gun on two old women while he was in the front garden and was sent to jail for a long time after that. I'm not sure how long I'd been living there when that happened.

54. While her husband was in jail, Mrs [REDACTED] started a relationship with a man called [REDACTED] and they were together for the rest of the time I stayed at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was married with children and I'm sure his wife must have known what was going on with Mrs [REDACTED].
55. The MTD/SPO [REDACTED] John, who was about five years older than me, [REDACTED] who was four years older, [REDACTED] who was one year older, [REDACTED] who was three years younger and [REDACTED] who was nine years younger. [REDACTED] dad was Mrs [REDACTED] boyfriend, [REDACTED]. When [REDACTED] and I arrived there was also another foster kid called [REDACTED] who was about two years younger than me. He left after about a year, although I don't know why, and then another lad called [REDACTED] came in to take his place. He was also about two years younger than me.
56. I can't really fault Mrs [REDACTED] for a lot of things, she treated [REDACTED] and me pretty much the same as her own children. I would never be able to say that she was a bad foster parent. She must have known that [REDACTED] John and [REDACTED] were abusing my twin sister [REDACTED] and me though and she did nothing about it. I'm not sure about [REDACTED] he was okay with me, but he might have had a part in the abuse of my sister.

Routine at foster care with MTD/SPO family, [REDACTED] Wishaw

Mornings

57. All the kids slept upstairs. At the top of the stairs was the older boys' room, which was the biggest room. The girls were in one of the other two rooms, on the right, which were smaller and [REDACTED] and I were in the other on the left.
58. Every day Mrs [REDACTED] woke each of us up and we all had to go straight into the bathroom before breakfast. Then we'd go to school.

Bedwetting

59. I had stopped wetting the bed by the time I got to the MTD/SPO but the lad that was being fostered when [REDACTED] and I arrived there, [REDACTED], was a bedwetter. He used to get hit by Mr MTD [REDACTED] with a leather belt across his bare backside whenever he wet the bed. That just made him wet the bed even more.
60. Eventually they got him a plastic mat with a buzzer on it so that he would wake up if he started to wet the bed and could run to the toilet. Unfortunately this poor boy could sleep through everything and he even slept through the buzzer.
61. Every time [REDACTED] wet the bed, Mr MTD [REDACTED] would get us all up and tell us to go downstairs. He would make [REDACTED] stand on a wee stool and sing "I'm a dirty wee stink bag". After that Mr MTD [REDACTED] would slap [REDACTED] across the head and body, in front of us all. I felt so bad about it every time I saw [REDACTED] poor face.

Washing and Bathing

62. There was only one bathroom and it was hellish with so many of us. Mrs [REDACTED] made sure we were clean and we all had to wash at the sink with a flannel and clean our teeth every morning. There was no shower, only a bath and there were so many of us in there that there were strict times for having a bath.

Clothing

63. We had to wear a uniform to school and every holiday we'd get a new one. Mrs [REDACTED] always bought our clothes at the market in Wishaw, but we never got to choose them. She also bought a lot of stuff at charity shops.
64. Often the clothes Mrs [REDACTED] bought us were the ugliest of things that the other kids at school would tease me about. When I was twelve and started working, I bought my own clothes rather than wear what Mrs [REDACTED] got for me.

65. We all had to iron our own clothes. I was ironing clothes at seven years old after Mrs [REDACTED] showed me how to do it. I was quite happy to do my own because I could do it better than anyone else anyway.

Food

66. Mrs [REDACTED] fed us well, although because we were kids we were always starving. Breakfast was healthy, we'd have grapefruit and porridge and for lunch there were always big pots of soup on the go. Most of the meals were healthy, there was always a pantry full of food.
67. After Mr MTD [REDACTED] disappeared to jail we built a breakfast bar where we'd all sit for our meals. We all took turns at setting the table or preparing the vegetables, big bags of tatties, or sprouts, or whatever.
68. There were strict rules about eating. We were never actually punished, but no matter what was put down we'd have to eat it or it would get put down in front of us for the next meal. At times the soup had been sitting on the stove for three or four days and we had to put vinegar in it to be able to eat it. Sometimes the soup was absolutely disgusting, but everybody had to eat it. Mrs [REDACTED] was forever giving us laxatives if we had an upset stomach.

Schooling

69. We went to the local Catholic schools while we stayed at the MTD/SPO [REDACTED] St Matthew's Primary in [REDACTED] and Our Lady's High School in Motherwell after that. I think [REDACTED] and I went into primary four when we arrived and I remember getting introduced to the teacher, Mrs Jackson.
70. I loved school, I had lots of pals, although I was a bit of a ruffian and was always at the Rector's office for something I'd done wrong. Every time I got in trouble I had to write a story about what I'd done and why, which was a pretty good punishment. It got me into creative writing.

71. Right across the road from the house was the local Protestant school so whenever we came home there would be fights and bricks and bottles would be thrown at us.
72. When I got into fourth year at the high school I started skipping classes. I'd been to all the classes in the years up to then, but I'd had enough by then and by that time I was working. I got my O-grade English, but that was it and I left after fourth year. I don't know if I actually had a choice, I think I was expected to leave and go and make money for [REDACTED] Mrs [REDACTED] boyfriend.

Adoption

73. One time Mrs [REDACTED] was brought into the school by the teacher, Mr Dougan. In front of the whole class he said that [REDACTED] and I were no longer called [REDACTED] we were now [REDACTED] and MSS [REDACTED] because Mrs [REDACTED] had adopted us.
74. I just took that as fact. Nobody had ever spoken to me about adoption and changing my name and I was embarrassed at the time. I still don't know for sure if I actually was adopted, I don't have any documentation saying that I was.

Leisure time

75. Whatever the weather we'd be put outside by Mrs [REDACTED] and told not to come back in until the streetlights came on. It could be pouring with rain and we could be soaked to the skin, but we'd still have to stay out. If we were allowed to play inside, I spent a lot of my time in the attic playing with my cars.
76. Every Sunday all us kids used to go and visit a man called [REDACTED] who we knew as Grandad. I'm not sure whether he was Mr or Mrs MTD/SPO [REDACTED] father. He was a nice man and I would do his garden. He would give me big bags of Woolworths 'pick-and-mix' sweets.

Possessions

77. We all had lots of our own toys. I had hundreds of wee matchbox cars that I played with up in the loft. I loved music as well. I'd go to Wishaw market and buy tape cassettes and record music from the radio that I'd play on my Walkman.

Birthdays/Christmas

78. Birthdays were celebrated, but the only one I remember is when I was fifteen. Mrs [REDACTED] went away on holiday somewhere and left me, [REDACTED] and the two older brothers to stay on our own. I'd asked for a black leather jacket and when she came back from wherever she'd been she gave me this horrible big grey thing.
79. Christmas was alright, we got a lot of presents. It was a traditional Christmas with a big meal and afterwards we'd get to sit around with fat bellies. New Year was good too. We were allowed to stay up for the bells, watch 'Scotch and Wry' and drink a non-alcoholic fruit drink that we'd made.
80. I remember one Christmas when I no longer believed in Santa. I'd wanted a castle and the one I got had a broken turret. It was clearly from a charity shop and there was a letter with it from Santa apologising for the damage. I didn't think much of that.

Trips and holidays

81. We went for a few holidays while we were at the [REDACTED] MTD/SPO. I think Mr [REDACTED] MTD came on a couple of them too, but we never saw him, he was always away drinking. There were two wee caravans in the garden that we would go touring in. I remember going to Tayport and Lake Windermere in those two caravans.
82. We also went to two static caravans in Lanarkshire Caravan Park, which may have been after Mrs [REDACTED] became involved with [REDACTED]

83. I don't remember anything much happening when we were away on holiday. We all just spent the time walking and playing in the rain.

Healthcare

84. Healthcare was by the book. We went to the dentist at the school and we got all the regular injections and blood tests. I had a habit of swallowing buttons and eating paper at primary school, just showing off. I think I was attention seeking, seeing how many buttons I could swallow. I was constantly at the doctor getting seen to for that.

Religious Instruction

85. The MTD/SPO were staunch Catholics and we had to go to church every Sunday. The MTD/SPO boys were all altar boys and I was asked to be one too, but I refused.
86. Mrs [REDACTED] went with us at first until she started her relationship with [REDACTED] and then she sent us on our own. When that happened we never actually went. We'd spend the money for the collection in the sweet shop and go and play in the swing park for an hour. That went on for a long time.

Family contact/Visits/Inspections

87. [REDACTED] and I have always been close and have always looked out for each other. I've always been very protective of her and she of me. I never saw my other sisters in all the time I was in care and I hardly even knew they existed.
88. My dad was supposed to visit us every Sunday, but I think I saw him twice in all the time I was at the MTD/SPO. I think Mrs [REDACTED] put a stop to it around the time she was wanting to adopt us. The next I heard of my dad was when I was fifteen and a social worker told me that he had died.
89. Mrs [REDACTED] handed me the phone one day and the social worker just told me straight out that he was dead. I sunk to my knees at the back of the couch and burst out crying.

Mrs [REDACTED] reaction was to make me pair up a massive basket of socks. I don't know if she was trying to take my mind off what had happened, but that was like a punishment to me.

90. Grandad [REDACTED] Mr or Mrs [MTD/SPO] father, would come and visit us every so often. Whenever he came I remember him being so angry at Mr and Mrs [MTD/SPO] although I didn't know why at the time.
91. I remember going to the social work department for panel meetings when I was still at primary school. [REDACTED] and I would be taken out of school and always had to sit in the waiting room while there were meetings in the office. Mrs [REDACTED] was there and we'd sit and play with toys while the panel met.
92. I think I was actually in a meeting once or twice, but I don't remember what it was about. I think I'd been badly behaved and they were maybe talking about that. I don't think there were any meetings when I was at high school because I liked it there.
93. The social work never came to see us at home. The only time I would ever see a social worker at home was when they were dropping a child off who Mrs [REDACTED] was to be looking after for as an emergency placement. They never spoke to me or asked me how I was.

Work

94. We'd all have chores to do every day. Each of us would take a turn at doing the dishes or peeling the potatoes, or whatever. My job was looking after the garden and it was big. At first it was a punishment that Mrs [REDACTED] gave me, but I enjoyed it and took to it. Even at ten years old, I was out digging that garden, planting vegetables. I just wanted to work, anything to be out of the house. I even made a driveway in the back garden when I was just eleven or twelve.

95. Every Sunday the bedrooms got torn apart. The wardrobes were emptied and everything had to be folded back up and tidied away. Mrs [REDACTED] would tell us that we weren't getting our Sunday breakfast until our room was done.
96. I started working for Mrs [REDACTED] boyfriend, [REDACTED] when I was twelve years old. At first he was doing door-to-door sales until [REDACTED] [REDACTED] That became [REDACTED] and then he branched out into weddings after he bought a Rolls Royce. He was a 'Del Boy' character and he taught me a lot.
97. After school I would go round people's doors selling household products. After about six months I started doing quite well, but all I got for it was about £40. At the end of the week, if I still had stuff to sell, [REDACTED] would make me go out on a Saturday and a Sunday to get rid of it. Any money I did earn I had to give to Mrs [REDACTED] for digs, even when I was only thirteen years old.
98. I was about sixteen when [REDACTED] got [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I both got jobs [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I also got involved in the mechanics and helped fix [REDACTED] that needed it.

Abuse at foster care with [REDACTED] MTD/SPO family, [REDACTED] Wishaw

99. I always called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] MTD/SPO by their first names, but I would get a leathering from Mr [REDACTED] MTD for not calling them dad and mum. After he was sent to prison I just called her "Auntie [REDACTED]" unless I wanted something. I would call her mum then.
100. When he punished me, Mr [REDACTED] MTD would tell me to drop my trousers and hit me several times across the bare backside with a leather waist belt. As I got older I would refuse and tell him where to go when he was drunk. Mrs [REDACTED] never hit us.
101. There were baby alarms in every room so that Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] MTD/SPO could hear every word we were saying. One day I said the word "shitty" and I got such a leathering for

that. [REDACTED] always refused to drop his trousers when he was getting a beating so I decided to refuse this time as well. It didn't make any difference, I still got the belt across my backside.

102. When Mr MTD [REDACTED] went to jail and Mrs [REDACTED] started her relationship with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] it was like they were having sex all the time. We children were fully aware of it, they'd have sex during the day while we were all looking through the keyhole.
103. Mrs [REDACTED] would disappear for long periods of time, leaving us kids alone to look after ourselves and that's when the abuse from John Deeney, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] started.
104. John Deeney started anally penetrating me when I was nine years old. It happened four or five times at least, up in the loft of the house in [REDACTED] At first he started bribing me with sweets and cigarettes, before it progressed and he took me up into the loft.
105. The loft was my play area, my only safe place. The first time it happened I wasn't sure what was going on, but I remember being on my hands and knees with my trousers around my knees and I remember the pain.
106. One day he was so forceful that my foot actually went through the ceiling into [REDACTED] bedroom. John took the blame and told his mother that he had done it. He said he had slipped when he was up in the loft and after that happened Mrs [REDACTED] got flooring put down in the loft.
107. The last time I remember it happening was in the bedroom when I was about twelve or thirteen. He tied my wrists to both sides of the bottom bunk of the bunkbeds and my twin sister [REDACTED] walked in on us. John was on his knees behind me and he told her we were playing cowboys and indians. I don't recall it ever happening after that because by that time I was out working, chapping doors and selling stuff, so I was never in the house.

108. I know now after my sister [REDACTED] told me, that while this was happening to me with John, every night the other brother [REDACTED] was lying in bed beside her. This started when she was nine years old as well, he was touching her up and abusing her. I didn't realise what was happening with [REDACTED] at the time, it was only later, as an adult, that I found out.
109. I also didn't know until recently that John Deeney had taken my sister [REDACTED] virginity. [REDACTED] told me it happened at the back of one of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had just turned sixteen at the time and John groomed her into having sex with him.

**Reporting of abuse while at foster care with [REDACTED] MTD/SPO family, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Wishaw**

110. My twin sister [REDACTED] actually went to Mrs [REDACTED] and told her about [REDACTED] abusing her, but Mrs [REDACTED] didn't believe her. I don't remember [REDACTED] telling me at the time that she had reported it to Mrs [REDACTED] it was only recently that she did.
111. I knew what was happening to me wasn't right, but I never felt I could report it. Mrs [REDACTED] must have known what was going on though. There were so many of us in that house that somebody must have known what John and [REDACTED] were doing.
112. Thinking about it now, I believe Grandad [REDACTED] knew about the abuse, because he was always so angry when he came round. He was always fine with me and I loved going round to his house. John Deeney never went round to his house and I don't remember John being about when Grandad came to visit us either. He was always up in his room and I couldn't really say what Grandad was like with him.

Leaving foster care

113. I left when I had just turned eighteen and went to stay with Grandad [REDACTED]. By that time, Mrs [REDACTED] daughter [REDACTED] was fourteen and pregnant and had left home. [REDACTED] was covering up for her and so Mrs [REDACTED] kicked [REDACTED] out.
114. When she did, [REDACTED] and I were both working [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] became friendly with one of the drivers. I think [REDACTED] told this [REDACTED] driver about the abuse that had been going on and he and his wife took her in to live with them.
115. I refused to tell Mrs [REDACTED] where [REDACTED] was so she booted me out as well. We had an argument and she ended up hitting me over the head with a mug, cracking it. I'm sure that was on my eighteenth birthday and I only had contact with Mrs [REDACTED] once after that to get my savings and my clothes. I never actually saw her then, she just sent it to me.
116. I knew that Mrs [REDACTED] would have been getting paid by the social work department to look after us, but it didn't occur to me that the money would have stopped when I turned eighteen.
117. While I was staying with Grandad [REDACTED] MTD [REDACTED] got out of jail and came round one day. I don't know how long I'd been there by then. In front of me and [REDACTED] MTD [REDACTED] pulled out a gun again.
118. My Dad had left some money in trust for each of his kids that we were to get when we were eighteen. The social workers put it into a bank somewhere and I got it as soon as I turned eighteen. I think it was about fifteen hundred pounds.
119. [REDACTED] and I asked the social workers if we could meet our sisters and they got in touch with them. The social workers didn't have much more to do with it, they just gave [REDACTED] and I the addresses and phone numbers. [REDACTED] welcomed us with open arms and told us a bit about our family. She told us that dad had been an alcoholic and died of sclerosis of the liver.

120. When we met [REDACTED] our mum happened to be walking up the street and she was drunk. [REDACTED] told her who we were and she turned and ran off. After a while I managed to build up a bit of a relationship with my mum and I ended up staying with her for about six months.

Life after being in care

121. After a while [REDACTED] moved in with one of her schoolfriends and the girl's mother and stayed [REDACTED] in Motherwell. She started a relationship with a guy called [REDACTED] who was the son of the upstairs neighbour and [REDACTED] got pregnant at nineteen.
122. [REDACTED] was a bit of a gangster and a drug dealer and I became influenced by him. I picked up my first joint and first bottle of Buckfast when I met him and I never put them down for twenty-six years. Every day I was drunk.
123. I've been convicted of a number of crimes over the years, all linked to alcohol. There were a couple of police assaults and I got caught running about Motherwell with a sword. I've been in Saughton Prison four times.
124. I got different jobs selling double glazing, going round doors, trying to get a salesman in. I went to work every single day as a functioning alcoholic. I needed to work to keep my habit. Even at work I was taking valium and smoking dope on the van.
125. After that I had a couple of factory jobs. I worked in a fish processing factory and moved to Galashiels where I worked in a mill. I had a few jobs in Galashiels before I went onto building sites, starting off doing demolition and going on to work with some big groundworks companies.
126. I've also had jobs building decking and putting fencing up and then I got a job laying slabs [REDACTED] for Scottish Borders Council. While I was doing that I decided to tell my boss that I had a problem with alcohol.

127. This was my road to recovery. He gave me twelve months off and I went to a rehabilitation clinic and haven't drunk or taken drugs since. When I came out I tried to get back to work and worked on the bucket lorry in the Borders and had various other jobs until I had to stop.
128. I've had a number of injuries over the years and taking the alcohol and drugs acted as a painkiller. The moment I got sober I started to feel all the pain.
129. One day I was pushing a cement mixer and ended up on my knees, unable to breath. After that I was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and that was the last building site I was on.

Impact

130. In all aspects I can say that being in care has ruined both my life and my sister's life. I have attempted suicide a couple of times over the years and I still struggle with the thoughts.
131. I hated my mum and dad for a lot of years, I blamed them for me going into care.
132. Being in care changed me drastically. It turned me to addiction. I never touched alcohol until I was eighteen and the moment I did I was hooked on it. At twenty-one I knew I was an addict. I was drawn into a life of crime, I became a football casual, an IRA sympathiser and I was getting arrested every weekend.
133. The minute I got a bit of freedom I turned into a hooligan. I enjoyed being in a group when I became a football casual and I felt that at last I belonged. While I was in care I never felt that I belonged anywhere.
134. I believe that being in care affected my education and my ability to study. I wanted to be a businessman and went to Motherwell College when I was nineteen to study book

keeping and management. I was only there for six months because it was too hard and I couldn't concentrate. I was drinking and smoking all the time and I wasn't able to settle down and study.

135. I've never been able to trust anybody's word and all the relationships I have had have been absolutely toxic. Every girl I've been with has been an addict, just like me. The last time I was in trouble was on 1 January 2015, when I was drunk and fell out with the partner that I had at the time. She was a nasty piece of work and it all got out of hand and became violent and I ended up getting arrested.
136. I've never been a practising Catholic since I left care, but I still pray every night and every morning. I think my religion has been the only thing that's kept me going, but I just can't face going into a church.
137. I still think about being in care every day. I have nightmares where all I see is John Deeney's face. I can never get that picture out of my mind. I've lived with that for all these years and have learned to deal with it in my own ways.
138. I had to stay strong for my twin sister [REDACTED] and that's why I got sober. I couldn't have [REDACTED] living life without me. Years ago, when we left foster care, we made a pact that if she goes, I go. We were both troubled, although we never spoke about [REDACTED] until recently.

Reporting of abuse after leaving care

139. A few years ago I went to Victim Support and spoke to them about being in care, but I came out of that with nothing. I could never have taken the step of speaking to the police.
140. A few months ago, I was contacted by the police who told me that my name had come up as staying at Nazareth House in Lasswade. They came round to speak to me and as well as telling them about Nazareth House, I told them about my time in foster care.

I told them everything about what had happened to me and to [REDACTED] and all about John Deeney.

141. [REDACTED] and I both gave statements to the police, although [REDACTED] can't remember much about what happened to her at all. I also told them about the wee boy [REDACTED] who had been at the MTD/SPO when and I arrived there, but I don't think they managed to find them.
142. Since then I've also been speaking to a liaison person in the Procurator Fiscal's office and I believe it's all going through the courts now. I'm still in contact with a DC Paden from Livingston. I believe that John Deeney has been arrested and is out on bail at the moment and I've been asked to attend a video identification parade.

Treatment and Counselling

143. Over the past seventeen years I have been getting help from my local Mental Health and addiction teams, trying to get sober. I have been in about nine detox places over the years.
144. I finally managed to get sober after I spent six months in a rehabilitation clinic near [REDACTED] I was put in there on [REDACTED] 2015 by the addiction team and I knew it was my last chance. I built up a great relationship with some of the other residents in there and I had a job in the kitchen while I was there. Eventually I managed to learn how to stay sober and I haven't had any drugs or alcohol since.
145. I have been attending counselling sessions that were organised through my G.P. I've already had some sessions and still have three more to attend. My counsellor knows everything and it's been very helpful. I don't know if there is any diagnosis of an illness, but I'm going to get some trauma therapy next.

Records

146. I've tried to contact the social workers that sent me into care and I've tried to get my records, but I've still never got them. Years ago I phoned Wishaw social work department and they phoned back and left a message on my answer machine. I was drinking at the time though and I forgot all about it.
147. Not long after I was contacted by the police, I contacted Wishaw social work to try again and get my records. They told me to write a letter and send them £10, but instead I used that money to get my birth certificate and get a provisional driving licence.
148. More recently I've contacted 'Birthlink' through 'Future Pathways' and they've told me they'll help me get my records.

Lessons to be Learned

149. I don't think Mrs [REDACTED] should ever have been allowed to be a foster parent. She had an alcoholic husband and abusive sons.
150. I have since been told by the police and Procurator Fiscal that John Deeney had abused someone that was being fostered by Mrs [REDACTED] before me and that this earlier abuse had been reported. I was told that although it was documented, John Deeney was too young at the time to be prosecuted. If that was the case I don't understand why the social workers let Mrs [REDACTED] foster [REDACTED] and me.
151. I think social work should do more and look into foster carers' backgrounds in more detail.
152. I hope all the sufferers of abuse in care get justice. I know from reading the papers that there were many.

Other information

153. Even though I thought Mrs [REDACTED] had adopted me, I never used her surname. I was always MSS [REDACTED] from the minute I left the house.
154. [REDACTED] and I are still close and live near each other. We still have contact with our other sisters over Facebook, but we don't see them much. It's difficult for me to visit them because they drink and they don't understand how hard it is for me. They don't make the effort to come and see [REDACTED] or I.
155. [REDACTED] died in a motorbike accident when he was eighteen.
156. 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... MSS [REDACTED]

Dated 9/4/14