

1 Friday, 30 September 2022

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning.

4 We return to our evidence in the foster care and
5 boarding-out case study, the last tranches of evidence
6 for this week. I think we begin with a witness who's
7 ready; is that right?

8 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady.

9 The first witness remains anonymous and has chosen
10 the pseudonym 'Susan'. 'Susan' and her husband were
11 foster carers for Glasgow City Council, I think from
12 about 1991 up until 2015 or thereabouts.

13 An applicant with the pseudonym 'Linda' was in
14 foster care with 'Susan' and her husband from around
15 2008 to early 2015. 'Linda's' statement was read in
16 yesterday, Day 329, 29 September 2022, and Glasgow City
17 Council is the responsible authority.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

19 'Susan' (sworn)

20 LADY SMITH: 'Susan', you'll see the microphone is switched
21 on, the red light's now showing. Could I ask you to do
22 your best to stay in a good position for the microphone,
23 because we need to hear you through the sound system.

24 A. (Witness nods)

25 LADY SMITH: The red folder is there on the desk because it

1 has the typed version of your statement in it, but we'll
2 also bring it up on the screen in front of you and go to
3 the different parts of it we need to discuss with you.

4 Otherwise, 'Susan', could I say at the outset that
5 I do understand that it's difficult coming into public
6 and being asked to talk about events that happened in
7 your home life quite a while ago now and that you know
8 you're facing possibly some difficult questions that we
9 have to ask you.

10 A. (Witness nods)

11 LADY SMITH: Help me, if you can, to do the best I can to
12 make the process as straightforward for you as possible.
13 If you need a break at any time, that's fine. Or if
14 there's anything else that I can do to help you give
15 your evidence as clearly and carefully as possible, do
16 let me know.

17 A. Okay.

18 LADY SMITH: 'Susan', one thing I need to make sure you
19 understand before you start is that you're here to give
20 evidence at a public inquiry. This isn't a court
21 setting, but you are giving evidence in public,
22 a transcript is being made, and it's important you
23 understand that your evidence could be relied on outside
24 the Inquiry and can certainly be consulted by anybody
25 outside the Inquiry.

1 A. (Witness nods)

2 LADY SMITH: In these circumstances, I need to warn you that

3 if you're asked any questions the answers to which could

4 incriminate you, you don't have to answer them. You're

5 not obliged to do so. Do you understand that?

6 A. Yes, I understand.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 If you're ready, 'Susan', I'll hand over to

9 Ms Innes. Is that all right?

10 A. Yes, that's fine, thank you.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 Questions from Ms Innes

13 MS INNES: 'Susan', we understand you were born in 1962?

14 A. Yes, that's correct.

15 Q. I'm going to refer first of all to your statement, which

16 we give the reference WIT-1-000001043 and I'm going to

17 start by asking you to look at the very end of the

18 statement, the last page, page 52.

19 At paragraph 258 we see that it says there:

20 "I have no objection to my witness statement being

21 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

22 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

23 true."

24 I think you signed the statement electronically on

25 27 July of this year, 2022. Is that right?

1 A. Yes, that's correct.

2 Q. Okay, thank you. If we can go back to the beginning of
3 your statement, please, at paragraph 2 you tell us that
4 you started fostering in 1991.

5 A. Yes, that's correct.

6 Q. And you were a foster carer for over 20 years, I think?

7 A. Yes, it was, yeah.

8 Q. You say that your mum was a foster carer and you learnt
9 about fostering through her?

10 A. That's correct, yes.

11 Q. When you were growing up, were there foster children in
12 the house?

13 A. Yes, there was, there were foster kids there, yes.

14 Q. I see. Then you talk about meeting your husband and you
15 say that you thought fostering would be a good way to
16 help children and you say that you got married when you
17 were 29. Did you start fostering as soon as you got
18 married or pretty shortly thereafter?

19 A. It might have been about -- we went through the training
20 obviously for about a year, so we weren't married that
21 long till we started fostering because we had already
22 been going through now all the training and ...

23 Q. Why was it that you decided to start fostering?

24 A. I just thought, as you say, it was -- my mum done it
25 and -- with the foster kids and myself and my husband

1 couldn't have any kids of our own, so obviously we
2 decided then we would foster kids, you know what I mean,
3 because I called the other kids of my mum's my foster
4 sisters and things, so that's why we decided to actually
5 foster.

6 Q. Did you work at all during the time that you were
7 a foster carer or were you --

8 A. No, not at the beginning because both myself and my
9 husband, we were emergency foster carers at the very
10 beginning of fostering, which means you're on call for
11 24 hours a day. So obviously you can get a call at any
12 time, day and night, that they were bringing a child.

13 Q. Okay. So was your husband not working outside the home
14 either?

15 A. Not at that time, no.

16 Q. Did there come a point during the time that you were
17 foster carers that either you or your husband worked
18 outside the home?

19 A. My husband did periodically, yeah.

20 Q. I'm just trying to get a sense of, you know, we're going
21 to go on to talk about the household. So when you say
22 periodically, can you remember roughly when he started
23 working outside the home?

24 A. No, to tell the truth, no. It was a few years anyway,
25 a good few years, because both of us were there together

1 when we done emergency, which was for roughly I think
2 maybe about four, five years, four years, something like
3 that.

4 Q. Then you say he worked periodically out of the home, so
5 were there times when he wasn't working?

6 A. Yeah, we done everything together, yeah.

7 Q. You also tell us in your statement that your husband had
8 a stroke at some point?

9 A. He did, yes.

10 Q. When was that?

11 A. 2015, I think. Yeah, 2015 I think it was.

12 Q. Okay, right. We'll come back to that when we come to
13 that part of your statement.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. If we look down to paragraph 4, you talk about the
16 process that you've already mentioned, that it took
17 about a year to go through the process.

18 A. Mm-hmm.

19 Q. You talk about them checking the house. So did you
20 apply to -- would it have been Strathclyde Region at the
21 time?

22 A. Yeah, Glasgow City Council, yes, uh-huh.

23 Q. Did social workers come out and check the house and --

24 A. Oh yes. They obviously came out -- not obviously to
25 check your house, but they came out to speak to you

1 about fostering and did you understand what fostering
2 was about, and as I said in that, basically to let me
3 know that it wasn't a way -- because we wouldn't have
4 kids of our own -- to fast-track adoption, which we had
5 said it's not something we wanted to do was adopt,
6 that's why we were talking about fostering.

7 LADY SMITH: 'Susan', you just said they didn't come to
8 check your house. Did they look at the accommodation
9 that you provided the foster children?

10 A. Sorry, I thought you meant right at the initial when
11 they just come out to talk to you to see about
12 fostering. They're not checking your house then, but
13 obviously once you said yes, this is what I want to do,
14 then the whole process then starts, sorry.

15 LADY SMITH: You were talking about a stage when really they
16 come to give you information.

17 A. Yeah, they're only coming to give you information. It's
18 just that you're enquiring about it, they're coming out
19 to tell you a bit about --

20 LADY SMITH: At that stage you hadn't decided you wanted to
21 commit to being fosterers?

22 A. Exactly, yes. Sorry about that.

23 LADY SMITH: No need to apologise.

24 MS INNES: You say that they spoke to you about how
25 fostering wasn't a gateway to adopting?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Do you know what they meant by that?

3 A. Basically that if say I got a child in that was maybe
4 a young child, a baby or whatever it may be, that not to
5 think just because it came to live with you that you
6 could adopt that child, because that's not what
7 fostering was about. I'm not saying it doesn't happen,
8 but ...

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And I explained to him no, I'm sorry, but that's not
11 what we wanted or we wouldn't be fostering.

12 Q. Over the page at page 2 and paragraph 5 you talk about
13 going on training camps with other foster parents.
14 I wonder if you can explain what you mean by training
15 camps. Was this a residential course or --

16 A. You would go to like -- they would have it in like
17 social work places, like it could be offices in like
18 a meeting room or whatever it may be. Basically there
19 you would do things like scenarios, you know, things
20 like that, with other -- obviously the other carers that
21 were there were going through the process to become
22 a foster carer as well, so it was going through
23 processes of maybe talking about maybe a child coming in
24 with difficulties, maybe child abuse, whatever it may
25 be, sexual abuse, so obviously we'd do scenarios like

1 that. They would have maybe say myself as the child and
2 then the other person would be the adult or -- and vice
3 versa, and they kind of give you a scenario to help you
4 like learn how to -- how you would cope with that.

5 Q. Who was leading that training, was it social workers?

6 A. Social work department, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. You describe as the training as being really
8 eye-opening for you, even although --

9 A. Oh yeah, definitely. Because for all my mum was
10 a carer, that didn't mean to say I knew everything that
11 went on with foster kids, do you know what I mean?

12 Q. Okay. You talk about having training every week in that
13 first year?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And your husband also attended the training?

16 A. Yeah. That was compulsory, both of you had to come.

17 Q. This was all before you were approved as a foster carer
18 or after?

19 A. That's leading up to you to try and get approved.

20 Q. Okay. Were the training sessions also part of your
21 assessment, do you know, as in were social workers
22 watching --

23 A. Oh, they were watching us as well, yeah, because they
24 told you by the end of it that's no guarantee that you
25 would be accepted as a foster carer.

1 Q. Okay. So were you conscious that they were looking out
2 for your responses in the training to check whether you
3 were a suitable foster carer or not?

4 A. No, I just done what I was asked and just was myself.

5 Q. Okay. You talk about the different types of training
6 that you had. If we go down to paragraph 8 you talk
7 about I think getting training about discipline or
8 managing children's behaviour.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Is that right?

11 You say you had training on how to restrain a child?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. You actually had to act that out, you say?

14 A. Yeah, we acted that one out, yeah.

15 Q. You say at paragraph 9 that you think you also got fact
16 sheets and books?

17 A. Fact sheets, yeah.

18 Q. What were they like? What sort of information did they
19 have in them?

20 A. Just -- it's hard to -- how would you describe -- like
21 about kids that have been sexually abused, kids that's
22 maybe been neglected, obviously some facts about kids
23 with like alcohol syndrome -- is that what you call it?

24 Yeah. And just basic things about fostering, do you
25 know what I mean. Basically what was getting done in

1 the meetings and what was getting said to us because it
2 wasn't all acting all the time. I mean we did -- we
3 spoke about things. They would give case scenarios,
4 obviously no names mentioned or anything, but they would
5 give scenarios of things that can happen because they
6 didn't sugarcoat it. They didn't tell you it's going to
7 be this marvellous things. They did explain things that
8 can happen.

9 Q. Okay. Can you remember if you had a fostering handbook
10 at any point?

11 A. I can't think of that.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It's possible, but honestly -- I know we had a diary, we
14 got diaries to keep.

15 Q. Yes, we'll come back to that. But you can't remember
16 the Local Authority giving you something called
17 a handbook?

18 A. I wouldn't like to say yes, because I honestly can't
19 remember.

20 Q. Okay, that's fine. If we go over the page, at
21 paragraph 10 you say that this training continued all
22 the time. It was monthly once you started fostering, in
23 the first year I think after you started fostering, you
24 say?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Was the training different at that point or was it along
2 the same sort of lines as before?

3 A. No, the -- we went every month where we would -- after
4 you start fostering, like you go every month. That was
5 mostly more a get together with other carers to talk --
6 just to talk amongst yourselves, things like that,
7 obviously other things were said, but the actual
8 training that happened after that is training that was
9 through like yourself. Like you would go to -- it could
10 be in a hotel they were having it, like a foster care
11 kind of -- and you would go like -- and that would be
12 maybe about ... like the sexual abuse, the different
13 things or children with maybe anger issues or -- how to
14 cope with things. So that's what these things were.

15 Q. Okay.

16 LADY SMITH: The way you describe it, it sounds as much as
17 anything like a support group, a mutual support group.

18 A. Every month was a support group, yeah, that was the
19 word, yeah. But in between that we would get like
20 separate training, if you know what I mean. I didn't go
21 with all the other foster carers that I knew. It would
22 be like -- would you call it like a conference or a --

23 LADY SMITH: A seminar?

24 A. A what, sorry?

25 LADY SMITH: A seminar?

1 A. Kind of thing, yeah, where you went and ...

2 LADY SMITH: How often were those sessions?

3 A. They would be round about monthly, yeah.

4 LADY SMITH: Did you have to travel far to get to them?

5 A. Oh, depending where they had it, yes. Biggest majority,

6 yeah, you had to travel.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 MS INNES: At that time it would have been Strathclyde

9 Regional Council. Was it all within Strathclyde, can

10 you remember?

11 A. Yeah, yeah, yes.

12 Q. Okay. Then after that year at paragraph 11 you say that

13 the regular training stopped and it became more like

14 a yearly conference thing, that's what you say in your

15 statement?

16 A. Well, you didn't get like the intense training and stuff

17 that you would get up to that because obviously you've

18 got to sit in front of a panel to say whether you are or

19 you aren't, but after that -- you still obviously had

20 this monthly support group to go to. Then you would

21 have again someone would come -- my worker, you'd get

22 a link worker and they'd come and say, "There's

23 a training group for such-and-such, would you like to

24 go?" And you would say "yes" or "no".

25 Q. You describe the training at that point, after the

1 initial period, as being optional?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Can you remember there being any training which was

4 mandatory that you had to do?

5 A. Well, for all they say it's optional, they really liked

6 it if you went. But it wasn't that they say -- prior,

7 yeah, you had to go, you had no option. But once you've

8 kind of been fostering and things had settled down

9 a bit, it was -- because that went on right all the way

10 through for 20-odd years.

11 Q. Okay. So it was optional later on?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Did there come a point when you had reviews of you as

14 a foster carer?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So you go back to the panel again?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. At the panel would they check if you'd done training?

19 A. Yes, they could check what training sessions you had

20 been to and what you hadn't.

21 Q. Did you carry on doing the optional training --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- was that something that you took up?

24 A. Yeah, I did.

25 Q. Why did you go to the training? Why did you think it

1 would be a good thing to do?

2 A. Because I wanted to understand how to do basically my
3 job right.

4 Q. Okay. You say I think that your husband didn't attend
5 the later optional training?

6 A. No, he didn't.

7 Q. Why not?

8 A. It's just the type, he's just a quiet person. He did
9 away at the beginning, but where we're talking about
10 now, we're talking five maybe six years down the line
11 kind of type thing, but he did come away at the
12 beginning, he came to everything he was expected to as
13 well.

14 Q. At the reviews that you went to, you know, we talked
15 about your discussions with your link worker, did
16 anybody ever raise any issues about him not going to
17 training?

18 A. No. No. They just viewed it as that I was actually the
19 main carer.

20 Q. Okay. At paragraph 12 you say that you changed to
21 long-term fostering and you tell us about that in your
22 statement in a moment which we'll come back to. But you
23 say at the point that you changed from doing I think the
24 emergency caring --

25 A. Emergency, yes.

1 Q. -- to long-term caring there was additional training
2 that you had to go through?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. What was that about?
5 A. To tell you the truth, it was more or less the same as
6 what you went through at the beginning, just the exact
7 same.
8 Q. You say it felt like a process the social work had to go
9 through as opposed to you?
10 A. Well, I felt that there was absolutely no need for it,
11 but obviously that's what I had to do because I had the
12 kids and they took them away until this process went all
13 through, which took nearly a year.
14 Q. Okay.
15 If we move on in your statement to the fostering
16 arrangements.
17 First of all, as you say, you applied to do
18 emergency foster care and you say that you said at the
19 beginning that you couldn't take babies and asked for
20 children aged 4 to 16 or 17?
21 A. Yeah.
22 Q. You said you were also happy to do after care if a child
23 was coming out of care?
24 A. That's correct, yeah.
25 Q. You describe that as being more like a housemother?

1 A. Yes. You were ... like what do you call that? Well,
2 like a landlord, if you know what I mean, like they just
3 live in your house but to me they were like my kids and
4 they were over 16.

5 Q. What sort of ages would these children have been?

6 A. They could be between 16 and up to 24 I think it was at
7 the time.

8 Q. Okay. And did you have many children staying with you
9 on that basis or not?

10 A. No. No. I think I only had ... two.

11 Q. Okay. You say that you couldn't take babies and you
12 asked for children over four.

13 A. Four.

14 Q. Did you ever have younger children than four in your
15 house?

16 A. Yeah. When I was an emergency carer, yeah. We did
17 obviously, if you're in an emergency the phone would go
18 and they would be looking for somewhere obviously for
19 maybe a baby to go and I think the youngest I had was
20 a 16-, 18-month.

21 Q. Okay. Did you have things like a cot or anything in
22 your house so that you could accommodate --

23 A. They brought it. They would bring you maybe a travel
24 cot. Obviously they would give you a payment to
25 basically run out and buy clothes for a baby. But as

1 a carer, because you knew you were emergency caring, you
2 really didn't know. Most carers at that time would have
3 a stock of clothes for different ages. I know I did,
4 anyway. That I could always -- if it was 4-year-old,
5 a 7-year-old, I could always -- especially nightwear.

6 Q. Yes.

7 How did you feel about the social work placing
8 children with you that were younger than you had asked
9 for?

10 A. Well, at the time I didn't bother. You're talking about
11 some wee kid that needed -- they needed somewhere.
12 Because they would only ask me if they really, really
13 needed to, obviously, and if I knew -- if they were
14 asking me, then I knew that maybe there wasn't another
15 carer available.

16 Q. Okay. Did that happen often or not, that you had a baby
17 or a younger child?

18 A. In the whole time I was emergency I think I had maybe
19 three.

20 Q. Okay.

21 At paragraph 14 you say:

22 "It was a bone of contention as to whether I was
23 employed or not by social work."

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. "We never really knew."

1 A. We never knew.

2 Q. To this day you still don't know?

3 A. No, still don't know whether I was, whether I wasn't.

4 Especially when it came to maybe like benefits or if you

5 went to buy a sweet, things like that, they would say,

6 "I don't see fostering here, it's not there as

7 employment", so you say am I employed with you or am

8 I not? Do I pay tax or do I not pay tax? You never

9 really got a straight answer for that, so to this day

10 I don't know.

11 Q. You say particularly that you mentioned you couldn't

12 sign on to get benefits, so would that be times --

13 A. So you were entitled to sign on for benefits but the

14 benefit office then would say -- it's called job

15 seekers' allowance. So if you weren't actively looking

16 for a job, which obviously we weren't because we had to

17 be there, so then they would say, "Well, we can't give

18 you money", so this is where all that stuff came in and

19 that's when I would get onto the phone to social work

20 and say, "Well, what's happening here?" Because

21 obviously my stamp's got to be paid somewhere from

22 somebody, but you never really -- so all the years we

23 never ever claimed the money that we were meant to get.

24 LADY SMITH: When you say "stamp", you mean National

25 Insurance?

1 A. National Insurance stamp, yeah, because now when you
2 are -- I take it when you sign a (unclear) you get
3 a stamp paid or something.

4 LADY SMITH: Looking back, have you identified whether or
5 not National Insurance contributions were paid for you?

6 A. No. I take it I won't know that till I get a pension.
7 I don't know.

8 LADY SMITH: All right. Was any tax taken off you?

9 A. Not that I'm aware -- I don't know if they did, but
10 I never seen any tax, no. There was nothing on -- you
11 know the little slip you get with the payments that said
12 anything about tax.

13 LADY SMITH: What did the slip have detailed on it?

14 A. On the slip it would be obviously the name of the child,
15 what age and the payment and that would go down and then
16 there would be a separate bit at the bottom for myself
17 and for our payment.

18 LADY SMITH: So there's an allowance for the child?

19 A. Yes, and also an allowance for --

20 LADY SMITH: For you and your husband?

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

23 MS INNES: I think you tell us on page 4 at paragraph 16
24 that you mention that half for the child and half for
25 your expenses is your understanding.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. You say different age groups got different pay rates?

3 A. That's correct, yeah.

4 Q. Were you paid more for an older child?

5 A. No, you were paid more for a younger child than you were

6 for an older child.

7 Q. Okay. You say that you thought you were paid well?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. That was what you felt, okay. You say that you didn't

10 get extra financial support for things like clothes and

11 shoes, but there would be extra money for birthdays and

12 Christmas?

13 A. Yes. Once you get paid, everything's on you. It's

14 just -- that's your job, do you know what I mean, except

15 for as you say for the birthday and for Christmas.

16 Q. Okay. If we can just move back up, please, to

17 paragraph 15 on this page, you talk there about

18 emergency placements and you say that they would usually

19 be for a week but sometimes could be for longer than

20 that?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. When a child came to you on an emergency basis, had you

23 any idea how long they were going to be with you?

24 A. No. All different kids were different. All depending

25 what they were actually there for. Some maybe were

1 waiting to move on to like temporary carers, which is
2 the next stage. Some would be -- it would be just,
3 "Mum's in hospital, she'll be out in a couple of days".
4 So it all depended. But it never lasted what they said.
5 Q. It --
6 A. Always lasted longer.
7 Q. Okay. You say in this paragraph that you didn't feel
8 like you had a say as to whether you could say no to
9 an emergency placement?
10 A. You could say no, but I always felt that they pulled at
11 your heartstrings for you not to say no, if you know
12 what I mean.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. My exact words were, "You're emotionally blackmailing
15 me".
16 Q. Okay.
17 If we go down to the bottom of page 4 in
18 paragraph 18 you tell us about different houses that you
19 lived in over the time that you were fostering.
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. You describe the first flat that you lived in as being
22 in a high-rise and you say you had two bedrooms?
23 A. That's correct, yeah.
24 Q. You say that you were given beds by the social work, so
25 I'm assuming there was one room for the foster

1 children --

2 A. Yeah, yeah, yes.

3 Q. -- and you and your husband had a room. You say you

4 fostered there for three years and you had no less than

5 three children at any one time?

6 A. I had three, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. So you always had three. Would they be related,

8 these children?

9 A. Oh, sorry. No, no, at the beginning you would maybe

10 only have one or it would be maybe two in the one

11 family. There would be an odd occasion where it could

12 be like there was two from one family and one from maybe

13 another family, but what I can say is that they always

14 made sure it was always that they could be put together.

15 I mean they wouldn't put like a 10-year-old boy in with

16 maybe two wee girls, things like that.

17 Q. Okay, but they could be from different families?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Could you have three from three different families?

20 A. No.

21 Q. So it tended to be, from what you've said, two from one

22 family and one from another?

23 A. Yeah, yeah. The biggest majority at the time I would

24 only have maybe one to two at a time. One of the times

25 I had actually three, but I had them for -- as emergency

1 for a good long time.

2 LADY SMITH: When you were in [REDACTED] Flats did you

3 ever have more than three at a time?

4 A. No, no, no, because I only had the one bedroom.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS INNES: Then you say that you moved house and at this

7 house you had a four-bedroomed house; is that right?

8 A. That's right.

9 Q. You lived there for about six or seven years?

10 A. (Witness nods)

11 Q. Obviously you and your husband had a bedroom. How were

12 the other three bedrooms used? Were they all for foster

13 children?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You say that you think you went up to four children

16 then?

17 A. I did, yeah.

18 Q. Again at this point were you doing -- were you still

19 doing the emergency foster care when you moved into the

20 house?

21 A. No. When I was -- you see how I was saying about when

22 I was doing emergency, well, I got three girls, right,

23 from the one family, there was twins and their sister.

24 And now that's the kids that I had to do the training

25 for to go long term for.

1 Q. I see.

2 A. So they moved obviously with me, and went into the

3 four-bedroom house and then I think that's when

4 obviously I maybe got another one in and then they would

5 go, but I was still emergency because these three girls

6 were took out until you done this training thing, so

7 they were put into a children's home --

8 Q. Okay. So the three --

9 A. -- waiting to come back to me.

10 Q. Okay. So three children placed with you on an emergency

11 basis?

12 A. Mm-hmm.

13 Q. How long did they stay with you when they were in the

14 emergency?

15 A. The time they moved from me -- the time I asked to have

16 them long term, they had been with me about -- must have

17 been near enough a year.

18 Q. Okay. You say that they were moved then --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- from you to a children's home?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. How long were they in the children's home for?

23 A. Nearly a year.

24 Q. From what you're saying, your understanding is that they

25 were moved to a children's home because you weren't

1 approved as a long-term carer?

2 A. That's correct, yeah. I had to do this other training,
3 go to sit in front of another panel to be then told
4 that: you're not emergency any more, you're long term.

5 Q. Okay, right.

6 Do you know if there were other checks, I mean you
7 talked about other training being done. Were there
8 other checks and another assessment carried out of you
9 and your husband to change to a long-term foster --

10 A. It was spoke about -- they came and obviously again they
11 spoke about it: do you understand what "long term"
12 means? Just that kind of stuff.

13 Q. When you talk about what long term means, what did that
14 mean?

15 A. Long term, well, my understanding -- what I know is long
16 term is they're there until they decide to leave.

17 Q. So for the rest of their childhood?

18 A. Yeah, and into adulthood.

19 Q. Okay. Do you know why it was long-term fostering rather
20 than adoption?

21 A. I didn't want to adopt.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Oh, and the kids that I'm talking about -- I'm not
24 saying they were too old, but they weren't wee kids or
25 anything.

1 Q. I see. What sort of age were they?

2 A. The twins were about 12, 12/13, the other one was maybe
3 about 11, 10/11.

4 Q. Did they still have contact with their birth family?

5 A. Well, yeah, prison visits.

6 Q. Right, I see. Okay.

7 You moved to this house with the four bedrooms. You
8 had the three girls with you, initially emergency, then
9 they went away, then they came back.

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. At the same time you were doing --

12 A. I was still doing emergency obviously, because the title
13 hadn't changed yet, the name.

14 Q. Okay. Once you were approved as a long-term carer, did
15 you stop doing emergency care completely?

16 A. Yeah, I did because I was no longer then an emergency
17 carer.

18 Q. Right, okay. You say that you went up to four children
19 and that's -- did you have -- did you go up to four on
20 a long-term basis?

21 A. No, I was three for my long-term.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I was still a long-term carer so any other kid that came
24 in, they could bring them to me because then there was
25 the opportunity then for them, if need be, they could

1 stay long term.

2 Q. Okay. Right. You then say you moved to another house,
3 a bigger house, and there were again I think four
4 bedrooms in this house?

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. Okay. At that point I assume you were doing the
7 long-term fostering?

8 A. Yes, I was.

9 LADY SMITH: What year was that that you moved to this
10 bigger house?

11 A. Oh goodness, my maths is terrible. (Pause)
12 2010 I think?

13 LADY SMITH: Okay, thank you.

14 MS INNES: At paragraph 21 on this page you say you had lots
15 of children for shorts periods of time and you think
16 there must have been up to 100 children that you looked
17 after.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Was that -- do you mean --

20 A. From emergency, from very first starting up until --

21 Q. Okay. Once you stopped doing the emergency fostering,
22 how many children did you have on a long-term basis?

23 A. At first three.

24 Q. Okay. Then did more children come and stay with you
25 long term?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Because in that period some of the kids got older and
4 moved -- and maybe went and got houses of their own or
5 whatever. So a lot of my kids stayed -- one particular
6 stayed -- she was 23 before she even moved.

7 Q. Okay. At paragraph 22 you talk about two sisters coming
8 to live with you and one of those sisters you know has
9 provided a statement to the Inquiry.

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. She has a pseudonym, like you do, and her pseudonym is
12 'Linda'.

13 A. (Witness nods)

14 Q. You talk about 'Linda' and her sister coming to live
15 with you and you say that -- I think you knew them
16 before because they had lived with your parents; is that
17 right?

18 A. Yeah, they actually lived with my mum and dad and my mum
19 and dad felt that they were getting kind of old, too old
20 to kind of -- because by then they were -- it was then
21 decided that the girls were going to be in long term and
22 my mum felt she was getting a bit kind of too old to --
23 what's the word I'm looking for? Like ... not promise
24 it, like ... guarantee that she was going to be there
25 until they were like 16, 18, whatever age. So that's

1 when obviously my mum decided to stop fostering them --
2 not fostering, just stop fostering them.

3 Q. Okay. So was your mum --

4 A. My mum was a temporary carer.

5 Q. She was a temporary carer at this point, okay. What's
6 a temporary carer?

7 A. Temporary carers, if you're going by time wise is
8 usually from the day they come in up to about six months
9 to a year.

10 Q. Okay. Had these girls been with your mum and dad for
11 six months or for longer than that?

12 A. Longer than that, yeah. A couple of year.

13 Q. Okay. You say that the social work had decided that
14 they needed long-term care.

15 A. That's right.

16 Q. You say I think essentially that you volunteered to take
17 them?

18 A. The girls had asked me, kept asking me, "Can we go and
19 stay with you? Can we not stay with you?" And
20 obviously the social worker had spoke to me as well and
21 said, "Would you consider taking them?"

22 Q. Okay. You say that your mum told you that she wouldn't
23 advise it as the girls had mental health issues?

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. What sort of issues?

1 A. I can't really say what she thought, but it was more
2 like ... like ... as in their social interacting. Do
3 you know what I mean, I really can't speak to really --
4 because obviously my mum's not discussing that with me
5 exactly what she thought of them, do you know what I
6 mean, so what she thought -- I'm trying to think of the
7 words. Do you know what I mean? Like their interaction
8 with maybe other kids. Their interaction in the house.
9 Their interaction ... how well they could do things.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Do you know what I mean?

12 Q. Did you then have a discussion with the social workers
13 about the girls?

14 A. Yes, oh yes, yeah.

15 Q. Did they provide you with information about their
16 background and their health?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Within that information, were you told if the
19 social work department had identified some mental health
20 issues?

21 A. They did, yeah, and obviously they had said when they
22 were with my mum, my mum had got them, the social work,
23 to get some help for them and they were seeing it and
24 then the social work right out of the blue stopped it.

25 Q. What sort of person were they seeing?

1 A. Is it called CAMHS?

2 Q. Yes, so Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

3 I think we would call CAMHS.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. You think they were seeing somebody there?

6 A. They were seeing somebody there.

7 Q. And the social work stopped it?

8 A. They stopped it.

9 Q. Do you know why?

10 A. They wouldn't give my mum any explanation. My mum

11 fought it for a while saying, "Why? Why has this

12 stopped?"

13 Q. Okay. Paragraph 24 you talk about the information that

14 you were given and you say that in relation to 'Linda'

15 and her sister:

16 "There were a lot of things that social work didn't

17 relay properly ..."

18 A. What do you mean? I don't know --

19 Q. I'm reading from your statement. At paragraph 24 you

20 say you were:

21 "... given paperwork with information about their

22 parents and circumstances as to why they were in care.

23 Social work didn't tell me about any engagement with

24 mental health workers ..."

25 A. Oh no, they didn't mention mental health to me.

1 Obviously I knew about the mental health things through
2 my mum, that they were getting counselling.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But they didn't say to me that -- the social work didn't
5 say to me anything about, "Oh, we had them" -- like if
6 I didn't know my mum, I wouldn't have known, do you know
7 what I mean?

8 Q. Then you say that you spoke to your link worker
9 constantly about the girls?

10 A. Yeah, once they were with me a wee while, yeah, I spoke
11 to my link worker about the things I was seeing when
12 they were living with me.

13 Q. Okay. What was his response?

14 A. He -- he would just -- he would relay it on to obviously
15 whoever it may be.

16 Q. And did --

17 A. Whether like the kids' social worker or his seniors, his
18 bosses.

19 Q. Did anything happen as a result of that, do you know?

20 A. No. No. I even spoke to the kids' own social worker as
21 well and this isn't just once, I spoke a lot of times
22 about that.

23 Q. You talk in paragraph 26 about them seldom interacting
24 with other children.

25 A. Yeah, that's correct.

1 Q. That was one of the things that you say that you raised
2 with social work?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. At the end of paragraph 27 you talk about the two girls
5 and you say they were 13 and 15 when they left you and
6 then you talk about them and another girl staying with
7 you for the longest time and you say:
8 "... but there were other kids coming and going.
9 The most I had at any one time was six."

10 A. That's correct, at one time I had six for a wee while.
11 It wasn't that long, but I had six.

12 Q. How did that come about?

13 A. I just got a phone call asking me these kids this and
14 that and whatever, the same as you would get any phone
15 call, and obviously the social work would come out and
16 see you and speak about the kids and tell you a bit
17 about them.

18 Q. Okay. At paragraph 29 at the bottom of this page you
19 say that you mainly fostered girls, because of the
20 amount of girls that you had taken on and a boy wouldn't
21 always fit in. You say that you did foster 'Linda' and
22 'Linda's' brother for a little while?

23 A. That's correct, yeah.

24 Q. How did it come about that he came to live with you?

25 A. His carers, I think they were giving up fostering or

1 something and the girls always would say to me, "How can
2 [REDACTED] not come and stay with me? How can he not come
3 and stay with us?" And obviously then when that
4 happened the social work spoke to me about it and I had
5 agreed, because he was of the same family as those two,
6 yeah, that would be fine.

7 Q. Okay. I think you say he was about five when he came to
8 stay with you?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. If we go on to page 7, you say that it didn't work out
11 and you refer to 'Linda' and her sister hating him?

12 A. Yeah. Yeah, they were always bullying him, pushing him.
13 I don't -- the way I look now, this is only me myself,
14 the way I looked at it is it wasn't the big red roses
15 that they thought it was going to be, because they'd
16 never lived with him and obviously he had behavioural
17 problems from school, things like that. It took a lot
18 of my time because the school wanted me to go up and sit
19 in the classroom with him because he was that
20 disruptive. So -- and it wasn't what they -- I don't
21 think it was what they actually thought it was going to
22 be.

23 Q. Okay. When he came to stay with you, did you just have
24 'Linda' and her sister and him or --

25 A. No, no, I had --

1 Q. -- were there other children?

2 A. -- an older one, an older girl and a younger girl.

3 Q. Did you feel that you had the capacity to look after

4 him, given his needs as you've said?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You say that he -- well, he then left your care. How

7 did that come about?

8 A. Obviously I had to speak to the social work and say it

9 just wasn't working out and I explained to them

10 obviously some of the incidents that had happened

11 between them and it just couldn't carry on. Plus the

12 demands for the school. I had other kids there.

13 I couldn't give that amount of time.

14 Q. Okay. You say in paragraph 30:

15 "Once he left I don't think I saw him again and

16 I didn't ask what had happened to him."

17 A. No, I never seen him again, no.

18 Q. Did the girls not carry on --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- having any contact with him?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Did you --

23 A. Not until ... maybe a year later, maybe six months,

24 a year later?

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I think they arranged for a contact. It happened and
2 then that was it, done.

3 Q. Okay. At paragraph 37 over the page on page 8 you talk
4 about, as you've mentioned, that other children would
5 come, you say as emergencies maybe for a few weeks or
6 a few months and you've mentioned the six children and
7 you say:
8 "It did cause some problems when the new placements
9 came in."

10 A. It could, yeah, yeah, because the other kids were like
11 family, do you know what I mean, they had been there for
12 a while all together and -- I mean when somebody else
13 came in, they didn't always get on with them which I was
14 always clear with the social work if they can't get on
15 with my kids that are there, I can't have them there,
16 because we were a -- a long-term family.

17 Q. Okay. Then you refer to the legislation changing you
18 think and you say that social work said that they wanted
19 everyone brought down to a total of --

20 A. Three kids.

21 Q. -- a maximum of three.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. But they had said the kids that you already had,
25 obviously they weren't going to remove them -- because

1 up until I actually stopped, I had four.

2 Q. Okay. You then go on to talk about matching in the next
3 paragraph, paragraph 38, and you say that you don't
4 think there was really any thought when matching a child
5 with you. With emergency you say you couldn't really do
6 that --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- because it was an emergency, but you say even when
9 you were long term you don't think there was any
10 thought.

11 A. To me not in the social work's head, because in their
12 eyes at the time, is they're looking for somewhere for
13 this child to go and that was their own priority.
14 Whereas my priority was are they going to fit in? Is it
15 a boy? Is it a girl? They would come out and speak to
16 you, do you know what I mean, you did know the kid's
17 background, you did know that, but ... it didn't always
18 match to -- that sounds terrible, "match". It didn't
19 always -- it wasn't a fit, it wasn't always a fit.

20 Q. Are you saying that it was you that was giving thought
21 to --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- as to whether things would fit or not?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Rather than perhaps the social work --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay.

3 If we move on, please, to page 9, paragraph 41, you

4 talk about the sleeping arrangements and you talk about

5 the place that you were in the longest. You talk about

6 'Linda' and her sister being in one room and two other

7 girls being in the other rooms. Then you say:

8 "That wasn't for long as other children would come

9 in and we had to move them around."

10 A. Yeah. It wasn't always because another child came in.

11 Sometimes -- that did happen, do you know what I mean,

12 because obviously -- I always went by ages as well.

13 Like maybe my 13-year-old didn't really want to be in

14 the same room as maybe a 7-year-old. But 'Linda' and

15 her sister, I had to constantly move them because they

16 didn't get on, they fought all the time about -- just

17 fought all the time. Then they would try however we

18 move that, that, that. But then I ended up -- I spoke

19 to the social work and I got another room made.

20 Q. Sorry, you got another --

21 A. Room put onto my house. I got the garage converted --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- so that then there was more space. So then I had

24 a five-bedroom house.

25 Q. Okay. So you had a garage connected to the house?

1 A. Yeah, yeah, it was --

2 Q. It was all part of the house?

3 A. Yeah, yeah, it's part of the house, yeah.

4 Q. You converted that garage into a bedroom?

5 A. Into a bedroom.

6 Q. Did you get financial help from --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- social care to do that?

9 A. Yeah, I did.

10 Q. Who then went and stayed in that?

11 A. 'Linda'.

12 Q. 'Linda'? Okay.

13 A. (Witness nods)

14 LADY SMITH: Can you remember what year that was done? Or

15 can you remember how old 'Linda' was?

16 A. I'm kind of trying to think here. Maybe 14?

17 LADY SMITH: You think she was about 14?

18 A. She was about 14, yeah. She might have been -- yeah,

19 I think she was about 14.

20 LADY SMITH: Her sister was a bit younger than her?

21 A. Yeah, she was two years younger, I think.

22 LADY SMITH: As you've said, sometimes other children that

23 were coming in were a good bit younger as well?

24 A. Yeah. Some would be -- I think most of the children

25 that came in after we moved into that house with 'Linda'

1 and that were younger.

2 LADY SMITH: I see. Thank you.

3 MS INNES: Moving on, please, to page 11 and paragraphs 52

4 and 53, where you talk about leisure time and what

5 'Linda' says in her statement about that. You say that

6 you're surprised to see that she's saying that she never

7 went out, because she never wanted to go out.

8 A. She didn't. That was where one of my concerns was,

9 that -- like all the other kids in the house, maybe

10 their friends would come over or I would be dropping

11 them off at their friends', but with 'Linda' and her

12 sister, never.

13 Q. What would they do instead of going out?

14 A. Watch TV in their room. Sit and watch TV with me or ...

15 just do things in their room. Watch videos. Homework.

16 They just didn't go out and socialise. They did -- if

17 somebody came in, do you know what I mean, mostly they

18 just sat there -- they would come in and talk and that,

19 but as in day to day, "I'm going to go up to my friends'

20 house", no.

21 Q. Can you remember 'Linda' having friends from school?

22 A. No. I never met any of them.

23 Q. Okay. If we can move on, please, to page 13 and

24 paragraph 64, where you're talking there about schooling

25 and you refer to what 'Linda' says about you not

1 encouraging her to study?

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 Q. What's your response to that?

4 A. That's not true, because I even got her a tutor.

5 Q. To help her with what?

6 A. To help her with her studies because she had said to me

7 that she was struggling -- I think is it science,

8 biology kind of type thing and I had said to her, "Do

9 you want me to get the social work to get you a tutor?"

10 because you could ask the social work to help you and

11 she said no she didn't want the social work to get her

12 a tutor, so I actually got my nephew, which was at

13 university and was doing the same kind of subject.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And he came twice or three times a week to help her

16 study. She did ask me to, but I'm sorry but I didn't

17 get any of that kind of stuff when I was at school and

18 I said that to her, I couldn't help her because I didn't

19 get that.

20 Q. Okay. If we move on to page 14 and paragraph 68 where

21 you talk about healthcare, you talk about having to take

22 'Linda' to the doctor as the social work had told you

23 that she'd tried to commit suicide?

24 A. That's correct, yeah.

25 Q. Had this happened during the time that she was living

1 with you?

2 A. It was at the time she was living with me, the social
3 worker came to me and said that 'Linda' had said to --
4 I don't know if it was to somebody in school or
5 something that she'd tried to commit suicide and
6 obviously the social work got in touch with me right
7 away and spoke to me about that, that obviously that
8 I would need to keep an eye on her, but I never saw any
9 signs whatsoever.

10 Q. When the social work told you about this, this was the
11 first that you'd become aware of this?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. What did you do as a result?

14 A. Spent a lot of sleepless nights. I slept on the couch
15 down the stair for about the first week, because like
16 I had big double doors and her bedroom is like here, so
17 as soon as she came out her bedroom, you either go up
18 the stairs or passed by to go the kitchen I would see
19 her, because I was always worried sick, is she going to
20 do it.

21 But I never saw any signs whatsoever -- I know at
22 one point she said something about a mark on her arm.
23 I never saw it.

24 Q. Did you speak to her about what had led her to do that?

25 A. I did -- I spoke to her -- it wasn't right away, I spoke

1 to her about it. I did speak to her about it and she
2 said that -- well, everybody thought she was smarter
3 than what she was and everybody's going to be
4 disappointed in her because she's not smart as what
5 everybody thinks and I said, "Nobody's asking you to be
6 really smart, hen, you only do your best", because
7 obviously this was all round about exam time and I said,
8 "You can only do your best", so that's just what I took
9 this was the reasoning for that statement.

10 Q. You say that you didn't speak to her right away about
11 it, why not?

12 A. What do you mean? Why did I not speak to her about it?
13 Because I was told not to.

14 Q. Who told you?

15 A. The social work had spoke to me and they asked me just
16 to keep an eye on her.

17 Q. And not to speak to her --

18 A. No, because they were dealing with it.

19 Q. When you say they were dealing with that, what were they
20 doing?

21 A. I don't know, I couldn't tell you, something, I don't
22 know. Obviously I take it her social worker was
23 speaking to her about it, do you know what I mean? But
24 obviously my link worker had came and after that and
25 spoke to me and said that I can speak to -- did I speak

1 to her about it? I said, "No, nobody told me I was to
2 speak to her, you told me not to because ..." I told
3 them what the social work had said to me and they said,
4 "No, that's fine, you can", so I did.

5 Q. You say at the top of page 15 that she was referred to
6 CAMHS at that point?

7 A. I said she was?

8 Q. You say in your statement.

9 A. Oh right, sorry.

10 Q. It's coming up at paragraph 69, you say she was referred
11 to CAMHS?

12 A. Yeah, the social work had said that they had arranged
13 for her to speak to somebody, yeah. I didn't deal with
14 any of that.

15 Q. So they organised that?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You say that you went with her to the meeting at CAMHS?
18 But you sat outside, I think.

19 A. Yeah, that's right, yeah.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I was in with her at first and then when we came in,
22 introduced ourselves, then I sat outside.

23 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 72 that you definitely felt
24 like you weren't given enough support over this time?

25 A. Well, not really, because I mean you're talking about

1 somebody maybe killing their self. For all I never seen
2 any, to tell the truth, if I'm being honest, I didn't
3 see any kind of -- her trying to do anything, do you
4 know what I mean. I never seen her depressed or
5 anything until she spoke to me at that time, no.

6 Q. Did you think that she was making up that --

7 A. Honestly? Yeah.

8 Q. Why did you think that?

9 A. Because I never seen any signs of it.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I think at one time she said that she'd actually [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]

13 Q. Uh-huh.

14 A. And there was no [REDACTED] there, because as soon as I got
15 told about it I was watching and there was nothing
16 there.

17 Q. Okay. If we go on, please, to page 16 and paragraph 77,
18 you talk about 'Linda' speaking to you a lot about her
19 past, because that bothered her and she would talk about
20 her past with her mum.

21 A. (Witness nods)

22 Q. You say:

23 "Some of the stuff she says in her statement about
24 my house is like what she would tell me it was like at
25 her mum's house."

1 A. That's correct, yes.

2 Q. What sort of things do you mean?

3 A. Like that her mum was constantly drunk every day. They

4 were always left to fend for their self. That she would

5 have to take her younger sister to neighbours and chap

6 neighbours' doors to get some food. Mum would be drunk.

7 She would throw things at them. Men would come in and

8 out the house all the time. At one point her exact

9 words were, "A man came in and I had to pull him off my

10 mum because he was raping her", so things like that.

11 Q. Okay. If we move on over the page, please, to page 17

12 and paragraphs 79 and 80, you talk there about your

13 husband's involvement and you say that he was just

14 really there as your husband. He didn't take part in

15 the day-to-day stuff with the kids. I think as you've

16 said earlier, you were the main carer?

17 A. Yeah, yeah, I was the main carer. Oh, he interacted

18 with them, I don't mean he didn't sit and talk to them

19 or anything, but I was kind of the main carer.

20 Q. You say sometimes he might give them a row if there was

21 a carry on.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. You mention at paragraph 80 that he had a severe stroke

24 just -- well, before you stopped fostering?

25 A. Well, he had a stroke in 2015, so it was a few years

1 prior to me stopping -- when did I -- I stopped in --
2 what? Was it 2018? I can't remember now.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But I know it was a wee while, yeah.

5 Q. Okay. We'll come back to that just in a moment. How
6 was your husband -- was he badly affected by the stroke?

7 A. Yeah. He -- the stroke and the bleeding in his brain
8 actually caused severe memory loss, short-term memory
9 loss, sorry, short-term memory loss. So like you would
10 tell him something and then five minutes later he would
11 forget. He would get things mixed up like what was
12 happening maybe years and years ago, maybe 20 years ago
13 he would think it happened then.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Do you know what I mean?

16 Q. Okay. At paragraph 82 you talk about the involvement of
17 your parents once the children were with you in foster
18 care and you talk about them babysitting your foster
19 children?

20 A. If needed, yeah.

21 Q. Okay. Would they do that together or would it be just
22 your mum or just your dad?

23 A. No. Basically they would be together. My dad never
24 babysat on his own. Or it would be just my mum or it
25 would be my mum and dad together, but that was only on

1 a very rare occasion because -- do you know what I mean,
2 I didn't go anywhere to need babysitters.

3 Q. Why was it that your dad didn't babysit on his own?

4 A. Because that's one of the things we got taught at
5 training.

6 Q. What --

7 A. That for the sake -- for the child's safety and for the
8 man -- any man, not just your parent, for their safety,
9 that -- don't leave children with men on their own.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. It was something we were always very, very aware of.

12 Q. Okay. If we move on to page 19 and paragraph 90, you
13 talk there about contact that 'Linda' and her sister had
14 with her family and you say you were just left to manage
15 all of that?

16 A. Sometimes, yes. Sometimes the social work -- maybe
17 a social worker would be off sick, their social worker,
18 whatever may be, and arrangements had been made. So
19 rather than the kids get let down, I would say to social
20 work, "Well, I'll just do it then", because it's not
21 fair for them.

22 Q. Where did they go and see their family?

23 A. We would take them in over to their gran's house.

24 Q. Okay, so that's their grandmother's house?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Can you remember how regular that was?

2 A. It started off once every two weeks and then the social
3 work decided to change it to once a month.

4 Q. Okay. Then did it go down to four times a year?

5 A. They changed it then, yeah, to like three monthly.

6 Q. I think you'll know that 'Linda' says in her statement
7 that it was you that asked for the contact to be
8 reduced.

9 A. I can't ask for things like that.

10 Q. Okay. What's your understanding of why it was reduced?

11 A. The social work, as far as I'm aware, my understanding
12 is that the social work reduced the contact with gran
13 because she was constantly drunk.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. She was -- when the kids went there, she was drunk.

16 Q. Okay. If we go over the page to page 20 and
17 paragraph 95, you talk about your visits from your link
18 worker.

19 A. (Witness nods)

20 Q. You talk about having a link worker called Simon?

21 A. Simon, yes.

22 Q. Did you have him for a long time or --

23 A. 17 years.

24 Q. Then after that did it change or did you have somebody
25 before him?

1 A. No, no, Simon was my link worker all the way through and
2 then the last few years Simon retired and I got another
3 link worker and ... I can't remember his name.

4 Q. Okay. That's fine. You say that to begin with he would
5 visit once a week?

6 A. Who?

7 Q. Simon.

8 A. Simon? Yeah. Right at the very beginning when you very
9 first start fostering, yeah, but then your visits from
10 your link worker would be once every two weeks unless
11 you phoned for him.

12 Q. Okay. So was it always once a fortnight?

13 A. They would say once a fortnight but they could be once
14 a week, they could be there twice a week, they could be
15 there -- there was occasions where it would be a month
16 maybe before you saw them.

17 Q. Okay. What would happen at the visits with your link
18 worker? Was it sit down and chat?

19 A. He would come in and sit and talk to me obviously about
20 is there any issues? As I said earlier on, we kept
21 a journal, a diary, and if there was any kind of events,
22 anything -- not day-to-day silly things, but anything
23 that went on, you would record it and you would speak if
24 there was anything in that, is there any issues. I mean
25 just things you wanted to talk about.

1 Q. Okay. Would he look at this diary himself?

2 A. Of course, yeah.

3 Q. Okay. You say of course the social workers for the

4 children would also visit?

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. Then you say in this part of your statement:

7 "They would just pop in unannounced."

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Do you mean Simon --

10 A. No, no, the kids' social work. If they were passing

11 they would pop in.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. You also had like -- what's it called -- unannounced

14 visits from social work as well. Could be your link

15 worker, it could be his boss, it could be somebody who

16 works in the office, just unannounced visits as well.

17 Q. How often would the unannounced visits from Simon or his

18 manager happen, roughly?

19 A. Well, the official unannounced visits? They could

20 happen ... once maybe every month or so.

21 LADY SMITH: Sorry, you've just said "official unannounced

22 visits". I wondered if you meant that?

23 A. Yeah, because when I say about the other ones about they

24 would pop in, the other social workers, that wasn't

25 because that was an official thing they had to do. It

1 was because they popped in to see the kids. They were
2 maybe passing my house, they would come in.

3 LADY SMITH: If it was a social worker who was one of the
4 children's social workers and they just popped in, how
5 long would they be there for?

6 A. Half an hour? Could be a wee bit longer.

7 LADY SMITH: I suppose the children might not be there?

8 A. Sometimes the kids were there, yeah. They usually were
9 because they usually -- as I always say, they always
10 picked their times to come in at dinner time, when
11 you're going to feed them.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 MS INNES: You describe at the end of paragraph 96 that they
14 always came at the most stupid times.

15 A. Exactly, yeah. Dinner time when you're going to put
16 your dinner out at 5, 6 o'clock, do you know what
17 I mean, you're maybe going to put your dinner down and
18 the door would go and it would be them, do you know what
19 I mean.

20 Q. Okay. In paragraph 95 you say there that one of the
21 social workers lived close by and she would pop in all
22 the time.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. It was as you've said just when you were trying to put
25 the dinner out and you say it was normally just for five

1 minutes?

2 A. It could be, yeah. I mean it's not completely like
3 black and white this happened this time every time at
4 that time or that -- it was just so different. It was
5 just like she was passing by, chapped the door, "Hiya,
6 how are you? Everything okay? Hi girls, how are yous
7 doing?" Talk to all the girls, "How are yous all
8 doing?" And then she would go. Or she could sit and
9 talk for half an hour. There wasn't any set --
10 I couldn't say, sometimes came for ten minutes,
11 sometimes came for half an hour.

12 Q. Over the page you talk about going to panels?

13 A. Children's panels, yeah.

14 Q. You say you had the opportunity to speak at those and
15 you would raise concerns. Did you feel that what you
16 said at the panels was listened to and taken onboard?

17 A. Well, they listened to you but whether they done -- they
18 never always done -- you never knew after that what
19 would happen, because obviously what happens at the
20 panels are more or less discussed with the social work
21 department. Sometimes you felt as if you were
22 getting -- like the kind of -- like the brush off,
23 "Okay, we heard you", but ... do you know what I mean?

24 Q. You talk about the girls having forms to fill out.

25 A. That's correct. "Have your say" they were called.

1 Q. How did they go about filling those out?

2 A. They just filled them out themselves in their rooms and

3 they would have an envelope to put them in.

4 Q. You say that sometimes they would come through and

5 say -- ask you if what they'd written looked okay?

6 A. Okay, because it would be, "Fine". And I'd say, "Okay,

7 you can write more than that". Half the time they felt

8 they were a bother.

9 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page you talk about records

10 and the diary that you've mentioned. At paragraph 103

11 you say that you shredded all the diaries after 'Linda'

12 and her sister left?

13 A. That's correct, after all the kids left, yeah.

14 Q. You say that you destroyed all photographs that had

15 'Linda' in them?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Why did you do that?

18 A. Because ... I was upset with her.

19 Q. Okay. We'll come in a moment to the circumstances in

20 which she left, but at paragraph 104 you refer to

21 knowing that she had a diary?

22 A. That's correct, yeah.

23 Q. Okay. What did you know about it at the time?

24 A. That she was saying things about me in it. One of the

25 girls had came and said, "Do you know, FDL keeps

1 a diary?" I said, "Yes"

2 "She's saying things about you in it".

3 I said:

4 "That's fine, that's what it's there for."

5 Q. Did you ever see what she'd written in her diary at the

6 time?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Did she keep it in her room or somewhere else?

9 A. In her room as far as I'm aware.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Well, it was in her room, because they had to send back

12 for it once she left.

13 Q. Yes, you tell us about that in your statement.

14 If we go to page 23 and I think at paragraph 109 you

15 talk about the day that 'Linda' left your care and you

16 describe that she left and never came home from school.

17 A. That's correct, yeah.

18 Q. Why was it that she never came back? What happened?

19 A. She never come back because she had made an allegation

20 about another man -- member of my family.

21 Q. We know, because you tell us in your statement, that

22 'Linda' had made allegations of sexual abuse against

23 your dad?

24 A. That's correct, yes.

25 Q. What happened? So obviously 'Linda's' sister was living

1 with you at the time?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Did you have other children in foster care --

4 A. I did, yes. I had another two.

5 Q. Okay. Had they ever lived with your mum and dad, these

6 other children?

7 A. 'Linda's' sister, yeah.

8 Q. Yes, but the other girls --

9 A. No, no.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. They had stayed like overnights and things, but they

12 didn't actually live as in foster carers, foster kids.

13 Q. Okay. What happened then after 'Linda' had made these

14 allegations? What happened to her sister? Did she stay

15 with you or not?

16 A. Well, exactly what happened was obviously she went to

17 school and she didn't come home from school and I was

18 wondering where she was and I turned around and I seen

19 two of the other kids' social workers coming in, and

20 obviously when you see that you know something's wrong.

21 They obviously they came in, had said that FDL had

22 made a sexual allegation against another member of my

23 family, so obviously they were there to take the kids,

24 which was my younger one and an older one and 'Linda's'

25 sister.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. But they refused to go, so social work asked me would
3 I kind of please speak to the girls. They were crying
4 and could I help them, can I pack some bags. And so
5 obviously that's what I done. I went up, helped them to
6 pack bags. 'Linda's' sister was just no way she was
7 leaving, she's not going, she's not -- so I had to sit
8 there with the social worker and I had to speak to her
9 and say, do you know what I mean, "You need to do this,
10 it's what you need to do", you know what I mean.

11 Q. Did all of the girls end up leaving your care at that
12 time?

13 A. No.

14 Q. No?

15 A. (Pause)

16 Q. It's okay.

17 A. My oldest, no, she wouldn't leave. She refused to
18 leave.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. They said they would get the police to come and remove
21 her. She said she didn't care what they done. She said
22 this was her home and she wasn't leaving anywhere.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And obviously then that started 'Linda's' sister off
25 again and, "If she doesn't leave, why do I need to

1 leave?" So it was just a whole ... but no, she didn't
2 leave. She left my house ... two year ago.
3 Q. Okay. How old was the oldest one at that time?
4 A. At that time she was 16.
5 Q. Okay. After this happened, did you carry on fostering
6 or is that when you stopped?
7 A. No, I didn't officially stop, no. I was still --
8 because obviously my oldest one, she was a foster child.
9 Q. Okay.
10 A. So I was still a foster carer, yeah.
11 Q. Okay.
12 A. But I didn't get any other kids in or anything.
13 I wasn't -- there were no more kids going to be coming
14 into my house, but I still had obviously one left.
15 Q. The oldest one?
16 A. Yeah.
17 Q. Okay.
18 A. And then 'Linda's' sister obviously was back and forward
19 with the social work.
20 Q. Okay. You tell us about that in your statement.
21 Can I move on, please, to page 28 and paragraph 130,
22 where you refer to your awareness of the allegations
23 that 'Linda' made at the time. You say you can't answer
24 anything about them as you weren't there. You say:
25 "I do have my opinion on it."

1 I wonder what your opinion is?

2 A. Well, once she came to live with me ... I know what she
3 said, the sexual allegation, but -- and I read some of
4 the statement, some of it that she'd said about being
5 frightened and this and that, and I never saw any of
6 that because it was like -- how can I say my granda's
7 ... that's my opinion, but I never saw absolutely
8 nothing, do you know what I mean? That she was shying
9 away from him? Do you know what I mean?

10 It was a constant fight in my house, "Can I stay
11 with my granny and granda tonight?" "No, it's this one's
12 turn". Do you know what I mean? So she was always
13 wanting to stay there as well. If he came in, it was,
14 "Hiya", and it was always "gran" and "granda". So ...
15 that's what I mean about my opinion is ... I didn't see
16 anything like that.

17 Q. Okay. Are you saying that you think that what she said
18 wasn't true?

19 A. I don't believe it's true, no.

20 Q. Why do you think she said it, if it wasn't true?

21 A. I can't say what's in her head. I can only tell you
22 I don't believe it's true. I can't tell you what she's
23 thinking.

24 Q. Okay. You go on in your statement to refer to the
25 various things that 'Linda' has said in her statement

1 and you provide a detailed response to what's said, so
2 I'm not going to go through all of that again. I just
3 want to ask you about some aspects of it.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. On page 29 at paragraph 136, 'Linda' talks there about
6 food and being fed takeaways all the time and sitting on
7 the floor to eat. What's your response to that?

8 A. Did we get takeaways sometimes? Yeah, like in a normal
9 family. As in for sitting on the floor eating? The
10 house we were in, no, because I had a big six --
11 an open-plan house and I had a big six-seat -- we all
12 sat at a big six-seater dining room table. Was there
13 a time we were all sitting about the floor? Sometimes
14 I would have things like we would all pick in the
15 supermarket like sausage rolls, you know, picnic
16 things and we would put it up the table.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. What we call was like a buffet night kind of thing. We
19 done silly things like that. But in that -- in my other
20 house that -- my prior house, we didn't have a dining
21 room table and sometimes one of them would be maybe on
22 the floor or -- but they were never -- it wasn't like
23 the way she's saying like they were made to sit on the
24 floor because that wasn't the case, no, and we did get
25 takeaway because we were at the caravan from a Friday

1 till the Sunday.

2 Q. You had a caravan and you went there at the weekends,
3 you tell us?

4 A. Yeah, and we went there six weeks in the summer.

5 Q. If we move on to page 31 and paragraph 144, 'Linda'
6 speaks there about having to do various chores in the
7 house and that if it wasn't done to the correct
8 standard, they would be made to do it again, be shouted
9 at and sent to bed.

10 A. Absolutely not.

11 Their chores -- one was to load the dishwasher, one
12 was to empty the dishwasher. I don't see where they
13 could do that wrong that I had to tell them to do it
14 again. That was it really, do you know what I mean.
15 And we had like a chart up because they were always
16 fighting, "No, it was me that emptied it last night",
17 "No, I did it". But they had a chore list.

18 Q. If we move to page 33 and paragraph 158, 'Linda' speaks
19 about a time when she got nits and all of them got it
20 because it wasn't treated?

21 A. No, it wasn't because it wasn't treated. They did all
22 have nits.

23 Q. I think she says that it went on for longer than you
24 say, but I think you say that this was a problem for
25 about three months?

1 A. Yeah, it was.

2 Q. Why did it last that long?

3 A. Because I couldn't get rid of it, I just could not --

4 the girls -- obviously I had four girls and every one of

5 their hairs were all down near their bottoms. I got

6 the -- you know the stuff from the chemist and stuff.

7 I was trying that. I even got the stuff that you would

8 put on to prevent them, and obviously told them, "You

9 need to keep your hair tied up". One of the girls would

10 kind of go home and have access or when she was with

11 family she would come maybe back with nits, do you know

12 what I mean. So then we had to do them all again,

13 so ...

14 Q. Okay. On page 37 at paragraph 180 'Linda' speaks there

15 about being put outside as punishment.

16 A. Sorry, say that again?

17 Q. 'Linda' speaks about being put outside as punishment.

18 A. Punishment? Outside where?

19 Q. She says -- so it's on the screen there. At

20 paragraph 180 she says that you would throw them outside

21 as punishment?

22 A. No.

23 Q. She refers to one time when she was out with a towel

24 only?

25 A. A towel on?

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. Right. That statement there, right away back when

3 'Linda' was first taken away from my house and she made

4 some of these allegations about me, this being put

5 outside with a towel, she said at the time it was one of

6 the other girls I had done that to and that I'd put her

7 outside, out in -- with a towel on and that. And now

8 when I see this statement now, now it's changed that

9 it's her I put outside. But that's not true. I never

10 put any of my weans outside.

11 Q. Over the page on page 38 at paragraph 183 and also 185

12 she talks about you calling her and her sister names

13 so --

14 A. That's not true.

15 Q. -- she uses the word "spastic", "mongo", "weirdo".

16 A. As I said before, the only person that used that word

17 was her herself to my youngest one. She had behavioural

18 problems and would have temper tantrums and that's what

19 she would call her.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And obviously she'd get into trouble from me when

22 I actually caught her doing it.

23 Q. If we move on to page 39 and to the bottom of that page,

24 paragraph 192, you refer there to 'Linda' saying that

25 when her brother came to stay with you she mentions he

1 had a lot of behavioural issues and she says that you
2 would slap him or drag him up the stairs.

3 A. No, that's absolutely not true, no.

4 Q. Did you ever slap any of the children?

5 A. I've never put my hands on any of my foster kids.

6 Q. If we move on to page 41, paragraph 203, 'Linda' says in
7 her statement I think that you had a problem with
8 alcohol?

9 A. Yes, she did, yes.

10 Q. You're quoting there something that she says, that you
11 would drink whisky and vodka and she refers on a number
12 of occasions in her statement to you being drunk and
13 aggressive. Is that correct?

14 A. No, it's not correct, no.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. No, I have a -- I have pancreatitis, which I was
17 diagnosed with when I was 17 so I've never been able to
18 drink, as in excess drink. Yeah, a Friday night,
19 especially when we went to the caravan, I would have
20 two, the most I would have was three vodkas when my mum
21 was there.

22 Q. Would a lesser amount of alcohol have a greater effect
23 on you because of your illness?

24 A. Yes, it would, yeah, because I tried it when I was a lot
25 younger, when I was very young, which ended me up in

1 hospital, because it irritates the pancreas.

2 Q. What sort of effect would the two to three drinks have
3 on you?

4 A. It was fine, it was only small drinks because I knew
5 what I could have. And the social work knew about that,
6 because FDL actually brought that up at the time. She
7 asked me why I was allowed to have a drink when her mum
8 wasn't.

9 Q. When you say the social work knew about it, did she
10 speak about that --

11 A. No, I did.

12 Q. Okay. And what was their reaction?

13 A. Not any different from you going home and having a glass
14 of wine.

15 Q. Okay. Right.

16 Moving on, please, to page 44, paragraph 219,
17 'Linda' says in her statement that you would sometimes
18 say that if they were moved from your house they would
19 have to go to a children's unit and that they were
20 unwanted and she talks about you pretending to phone the
21 social work and ask for them to be put into a children's
22 unit. Did you do that?

23 A. No.

24 The conversation about phoning the social work
25 department was I had said to -- I've always said to all

1 the kids they didn't have to be there. You know what
2 I mean? If they wanted to move, I would phone the
3 social work for them. Do you know what I mean, they are
4 not forced, because FDL had brought that up because
5 she said that I only foster them for the money and
6 I don't love them. And obviously we had a conversation
7 about that and I had said to them that's not true,
8 because there's lots of foster kids out there. I wanted
9 you here, that's why you are here. Do you know what
10 I mean? I said:

11 "But if you didn't want to be here, you know you can
12 either speak to your social worker or tell me and I'm
13 phone the social work."

14 And that was the only conversation about me phoning
15 the social work, about that.

16 Q. Then if we move on, please, to page 51 and to
17 paragraph 251, you're responding there I think to
18 a question about motivation. What do you think
19 'Linda's' motivation is in saying the things that --

20 A. That she said? Money.

21 Q. Why did you think that?

22 A. Because her actions are showing it.

23 Q. Okay. What actions?

24 A. Well, basically, as far as I'm aware she's already had
25 money and a conversation with her sister when I had

1 bumped into her to say that FDL had said to her and
2 some of the other kids if they've to say the same as her
3 and they'll all get money, but not to worry because she
4 would tell them what to say. And then obviously a phone
5 call I received with myself and my mum from a lawyer
6 from Glasgow City Council, asking us to be witnesses
7 against FDL in a -- that she's obviously filing for
8 money again.

9 Q. You think that she's maybe made a claim against Glasgow
10 City Council?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is that recently that you and your mum have been phoned?

13 A. Well, in between me giving my last statement and now.

14 Q. And now?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So since 27 July?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay. You mentioned a conversation with 'Linda's'
19 sister about an agreement that they would all get
20 a share of money?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Roughly when was that?

23 A. They had left -- they'd only been out my house about six
24 month and I was on a day trip -- bus day trip, when
25 I heard FDL -- sorry --

1 Q. 'Linda's' sister?

2 A. 'Linda's' sister shouting on me and she came running
3 crying, "Please take (unclear)", that kind of stuff and
4 that's when she said -- she said FDL had been with her
5 but she ran away when she saw us, and I never saw her.
6 And that's when she had said that that's what FDL had
7 said. She'd asked, "I hate her, she's asked us all" --
8 and she asked other kids that were in my house and that
9 and somebody in another house would they say that, and
10 she would tell them what will to say, not to worry.

11 Q. I think you mention that in your statement, so that was
12 about six months after --

13 A. They left, yeah.

14 MS INNES: -- the girls left, okay.

15 Right, 'Susan', I don't have any more questions for
16 you.

17 There are no applications, my Lady.

18 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
19 questions?

20 'Susan', that completes the questions we have for
21 you this morning. Thank you very much for coming to
22 engage with us and listening as carefully as you have
23 done to the questions we had.

24 A. Thank you.

25 LADY SMITH: I'm sure you'll be glad to know that I can now

1 let you go and relax for the rest of Friday.

2 A. Thank you.

3 (The witness withdrew)

4 LADY SMITH: We'll take the morning break now, Ms Innes, and

5 the plan is that there will be an oral witness to follow

6 the break; is that right?

7 MS INNES: That's correct, my Lady.

8 LADY SMITH: Very well. Thank you.

9 (11.38 am)

10 (A short break)

11 (11.57 am)

12 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

13 MS INNES: My Lady, the next witness is Sheila Davies.

14 Sheila Davies was a foster carer for Grampian Regional

15 Council and then Aberdeen City Council from about 1989

16 until she resigned on 8 May 2003. Aberdeen City Council

17 is the responsible authority.

18 On 31 May 2018, Ms Davies was convicted of six

19 charges of assault in respect of six complainers, of

20 which an applicant with the pseudonym 'Jess' was one.

21 'Jess' gave evidence on Day 326, 23 September 2022. At

22 that time, reference was made to the conviction, which

23 is at JUS-000000082. I don't know whether Your Ladyship

24 would find it helpful to look at the conviction again?

25 LADY SMITH: It might be appropriate to put it up just now.

1 MS INNES: If we can look at this, we see I think the
2 extract "Conviction". We see on the first page the
3 charges, so two of assault to injury and four of
4 assault. The disposal, as Your Ladyship will see, is
5 a community payback order, 240 hours to be completed
6 within one year.

7 LADY SMITH: Yes, I think at that time 240 hours would have
8 been the maximum, if I remember rightly.

9 MS INNES: Your Ladyship will know better than me, I think.

10 LADY SMITH: I used to have more contact with these things,
11 but I think so.

12 Thank you.

13 MS INNES: Then if we move to, please, to page 3.

14 Your Ladyship will see the charges there. Again, just
15 in respect of the first charge, Ms Davies was found not
16 guilty in respect of that charge.

17 Charge 2 wasn't insisted on by the Crown, I think it
18 was withdrawn by the Crown.

19 She was convicted of charge 3 as amended, as we see
20 in handwriting.

21 She was convicted of charge 4, and charge 4 is in
22 respect of 'Jess', and Your Ladyship will see that that
23 was a conviction of assault by seizing her by the body
24 and repeatedly slapping her on the head and body.

25 LADY SMITH: That was on various occasions over a period of

1 months?

2 MS INNES: Yes, [REDACTED] 1995 to [REDACTED] 1995. It coincides

3 with the time that 'Jess' was in the care of Ms Davies,

4 so that's the time that she was in foster care with her.

5 LADY SMITH: Yes.

6 MS INNES: Charge 5 was withdrawn.

7 Then Ms Davies was convicted of charges 6, 7, and

8 then, on page 5, 8 and 9.

9 Overall, the earliest date is 26 June 1993 and the

10 latest is 31 December 2001.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

12 MS INNES: Thank you.

13 Sheila Davies (affirmed)

14 LADY SMITH: I hope you find the first question I have for

15 you an easy one. How would you like me to address you?

16 By your first name or as Ms Davies?

17 A. First name's fine.

18 LADY SMITH: Is that all right? Thank you.

19 Sheila, it sounds as though you are in a good

20 position for that microphone. If I could ask you to try

21 and keep that position it will be really helpful, so we

22 hear you properly through the sound system.

23 A. Okay.

24 LADY SMITH: That red folder on the desk has a typed copy of

25 your statement in it, the one you signed. On the screen

1 you'll also see your statement is coming up. We'll go
2 to different parts of it as we need to discuss it with
3 you. You might find it helpful to use them but you
4 don't have to. It's up to you. They're there if you
5 find that useful.

6 Otherwise, Sheila, can I just assure you, I do
7 appreciate that this is a difficult task that you're
8 going to have to do in the next hour or so, coming to
9 talk about what are no doubt distressing memories for
10 you in various respects is tough. If there's anything
11 I can do to help, such as by giving you a break if you
12 need it, whether sitting where you are or leaving the
13 room for a little while, you must let me know.

14 A. Thank you.

15 LADY SMITH: Or if there's anything else I can do to help
16 you give your evidence as clearly and carefully as you
17 can, please tell me, would you?

18 A. Okay.

19 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes and
20 she'll take it from there.

21 A. (Witness nods)

22 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

23 MS INNES: My Lady, although this witness has a conviction,
24 I'm just conscious that there may be questions that --

25 LADY SMITH: Yes, I think that's right.

1 Sheila, this is a public inquiry. It's not a court,
2 and I know you're very familiar with the court setting
3 and what happens in the court but our function and
4 purposes are different. However, it is a public forum,
5 you're giving evidence in public, a transcript is being
6 made of your evidence and it's important that you
7 understand that the transcript of your evidence will be
8 available outwith the Inquiry afterwards.

9 I need to warn you that if you're asked any
10 questions, the answers to which could incriminate you in
11 relation to matters of which you were not convicted when
12 you were on trial, then you're not obliged to answer
13 those questions.

14 A. Okay.

15 LADY SMITH: Do you understand that?

16 A. Yes.

17 LADY SMITH: We'll see how we go and if you have any queries
18 or doubts at any time, whether we're in an area covered
19 by your convictions or not, please speak up. Don't sit
20 there worrying about it. All right?

21 A. Okay.

22 LADY SMITH: Very well.

23 Ms Innes.

24 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

25 Questions from Ms Innes

1 MS INNES: Sheila we understand you were born in 1959. Is
2 that right?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. I'm going to refer first of all to the statement that
5 you've given to the Inquiry and we give it the reference
6 WIT-1-000001004.

7 If we look first of all at the last page of this
8 statement. At paragraph 188 we see that it says there:
9 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
10 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
11 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
12 true."

13 I believe you signed your statement on 3 June 2022;
14 is that right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I'm going to go back to the beginning of your statement
17 and you tell us at paragraph 2 that you have an SVQ
18 level 3 in childcare and education and another SVQ
19 level 4 in management. You say that you can't remember
20 exactly when you obtained those qualifications, other
21 than it was in the early 1990s. Was that after you had
22 become a foster carer?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Why was it that you decided to become a foster
25 carer?

1 A. I think I just wanted to help children and I wanted to
2 work from home, because I had a small child and I didn't
3 want to go out to work and it was one of the things --
4 I became a childminder and a foster carer at the same
5 time.

6 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 4 that you applied and
7 became a registered childminder and foster carer when
8 your son was about three.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. So that was in about 1988 or 1989.

11 You say over the page at page 2 and paragraph 5 that
12 it was after you applied to be a childminder that
13 fostering came up. Am I right in thinking that your
14 initial thought was doing childminding --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- and then was it the social work that suggested that
17 you might consider fostering?

18 A. I actually don't remember who suggested it. I don't
19 know whether it just came up in conversation and
20 I thought that I would try it.

21 Q. Okay.

22 LADY SMITH: As far as your childminding was concerned, was
23 that through a business that you set up initially?

24 A. As a childminder you're self-employed, so it was in fact
25 a business.

1 LADY SMITH: Right. And did children come to you for
2 childminding only through social work or did they come
3 through other ways as well?

4 A. I never actually child minded any child through social
5 work. It was all through private -- so it was parents
6 going to work or some was through college, so they were
7 going to study.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MS INNES: You say that you decided you wanted to become
10 a foster carer so the social work ran both registrations
11 together. So although you were doing private
12 childminding, you would need to be registered with the
13 Local Authority.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay.

16 You say at paragraph 6 that you suppose that you
17 decided that you wanted to foster children because you
18 wanted to help kids and because you wanted to work at
19 home. Why was it that you wanted to help kids, were you
20 interested in working with children?

21 A. I can't really remember exactly why I wanted to --
22 I wanted to be involved with children. Why, I really
23 can't remember, but I know that I wanted to be involved
24 with children and helping children.

25 Q. Okay. Then you say at paragraph 7 that you had a series

1 of interviews and meetings with a social worker?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. This person was -- you describe them as being from the

4 under-eights section?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Were you looking to foster younger children then?

7 A. No, the under-eights section was the childminding. It

8 was specifically looking at registering me as

9 a childminder.

10 Q. I see. After that, in order to become a foster carer,

11 did you then have other social workers coming to visit

12 you, to assess you?

13 A. I can't remember. It's such a long time ago. I mean

14 I know that they ran the registrations together, so

15 I think the reports that the under-eights section did

16 was passed to the fostering. But I can't remember if

17 I actually met with anybody from the fostering. I just

18 can't remember.

19 Q. Okay. At paragraph 8 you say that you were living in

20 Dyce at the time in a two-bedroom ground floor flat and

21 you mention that your mother stayed with you and your

22 son?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So in terms of fostering, where were you going to

25 accommodate any foster children?

1 A. My mother had one room, my son had the other room, so
2 the foster carers would have been sharing with my son.
3 Q. The foster children would be sharing with your son?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. Okay. So your mother had one room, so where were you
6 sleeping?
7 A. I had a bed in the living room.
8 Q. Okay. You say that at the time you wanted to foster
9 babies who were about the same age as your son?
10 A. That was the plan.
11 Q. Okay. Why was it that that was your plan?
12 A. Because that was the knowledge that I had. I hadn't
13 really a lot of knowledge of older children, so I wanted
14 to stick to what I thought I was good at.
15 Q. Then you talk about the childminding at paragraph 9 and
16 you say as a childminder you could run your business
17 however you felt was best and you say you could take as
18 many children as was allowed, which was 12 at that time,
19 including your own, or you could just take one.
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. The maximum at that time for childminding was 12?
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. Okay. When you started childminding, what's the maximum
24 number that you had?
25 A. I can't remember. I think it was possibly one or two

1 child-minded children I had.

2 Q. Okay. If we move on to page 3 and paragraph 11, you say

3 that you think that you were rushed through the

4 application process?

5 A. Yes. They told me that they had a baby who was ready to

6 come into foster care and they didn't have any

7 placements for her to go into, and I think it was only

8 a matter of weeks, because the child-minding assessments

9 had been running for a few weeks before that.

10 Q. Okay. You think that the application process to become

11 a foster carer took weeks rather than months is what you

12 say?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. At paragraph 12 you talk about your link worker

15 and was that a social worker who was working with you --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- rather than, working with the children?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Over the time that you were a foster carer, did you have

20 the same link worker for a long period of time or did

21 the link worker change?

22 A. They did change. I can't remember how long we had them

23 for. Some were for years, some were for a short time.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I think I had about approximately six or eight.

1 I couldn't give you the definite amount, but
2 approximately that amount.

3 Q. Okay. You say that you had regular meetings, so
4 focusing on your link worker, you had regular meetings
5 with your link worker?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How often roughly would you see your link worker?

8 A. It was reasonably regular. It wasn't every week, but
9 I would say maybe three, four weeks. More regular if
10 there was any problems with a placement.

11 Q. Okay. Was your link worker somebody that you would
12 contact if there were problems?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. How did you feel your relationship with the link worker
15 was? Did you feel that it was helpful and supportive or
16 not?

17 A. Most of them were great. There was only one that I felt
18 I had absolutely no relationship with at all.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And I asked to have a different link worker and I think
21 they were changed within six to eight months.

22 Q. Okay. What was it that made you feel that you didn't
23 have a good relationship with this person?

24 A. I just felt I couldn't speak to her about anything.
25 I felt uncomfortable speaking to her and I don't know

1 whether it was a clash of personalities or what.

2 I don't know, I just felt that there was no

3 relationship there at all.

4 Q. Okay. You say those meetings were generally within your

5 house, so does that apply to your link worker, you would

6 meet them at your house?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You say that these visits continued throughout the whole

9 time that you were fostering?

10 A. Yes, they did.

11 Q. At paragraph 13 you mention that your mum was assessed

12 as part of your fostering application?

13 A. She was, yes.

14 Q. Is that because she was living with you at the time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. At paragraph 14 you mention your thoughts on the

17 application process and you say you think it was okay,

18 although there's a lot more involved now. Then you go

19 on to say:

20 "I think there would need to be a lot more

21 preparation with older children especially."

22 A. (Witness nods)

23 Q. What are your thoughts about that? What sort of

24 preparation?

25 A. I think for my situation, because I didn't have any

1 experience of having older children or working with
2 older children, I just found that a lot more
3 challenging.

4 LADY SMITH: Sheila, just thinking back, if I have this
5 right, your own child would have been about four years
6 old when you began fostering?

7 A. I think he was still three.

8 LADY SMITH: Still three at that stage. You were about 30;
9 is that right?

10 A. Approximately, yeah.

11 LADY SMITH: So both of you were quite young?

12 A. Yeah.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 MS INNES: We'll come back in a moment to the ages of
15 children that were placed with you and that sort of
16 thing.

17 If we can move on to a section on training, you say
18 that after you were approved as a childminder and foster
19 carer you became a member of the Child Minding
20 Association and the Foster Care Association, and why was
21 it that you joined the Foster Care Association?

22 A. I think because I was a single parent, I felt I needed
23 the support, advice, and just somebody to -- other
24 people to get ideas from.

25 Q. Were there meetings of the Foster Care Association in

1 Aberdeen?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. How regular were they?

4 A. I think it was monthly meetings.

5 Q. Okay. What was the purpose of the meetings?

6 A. They would occasionally have speakers in from the --

7 maybe a social worker, different -- a child

8 psychologist, that kind of thing. Sometimes it was just

9 to meet up, have a coffee, have a chat and compare

10 notes.

11 Q. So sometimes it was a bit of a support?

12 A. A bit of a?

13 Q. Support.

14 A. Support, yeah.

15 Q. You also say that getting that support was important to

16 you and keeping your knowledge up to date was something

17 that was important to you too?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. If we go down to paragraph 19, you say that you don't

20 think there was any training that you had to do before

21 you became a foster carer or ongoing?

22 A. I honestly can't remember. I do remember attending

23 conferences and things like that, but I can't remember.

24 I don't think they were compulsory, but I couldn't say

25 for definite if they were or not.

1 Q. Okay. Was there training provided by Aberdeen City
2 Council or Grampian Regional Council before that?

3 A. I -- I honestly can't remember. I don't think there was
4 anything leading up to the registration to become
5 a foster carer.

6 Q. Okay. Afterwards, can you remember there being anything
7 put on by the council?

8 A. There would have been. But because I went to things
9 through the Child Minding Association, the Foster Care
10 Association as well, I can't tell you which organisation
11 actually put what on.

12 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 21, you talk about training
13 on child protection and you say that you completed that
14 periodically because it changed over the years?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. That's something that you updated yourself on?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. You describe yourself as having been on countless
19 different courses?

20 A. (Witness nods)

21 Yes, I was.

22 Q. Over the top of the page at paragraph 22, you say that
23 you can't remember receiving training on disciplining
24 children or managing their behaviour?

25 A. (Witness nods)

1 Q. You can't remember that being --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- something that you received training on?

4 A. I think I would have done -- maybe not specifically

5 disciplining, but probably about behaviours and

6 different behaviours. I remember going on training

7 courses for that, but not specifically for disciplining

8 children.

9 Q. Okay. Can you remember if you were given any training

10 about restraint, for example, restraining a foster

11 child?

12 A. No, I can't remember.

13 Q. At paragraph 23 you say you can't remember if there was

14 any written or verbal guidance or instructions given

15 about your role and responsibilities as a foster carer?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Can you remember being given anything like a foster

18 carer handbook?

19 A. I can't, I can't remember.

20 Q. Okay. If we look at paragraph 25, you give your

21 reflections on the training that you received. So in

22 terms of the training that you received through the

23 associations, did you feel that was adequate?

24 A. I -- I think at the time I didn't actually think about

25 it being adequate or not. It was just something that

1 was done, you know, and I wanted to do. So I can't
2 really say yes it was adequate. It was just something
3 that was part of the responsibilities.

4 Q. Okay. With the benefit of hindsight, have you had any
5 reflections on whether it was sufficient or not?

6 A. I think there's always room for improvement, for
7 learning, so ... I mean, there may be room for
8 improvement, but I think at the time it was okay, as
9 I said.

10 Q. Okay. You go on to refer to the lack of training from
11 the social work department, that you say that that and
12 the lack of information wouldn't be acceptable now. So
13 do you feel that the social work department weren't
14 doing enough in terms of training?

15 A. I can't say if that was how I felt or not, you know.
16 I was just one of these kind of people that got on with
17 things, you know. I tried my best. I always did
18 everything to the best of my ability.

19 Q. Okay. If we go down to paragraph 26, you're talking
20 there about your view of fostering. Did you see it as
21 being a job?

22 A. No, I never ever saw it as a job.

23 Q. What did you see it as?

24 A. I think I saw it as a vocation. I don't think you want
25 to work with kids or challenging children as a job.

1 I think it has to be something more than that. It has
2 to be passion. It has to be something you really want
3 to do.

4 Q. You say at paragraph 27, as you've already mentioned,
5 that when you applied to become a foster carer, your
6 idea was that you would look after children who were
7 about the same age as your son?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. But you say that you ended up doing emergency foster
10 care and you had children of all ages?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Can you remember how that happened?

13 A. No. No, I can't. I think it was by accident, but
14 I can't actually remember.

15 Q. Okay. What was it like being an emergency carer? How
16 did that work?

17 A. You would get a phone call at any time of the day or
18 night, they were looking to place a child or children,
19 and you said "yes" or "no".

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Depending on whether you had space or not.

22 Q. Did you feel that you could say no?

23 A. I think when we got the call during the night, I think
24 there was -- I did feel a little bit pressured to say
25 yes, because you always knew that -- and they would

1 always say, "We've got nowhere else for this child to
2 go". So I think there was a bit of pressure there at
3 times. Not all the time, but sometimes there was.

4 Q. Then you also mention there that you ended up taking
5 children of all ages, so were some of those older than
6 your son?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. How did you feel about that, taking older children?

9 A. I think some of them fitted in to the family and were
10 slightly less challenging than some children.

11 I think I found the boys especially difficult,
12 because they did come with a lot of -- for the want of
13 a better word -- baggage. You know, they had had some
14 trauma -- quite a lot of trauma, most of them.

15 Q. Okay. Okay. Did you feel that you were equipped to
16 look after them?

17 A. I think because it was emergency foster care and it was
18 short term, I think I was okay about it most of the
19 time.

20 Q. When you say it was emergency and it was short term,
21 sort of what period would you be expecting to look after
22 a child for?

23 A. I think when they came in as an emergency basis it was
24 generally up to three weeks.

25 Q. Okay. Did that then happen? Did they leave after three

1 weeks or not?

2 A. No. Not always. Occasionally they did. It may be that
3 they were waiting for a place to come up and they had to
4 come into care earlier than expected, you know, but in
5 general I don't think I had any child for just three
6 weeks.

7 Q. If it extended beyond the three weeks, sort of what
8 period of time are you talking about?

9 A. I had an emergency child up to two years.

10 Q. Right, okay. Was that the longest?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Other than that longer one, sort of what period
13 are you looking at? Is it months or --

14 A. It could be months, it could be longer.

15 Q. Okay. How did you feel about that, given that you were
16 doing emergency care, you would think the expectation
17 would be that the child would move on within three
18 weeks, say, but then they ended up staying much longer,
19 how did you feel?

20 A. A lot of the time it was just -- I just accepted it. We
21 just got on with life. We obviously tried to
22 accommodate them as best you can. Well, a lot of the
23 kids went to different schools, you know, had different
24 hobbies and things like that, so it was a case of
25 adjusting life for everybody.

1 Q. Okay. If we move on in page 6 to paragraph 31, you talk
2 about the fostering allowance. How did that work? Did
3 you feel that you received adequate money to provide for
4 the children and to support your home?

5 A. I -- I can't actually tell you how much I got because it
6 wasn't about the money. You know, I got a slight
7 enhancement because of the emergency foster caring, but
8 I can't actually tell you how much that was.

9 Q. Okay. Then I think you mention at paragraph 34 that you
10 were childminding as you mentioned and you also mention
11 that you received income support I think maybe for
12 a period?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. At paragraph 35 you say that there was no
15 material support, what do you mean by that?

16 A. I -- I don't know. I obviously answered a question that
17 was asked, but I wasn't sure -- I'm not sure what the
18 question was.

19 Q. Reading the rest of the paragraph, it might be about,
20 you know, having resources, so, for example, having
21 a cot or having clothes.

22 A. Mm-hmm.

23 Q. These sorts of things. Were you given help with that?

24 A. I did. I did get help. Obviously I got money towards
25 beds and to buy chest of drawers. That was for me

1 personally. Everything stayed with me -- that stayed
2 with me. But obviously there was extra money for -- you
3 know, if children came with nothing, I would get
4 an allowance for buying clothes for them. So that was
5 all obviously spent on the children.

6 Q. Okay. You say I think that you maybe built up a -- did
7 you build up a store of clothes and toys and things?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. At the bottom of this page you talk about your household
10 and you've already told us that initially you lived in
11 a flat in Dyce and I think you moved from there; is that
12 right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You moved into Aberdeen?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did you move into a house?

17 A. No, it was a flat, a three-bedroomed flat.

18 Q. Okay. Did your mum move in with you there or not?

19 A. She did, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. So when you were in the Aberdeen property, what
21 accommodation did you have for foster children then?

22 A. Actually, I think it was -- I think it was
23 a four-bedroom flat we had. I can't remember. My mum
24 did stay with a partner for a while, so -- either three
25 or four bedrooms. So one would have been for the girls,

1 one would have been for the boys and I would have had
2 another one, if it was three bedroom.

3 Q. You've already told us about your son and then you had
4 a daughter as well?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I think in 1991?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. From what you're saying, your son and your daughter
9 would share their rooms with the foster children; is
10 that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Were there any issues with that or how did your children
13 cope with the foster children?

14 A. Remarkably well. They were kind of accepting of every
15 child that came.

16 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 40 that you had two bedrooms
17 built on, you say, to the house, so --

18 A. That was in the next move that we had, that wasn't in
19 the flat.

20 Q. I see. So you moved from Dyce to Aberdeen.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And then you moved within Aberdeen?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. To a house?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. In that house you had two bedrooms built on?
2 A. Yes.
3 Q. Okay. Did you get any help from the Local Authority
4 with that extension?
5 A. No.
6 Q. Did you know if that was something that you could ask
7 for or not?
8 A. I don't know. I didn't think I even thought about it.
9 Q. Why did you build the extra bedrooms on?
10 A. Because we had two foster children that were staying
11 with us long term.
12 Q. Okay. If we move down to paragraph 42, you talk there
13 about the children that you fostered and you say that
14 you're not sure how many children you fostered over the
15 years, but it must be in the hundreds, possibly even as
16 many as 1,000?
17 A. Mm-hmm.
18 Q. Why do you think it's so many?
19 A. Because I was always so busy and I did it over 18 years.
20 Q. Okay. If we look at paragraph 43, you say that you
21 fostered both boys and girls, ranging in age from a few
22 weeks old to 14 and 15.
23 A. Yeah.
24 Q. But you say you're not sure how many you'd have had at
25 the one time?

1 A. No.

2 Q. You think it was probably a maximum of six?

3 A. Yes, uh-huh.

4 Q. So six plus your own two children; is that right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay, so eight children in the house?

7 A. Mm-hmm.

8 Q. Okay. Are you thinking that because, for example, you

9 might have had a bedroom with two sets of bunk beds in

10 it --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- is that how it worked?

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. When you talk about the boys' room, were there -- am

15 I right --

16 A. There's two sets of bunk beds in the boys' room.

17 Q. Okay. And the same in the girls'?

18 A. I can't remember if there was just one set of bunk beds

19 or if there was two. I can't remember.

20 Q. Okay. You say that all of the children that you

21 fostered were placed with you by Aberdeen City

22 Council --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- or Grampian Region before that?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. In terms of any longer-term placements, how many
2 children did you have on a longer-term basis?

3 A. There's four that I remember that were with me for about
4 two years. I had another one for almost a year.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But there may have been others that I don't actually
7 remember.

8 Q. Okay. In terms of the fostering arrangements at
9 paragraph 45, you say there wasn't much preparation in
10 an emergency, for example?

11 A. No.

12 Q. The children that you had longer term, did they
13 initially come to you on an emergency basis and end up
14 staying longer?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 Did you have to do any re-assessment through the
18 Local Authority for them to stay with you on a long-term
19 basis?

20 A. I think it was just through discussions and just
21 obviously the social worker meeting with the child and
22 just discussing it, looking at the arrangements. It's
23 a long time ago, so I don't remember exactly.

24 Q. Okay. You don't remember sort of having to go back to
25 a fostering panel or anything?

1 A. It may have been possible, but I can't remember.

2 Q. Okay. What sort of information were you given about the
3 children when they came to live with you? If we go on
4 to page 9, paragraph 48.

5 A. I think the emergency placements you quite often didn't
6 get anything. It would be a phone call at 1 o'clock in
7 the morning, you know, "We've got two children we need
8 placed, can you take them?" So quite often it was maybe
9 a day or two after before you met with the social worker
10 and got the information then.

11 Q. You say at paragraph 49 that you wouldn't get, for
12 example, a child's care plan at the outset. You'd
13 normally get that a couple of days after the child had
14 been placed with you?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Okay. Did you feel that that was a problem? Should you
17 have had more information? Or were you quite happy with
18 what was being done?

19 A. I think because it was emergency placements, I probably
20 wasn't expecting anything else on the initial phone
21 call, other than name and date of birth possibly.

22 Q. Okay. When children came to you on an emergency basis,
23 had they generally just been removed from their parent
24 or their usual carer?

25 A. Yes, I think so.

1 Q. Did some of them come from other foster carers or from
2 residential care, do you know, or was it mainly from
3 their birth families?

4 A. I think it was mainly from their birth families.

5 Q. Okay. For some of them, would it have been their first
6 time that they would have been taken into care?

7 A. I think for some of them it would have been, for some of
8 the older ones or even some of the younger ones it would
9 have been second, third, maybe fourth time.

10 Q. Some of the children that you had, did you have them
11 again? Did they come to you and then did they come back
12 to you at a later stage?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. At paragraph 54 you talk about you're aware that
15 a child who stayed with you, who we are calling 'Jess',
16 came to live with you in 1995 and she came with her
17 brother.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You talk about the age gap between them. Her brother
20 was older than her and she was not yet at primary
21 school, I think?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Do you have any memory of the circumstances in
24 which they came to live with you?

25 A. I do. They were quite a local family.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So they were actually known to me before they actually

3 came.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. The parent was a drug dealer and had been arrested.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And that was the first time they came to stay with me.

8 Q. You say that -- did you know the family -- do you mean

9 you knew the family or you actually knew 'Jess' and her

10 brother before?

11 A. I knew of the family. I wouldn't say I actually knew

12 the family.

13 Q. I see, thank you.

14 If we can move on a little bit in your statement,

15 please, you talk about the routine in the household.

16 Just in terms of the way in which you treated the

17 children, obviously you had your own children. Did you

18 treat them the same as your own children or did you

19 treat your children and the foster children differently?

20 A. All the children in my household were treated the same.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I didn't feel that there was any rules that I had in the

23 household that were applicable to one set and not the

24 other.

25 Q. Okay. If we can move on, please, to page 14 of your

1 statement and paragraph 74 where you're referring to
2 something that 'Jess' said in her statement and she
3 talked about being fed with a metal spoon and I think
4 having some issues with food and being force fed I think
5 chocolate mousse.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What's your recollection of that?

8 A. I don't remember anything of that happening.

9 Q. Okay. Do you think it's possible that it happened and
10 you can't remember?

11 A. No, because I would never have force fed a child.

12 Q. Okay. If we move on, please, to page 19 of your
13 statement, paragraph 102, you talk there about
14 discipline and how would you discipline a child if they
15 were misbehaving?

16 A. I don't really have any memories of having to seriously
17 discipline a child. You know, I ... I can't say how --
18 how it was in the house. It just seemed to work. You
19 know, I think because I had such a strong routine with
20 my children, I found a lot of the time the foster
21 children sort of followed their example.

22 Q. Okay. You say in this paragraph that sometimes you
23 raised your voice, but you don't remember ever shouting
24 at any of the children?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page to page 20 and
2 paragraph 103, did you ever use physical discipline?
3 A. Absolutely never.
4 Q. Okay. You say here that when your son was little you
5 remember smacking him?
6 A. Yes.
7 Q. And by smacking, whereabouts on his body do you mean?
8 Do you mean on the bottom or on his hand?
9 A. It would have been maybe a tap on the back of the hand
10 or a smack on the bottom.
11 Q. Did you continue doing that or not?
12 A. I think at that time it happened to me when I grew up,
13 I think it was kind of acceptable. But once I started
14 childminding, I can't remember the situation but my son
15 and a child-minded child did something and I went to tap
16 my son on the back of the hand and I thought: I can't do
17 that because I can't do that to my child-minded child.
18 And that was the last time I ever lifted my hand to
19 a child.
20 Q. Okay. Roughly when was that or how old was your son at
21 the time?
22 A. Possibly about four.
23 Q. Okay.
24 A. I think it happened not long after I started
25 childminding.

1 Q. Okay. At paragraph 107 on page 20 you say that you
2 would have kept a record of any sanction or punishment
3 that you might have given. Why would you have done
4 that? Were you keeping records throughout the time that
5 you were a foster carer?

6 A. I think if I had had to use a sanction or a punishment
7 it would have been, but I honestly can't remember.
8 I mean, we're talking about 30 years ago.

9 Q. You say that you don't know if that's something that
10 would have been expected of you, but you think it's
11 certainly something that you would have shared with
12 a child's social worker?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. If we move on, please, to page 21 and paragraph 111,
15 you're talking there about contact that children had
16 with their parents. Was that something that you were
17 involved with or was it something that was organised by
18 social work?

19 A. I was never actually involved in organising it, but
20 I was sometimes involved in transporting the children to
21 and from. I had a family who met in a family centre, so
22 I would take the children there, the parents would meet
23 them, be supervised by the centre staff, and then
24 I would pick them up afterwards.

25 Q. I think we know that when 'Jess' and her brother were in

1 your care, their mother was in prison?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Can you remember them having contact with their mum?

4 A. I think they would have done, but I wouldn't have been

5 involved in that because it was obviously quite

6 a distance away.

7 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 113 that you felt it wasn't

8 your position to try to encourage contact, it was the

9 social worker's role?

10 A. That's possibly the wrong sort of wording for it. It

11 wasn't my responsibility to organise the -- you know,

12 I didn't have any knowledge of a lot of the background,

13 so I wouldn't have said, "Oh yes, they have to see their

14 parents", that would have been the social worker's role,

15 not mine.

16 Q. Okay.

17 If we move on, please, to page 23 and paragraph 120,

18 you talk there about visits -- you talked about your

19 link worker, but the children's social workers would

20 also visit?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. That would be variable in terms of frequency?

23 A. It would, yes.

24 Q. Was there any pattern as to where the social worker

25 would see the children? Would they see them in the

1 house or would they see them outside?

2 A. I think it would depend on the children. You know, some
3 of the younger children might have been seen at their
4 nursery or their school. Older children, I know, were
5 taken out occasionally. Sometimes they would come to
6 the house. So it just depended on the child and the
7 social worker.

8 Q. The end of paragraph 121 you say:

9 "All the visits were announced because otherwise
10 they might not have got me at home."

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Are you talking there about all the visits from
13 children's social workers?

14 A. And my link worker as well.

15 Q. So your link worker never turned up unannounced?

16 A. Not as far as I remember, no.

17 Q. Can you remember, you know, if, for example, your link
18 worker's manager might sometimes come and visit you?

19 A. I don't think so.

20 Q. Okay. At paragraph 125 you say that you can't remember
21 or you say no person came to inspect your home. Did
22 nobody come when you moved house to have a look at the
23 new accommodation?

24 A. I think they would have, but I can't specifically
25 remember when that happened, but I'm sure it probably

1 did.

2 Q. Can you remember your link worker going and looking in
3 the children's bedrooms, for example?

4 A. I can't specifically remember that.

5 Q. Okay. If we move on, please, to page 25 and the keeping
6 of records. You say that you don't remember being given
7 any written or verbal guidance or instructions on the
8 keeping of records, but you refer to keeping diaries at
9 paragraph 135?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Was that something that you did of your own volition or
12 is that something that your link worker asked you to do?

13 A. No, it was something that I did to keep my life
14 organised and to remember things, because obviously
15 I had child-minded children, I had -- sometimes had
16 appointments for them, I had appointments for foster
17 children, I had appointments for my own children,
18 different nurseries, different outings and things like
19 that, so it was just a way of me keeping track of where
20 I was meant to be and at what time.

21 Q. I mean you described a number of children that you had
22 and from what you're saying there, you must have been
23 very busy?

24 A. I was, yes.

25 Q. Did you ever find that overwhelming?

1 A. Not -- not specifically. I think there was sometimes
2 when the older children were really challenging and it
3 did make life a little bit difficult.

4 Q. Okay. How would you react or feel when you felt that
5 things were a bit difficult?

6 A. I think I did speak to my link worker about the age of
7 children, you know, because obviously it was -- I was
8 fostering children that were older than my own children
9 and that was something that I never really wanted to do.
10 But it was just something that continued through the
11 time that I fostered.

12 Q. Okay, so did that not change after you spoke to your
13 link worker?

14 A. No, I don't think so.

15 Q. Would your link worker ever look at the diaries that you
16 mention --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- or would you just use them to help you remember
19 various things?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. If we go down on page 26 to paragraph 144, you
22 talk there about the older, more challenging children
23 and you say that you think that there would need to be
24 more support than there was. What sort of support would
25 have been helpful to have?

1 A. I just think because it wasn't an area that I was
2 familiar with, because obviously some of these
3 challenging children were much older than my own, you
4 know, I just -- I did find some of it really, really
5 challenging and quite difficult at times.

6 Q. If we go on over the page to page 27 and paragraph 145,
7 you say that there should be more options available like
8 more foster carers, but at the time there just wasn't.

9 A. Mm-hmm.

10 Q. Was that your impression from what you were being told
11 when you were being asked to take children?

12 A. I think especially the emergency care, because, you
13 know, I knew that there was only a certain amount in
14 Aberdeen and you would get a phone call in the middle of
15 the night, they'd be looking to place one, two, three,
16 sometimes four children at a time, and it was a case of,
17 "How many can you take?"

18 Q. Mm-hmm.

19 A. So I just don't know what would help the situation at
20 that time.

21 Q. You refer in this paragraph to once having a child who
22 had to be removed immediately?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you mean immediately removed from your care?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you know why that was?

2 A. I honestly can't remember, but I just remember this one
3 child who was very, very challenging. He seemed to live
4 in a different universe is all I can kind of think of,
5 you know, and he just -- he was very disruptive with the
6 rest of the children and I just felt it wasn't fair to
7 the other children to put them through that.

8 Q. Can you remember if you asked for him to be removed or
9 if he had asked?

10 A. No, I asked for him to be removed.

11 Q. Okay. If we can move on to the next part of your
12 statement, on page 28 you talk about the convictions
13 that you have and you list them there. We know that one
14 of those convictions was in respect of 'Jess'.

15 You then go on to say at the bottom of this page:
16 "I stopped childminding and fostering at the same
17 time because I opened my own business."

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I think we know that you resigned as a foster carer in
20 May 2003. Can you remember if the social work had said
21 to you that they had concerns about you continuing to be
22 a foster carer before you resigned?

23 A. No, I can't remember.

24 Q. Okay. I'm going to look at a document, if we just --
25 just bear with me a moment, I need to ...

1 The document is ABN-000000268.

2 I appreciate, Sheila, that this will not be
3 a document that you've seen before. It's a document
4 from you'll see Aberdeen City Council and it's
5 a memorandum to somebody at the Care Commission by
6 a Susan Sloan, senior social worker.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Do you know who Susan Sloan is? Is she somebody that
9 you knew?

10 A. I remember the name, I can't remember her.

11 Q. Okay. You'll see that this is dated 10 June 2003, so
12 this is after you had resigned, okay? It's referring to
13 you, it's blanked out on the screen but it's referring
14 to you and she then says:

15 "I spoke with Doris Copley re the above and she
16 advised that I contact you. We spoke on Friday 6th and
17 I am also forwarding a copy of the original complaint.
18 Mrs Davies is an approved foster carer and also
19 a registered childminder. Mrs Davies provided care for
20 a number of foster children and has been seen as
21 suitable with time-limited placements where children
22 respond to clear boundaries or routine."

23 Just pausing there, I think that's consistent with
24 what you've said about taking emergency placements and
25 I think you also mentioned in your evidence earlier

1 about having a clear routine with your own children.

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 Q. So that would be consistent with that.

4 It then says:

5 "There have however been complaints regarding her

6 ability to nurture very needy children and at times her

7 rough handling of children. There have been other

8 complaints (which are possibly less pertinent to

9 childminding and relate more to her role as a foster

10 carer) but the concern relating to her care/handling of

11 children are all relevant to childminding."

12 I think that might be why Susan Sloan is writing to

13 the Care Commission, it's maybe more about the

14 childminding. But were you aware that there had been

15 complaints about, first of all, your ability to nurture

16 very needy children?

17 A. I can't remember that.

18 Q. Were you aware that there had been complaints about your

19 rough handling of children?

20 A. I can't remember any of that.

21 Q. Then it says in the next paragraph:

22 "The fostering service's concerns regarding

23 Mrs Davies were shared with her at a recent meeting on

24 30 April 2003 with the link worker, Jenny Needham and

25 myself."

1 Jenny Needham, is that a link worker that you had?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Then it says:

4 "It was explained to Mrs Davies that in view of the

5 number of complaints we could not continue to support

6 her registration as a foster carer and this would be

7 presented to the Adoption and Fostering Panel.

8 Mrs Davies has, however, resigned as a foster carer."

9 Can you remember having a meeting with this

10 Jenny Needham and Susan Sloan and them telling you that

11 they wouldn't be able to continue to support you being

12 registered as a foster carer?

13 A. No, I don't remember that.

14 Q. You don't remember that, okay.

15 It then refers to a letter from staff at the

16 Westdyke Leisure Centre, which was sent to

17 a Zandra Morrison, community school social worker, and

18 it says the information was subsequently passed to

19 adoption and fostering. It was reported initially

20 verbally, but a written report was requested.

21 We'll go over the page to see the letter. If we

22 scroll down it's a letter from a Julie Elrick and

23 Mairead Cowie, Kindergym coaches. Do you know who these

24 people are?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Can you remember going to something called Kindergym at
2 the Westdyke Leisure Centre?

3 A. I would have -- possibly, but we went to lots of
4 different groups and things like that, so I don't
5 specifically remember that.

6 Q. You can see it says:
7 "During our Kindergym sessions at Smithfield Primary
8 we have become increasingly concerned over the actions
9 of one of our childminding members ..."

10 That's referring to you. So it looks like the
11 sessions were at the primary school rather than at the
12 leisure centre that I mentioned. It says:
13 "Our concerns are for a little boy ..."

14 It's blanked out but the name is "[REDACTED]", who she
15 fosters.

16 A. No.

17 Q. Can you remember having a wee boy called [REDACTED]?

18 A. No.

19 Q. "When he arrived at our classes in August 2002 he was
20 a happy, lively and friendly boy. Within several months
21 he became more withdrawn, less confident and was
22 permanently watching Sheila or checking she wasn't
23 watching him. She paid him little or no attention,
24 giving no praise or encouragement whilst praising other
25 children. She was extremely quick to tell him off,

1 often for no apparent reason, leaving ourselves and
2 other members of the class stunned."

3 Do you have any recollection of going to Kindergym
4 classes at Smithfield Primary with a little boy that you
5 fostered?

6 A. As I said, I went to lots of different groups and things
7 like that. I can't specifically remember that.

8 Q. Okay. Do you have any comment on it being said that you
9 were paying little or no attention to the child and
10 being quick to tell him off? Is that something that
11 might possibly have happened or not?

12 A. I think that's a personal opinion from somebody.
13 I can't comment on what they think or how they feel.

14 Q. Okay. Then there's reference to similar behaviour with
15 another child you fostered and the name's blanked out
16 but it's "██████"? Do you remember having a child
17 called ██████?

18 A. ██████?

19 Q. ██████

20 A. ██████? Yes, I do.

21 Q. Is it possible that you were quick to tell her off?

22 A. I don't believe so, but I can't remember any specific
23 time for that.

24 Q. Okay. Then it says:

25 "During the classes she has also physically

1 reprimanded ..."

2 The names mentioned there are "██████" and "██████".

3 "... whom she also child minds."

4 A. I did child mind those children, yes.

5 Q. The people who are writing this letter seem to be
6 suggesting that you were physically reprimanding them.
7 Is that something that you did?

8 A. I don't believe so.

9 Q. Okay. Then they refer to their concerns. They say that
10 they find your behaviour "disturbing and unacceptable"
11 and they suggest that it merits further investigation.
12 Okay?

13 So that was the letter that was referred to in the
14 memo from Susan Sloan, which I think coincided with the
15 time that you resigned as a foster carer, but you can't
16 remember the Local Authority having any concerns about
17 you at the time?

18 A. I can't remember that far back, no.

19 Q. Okay. I want to ask you to look at one other document,
20 please, so this is at ABN-000002452. If we can go to
21 page 3 of this, just to put it in context, this is
22 an earlier document. You'll see it's Grampian Regional
23 Council and it's a letter to some senior people,
24 including a Patricia Hallett. Was she your link worker,
25 can you remember?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Again, this is from Susan Sloan, who is the senior
3 social worker in the adoption and fostering team and the
4 date of this is 23 February 1996. It's referring to you
5 and the context is that it's speaking about the
6 placement of a child called a [REDACTED]?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Can you remember that child staying with you?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I think if we scroll down to the first paragraph --
11 well, the first paragraph says:
12 "We've spoke a number of times regarding the above
13 and I shared with you the concerns and complaints from
14 social workers regarding Mrs Davies.
15 "As a result of these, Patricia Hallett, link
16 worker, held discussions with Mrs Davies between October
17 and December 1995 in order to review her service as
18 a foster carer and to consider how she might best be
19 used for the future, if indeed it was appropriate for
20 her to continue."
21 It then goes on to talk about the possibility of
22 this girl [REDACTED] potentially staying with you for a bit
23 longer.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Can you remember that that was something that was being

1 discussed?

2 A. I don't remember that. I do remember that [REDACTED] was one
3 of the ones that stayed with me for two years.

4 Q. For a longer time, okay.

5 If we can move on, please, to page 5, this is
6 talking about the review of you as a foster carer and
7 it's talking about between October and December 1995, so
8 this was after 'Jess' and her brother were with you, and
9 there's a paragraph beginning:

10 "This became imperative following placements in the
11 summer which proved unsatisfactory and in relation to
12 which an extremely concerning AF10 ..."

13 That's a document that the Local Authority have.

14 "... was received ..."

15 Then there was this request to take this girl,
16 [REDACTED] for longer.

17 If we go down to the next paragraph it says:

18 "Given the grave concerns expressed by
19 Peter MacDonell regarding 'Jess' and her brother's
20 placements and the history of some disquiet over the
21 years and given your commitment to emergency fostering,
22 limited accommodation and observed difficulty in coping
23 with and in persevering with difficulties, a thorough
24 exploration was clearly necessary."

25 That's what the Local Authority are discussing at

1 the time.

2 Then it goes on to say what the social worker had
3 said about 'Jess' and her brother's placement. It says:

4 "The AF10 ... was fairly damning and suggested that
5 you had little understanding of the children's needs and
6 the basics of good practice."

7 It says:

8 "The brother's emotional needs were not met, indeed
9 the placement was rather damaging to his emotional
10 well-being. With regard to 'Jess' as well, the social
11 worker felt that you showed a lack of understanding of
12 basic needs with regard to her and her brother's need to
13 visit their mother in prison and to be allowed to have
14 their upset at their separation."

15 Do you have any recollection of 'Jess' and her
16 brother's social worker having concerns about your care
17 of them?

18 A. No, I don't.

19 Q. Okay. Can you remember not being supportive of the
20 children in terms of their need to see their mum?

21 A. I can't remember the specifics around that. I know that
22 they did go and visit their mum in prison. But
23 obviously that wasn't my role, I wasn't involved in
24 that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 LADY SMITH: How did you feel about that?

2 A. Sorry?

3 LADY SMITH: How did you feel about it?

4 A. About them visiting their mum?

5 LADY SMITH: In prison.

6 A. I don't think I had really any views on that, because

7 obviously it's important for children to see their

8 parents, regardless of what the situation is. I just --

9 I couldn't facilitate taking them to that kind of visit,

10 because it was so far away and I obviously had other

11 children that I needed to look after.

12 LADY SMITH: How were they after the prison visits?

13 A. I -- I -- I really can't remember any specifics.

14 I think [REDACTED] would have -- the older one would have

15 certainly been a lot more upset by it, I think because

16 he was a lot more aware of what was going on, and

17 I think especially the second time when his mum had had

18 her sentence, that they both knew that she was going to

19 be away for a long time. But the plan was never that

20 they stay with me for that length of time, you know.

21 I felt that I was supportive of them going. I would

22 never have made any issues about them being upset.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 A. Although that's obviously not what they're saying.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you, Sheila.

1 MS INNES: Just finally on this document, if we just scroll
2 down a little, please, and it refers to your view of the
3 criticisms that had been made, so your view of the AF10
4 was that it was unfair and you felt angry. Then you see
5 it says:

6 "She accepted that she had mishandled the summer
7 holidays, but felt that it was difficult having five
8 children to accommodate with varying activities."

9 Then:

10 "Primarily, however, she blamed the fact that the
11 placement was unsatisfactory on the fact that it had got
12 off to a bad start ..."

13 Because for some time you'd had three teenagers and
14 you were concerned about one of them having a bad
15 influence on 'Jess's' brother. Okay? So that's a note
16 that the Local Authority have made about your response
17 at the time.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you have any recollection of that? Do you think
20 that's probably right that that was your view at the
21 time?

22 A. Well, obviously if that's what I said, that's what my
23 view would have been. I can't remember the
24 circumstances around that, so I can't say any more.

25 Q. Right, if we leave the document now, please, and just go

1 back to your statement briefly, if we can look, please,
2 at page 32, paragraph 169, where you're referring to the
3 allegations that 'Jess' has made against you, and you
4 say that you were so surprised when you read her
5 statement that it's what her memory is.

6 We know that you were convicted of assaulting
7 'Jess', so I was wondering if you could explain why it
8 was that you were surprised at what she said in her
9 statement.

10 A. I don't think I want to make any comment on that, you
11 know, it's around my -- my convicted assault and I don't
12 want to make any comment about that.

13 Q. Okay. I was just trying to understand if there were
14 things in 'Jess's' statement that you were surprised
15 about, and, if so, what those were.

16 A. From my memory of reading her statement, she said she
17 was crying all the time. That wasn't true. She said
18 that I made differences with her and my daughter.
19 I don't feel that that was true.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. There was other things in it, I obviously can't remember
22 her statement, but I don't remember her being this
23 crying little thing that she has said that she was.
24 I know that she was upset some of the time around her
25 mum, but I -- my memory of the placement is obviously

1 not the same as their memory.

2 Q. Okay. Why do you think it is that 'Jess' has said the
3 things that she's said about you?

4 A. I think she's obviously had a very difficult life and
5 I think she wants to blame other people other than her
6 mum.

7 Her mum was the person who gave her the bad start in
8 life, not foster care. Her mum used to take her out
9 shoplifting and hide the things that she shoplifted in
10 her buggy. She used to send the older brother out with
11 her to go shoplifting. That wasn't foster care. That
12 was her home life. There was the drug dealing, there
13 was the drug use. That has to have a huge effect on
14 children in general. And I don't think that how her
15 life turned out is all to do with her treatment in
16 childcare -- in foster care.

17 Q. Okay.

18 We know that you have convictions in respect of six
19 assaults on six different people. How do you think it
20 is that six different people have come forward to say
21 that you assaulted them?

22 A. I don't want to comment on that. I've been convicted.
23 I've served my sentence. I don't want to comment on
24 that.

25 MS INNES: Okay. Right, I don't have any more questions for

1 you. Thank you, Sheila.

2 There are no applications, my Lady.

3 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for

4 questions of Sheila?

5 Sheila, that does complete all the questions we have

6 for you.

7 Thank you very much for providing the statement that

8 helps us with more detail than we've discussed today.

9 I have read it and that's part of your evidence as well.

10 Thank you for listening so carefully and answering the

11 questions that we've been putting to you today.

12 I'm sure you're very glad to hear that I'm now able

13 to let you go and hopefully unwind and relax for the

14 rest of the day. Thank you very much.

15 (The witness withdrew)

16 LADY SMITH: We can take the lunch break just now, Ms Innes.

17 Then after the lunch break we have some read-ins; is

18 that correct?

19 MS INNES: We have.

20 LADY SMITH: Yes.

21 MS INNES: A number of read-ins into the afternoon.

22 LADY SMITH: We'll make it as close to 2 o'clock as we can,

23 but it may be just slightly after that.

24 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

25 (1.16 pm)

1 (The luncheon adjournment)

2 (2.05 pm)

3 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon.

4 Ms Innes, where are we going now?

5 'Clair' (read)

6 MS INNES: My Lady, we're going to start with a read-in of
7 a witness who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen
8 the pseudonym 'Clair'. Her cypher is FPF.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10 MS INNES: 'Clair' and her husband, who has the pseudonym
11 'Dylan', were foster carers for Glasgow City Council
12 from about 2003 until about 2015. An applicant with the
13 pseudonym 'Linda' was in foster care with 'Clair' and
14 'Dylan' for a few days in 2008. 'Linda' also spent
15 a period in foster care with 'Dylan's' parents from 2004
16 to 2008 and another period with 'Dylan's' sister, who
17 has the pseudonym 'Susan', and her husband from 2008 to
18 early 2015.

19 Glasgow City Council is the responsible authority.

20 'Linda's' statement was read in on Day 329,
21 29 September 2022.

22 'Susan' gave evidence this morning.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

24 MS INNES: Although all of 'Clair's' statement is in respect
25 of her experience as a foster carer, I'm only going to

1 read out certain parts of the statement.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 MS INNES: Turning to the statement which has the reference

4 WIT-1-000000949:

5 "My name is 'Clair'. I was born in 1980. I am
6 married to 'Dylan' and we stay in our house in Glasgow
7 along with my stepson. We also have our adopted
8 daughter and another former foster girl, who is now 21
9 and have full parental control of.

10 Prior to being a foster mother I was employed as
11 a home carer looking after the elderly. We were
12 instructed by the social work that one of us had to be
13 at home at all times and at that time that was me.
14 After my time as a foster mother I returned to the
15 caring industry and was again working as a home carer
16 looking after the elderly.

17 When I married my husband, we found out that we
18 could not have children of our own. We tried to see if
19 we could get IVF but as we had our stepson we did not
20 qualify for this. We then discussed the option of
21 adoption.

22 My husband was a teenager when his family began
23 being foster carers and they did this for a number of
24 years. Whilst waiting on any adoption we decided that
25 fostering would be something that we would be good at.

1 We had a spare room at our first house.

2 We contacted Glasgow social work department and we
3 were introduced to Kathy Coll. She came to the house
4 several times over several months. This included
5 finding out about our families and our background. We
6 also had to attend meetings held at the social work
7 offices. The whole process took the best part of a year
8 for it to be completed and this was in 2003.

9 To begin with we were looking to do emergency foster
10 care and on a short-term and respite basis. We were
11 also conscious that my stepson, who was 10 or 11 at the
12 time, had to be looked after. We asked that any of the
13 children we were to look after would be younger than him
14 and we were happy to take either boys or girls. At the
15 beginning, the social work agreed to do this but as soon
16 as the first call came in it had changed.

17 I was asked to provide references and I think one of
18 them was my former employers that we put forward.
19 I think the social work did make contact with those
20 references.

21 Part of the training process was that the staff
22 would have discussions with us as to how we might deal
23 with some of the issues arising from the children we
24 might look after. We would attend the social work
25 offices once a week where they would go over different

1 scenarios. We were also introduced to some foster
2 parents who came along to provide assistance with the
3 experiences they had dealt with. Many of those
4 scenarios I had experienced as a home carer. This part
5 of the process took several months.

6 We also attended courses which were held during the
7 day at different hotels. Again we would go over issues
8 that some children would have experienced in their
9 lives. I am sure that child protection was one of the
10 courses we attended. Those courses were mandatory. We
11 were given dates of the different courses and had to
12 make arrangements to ensure we attended them all.

13 I found many of the courses to be quite interesting
14 and helpful. Listening to some of the other foster
15 carers were much more helpful because they had faced
16 those issues. Later during my time as a foster mother
17 I also gave lectures on some of those courses. Prior to
18 my giving lectures I had been told by one of the senior
19 social workers that I should limit some of the content
20 I would talk about as they did not want people to be
21 frightened off. I found that I always wanted to speak
22 with the foster parents as they were more insightful.
23 It was the same when I spoke. The new foster parents
24 came to me with things they wanted to discuss. I do
25 think that potential carers should be told more about

1 how to deal with the serious issues that they are likely
2 to face. It would give them a better understanding and
3 make them better carers.

4 One area I don't recall many training days about was
5 the topic of learning and disability issues. There
6 needs to be more emphasis placed on this by social work
7 teams.

8 I never saw that being a foster parent was a job.
9 I saw that I was providing care for someone and was
10 happy to have them as part of our family. We spent
11 every penny we got from the social work and some of our
12 own on the kids. We also treated all the kids we looked
13 after the same way we treated our own.

14 Our main contact for ourselves when we were foster
15 parents was a link worker. That person continually
16 changed over the years. They were usually nice when we
17 were dealing with them and they were nice with the kids
18 when they came to the house. I have a photograph in the
19 house with one of the link workers playing with the
20 kids. Any issues, we updated our link worker and they
21 would tell us that they would take the issue up with
22 seniors. There were many times where there would be no
23 action taken by the senior staff.

24 We did get financial support from the social work.
25 The usual money was about £250 every two weeks, per

1 child in our care. The money was paid into our bank
2 account. They would also send a slip to our address
3 confirming the amount we were being paid and for which
4 child it related to.

5 Sometimes we would get an emergency fund but that
6 was usually when a child first arrived. That fund
7 varied but could amount to £100. Sometimes if it was
8 really late at night when a child arrived we would have
9 to go to the 24-hour shops to get some clothes.

10 Perhaps once a year we might have been sent a letter
11 for the 'Index' shop. That would be to help provide
12 some extra bed linen. We would take that letter to the
13 shop and be given pillows, quilts, et cetera, up to the
14 value stated on the letter. That was quite helpful but
15 if you had a child that had issues with bed-wetting or
16 worse then it barely touched the cost we laid out.

17 Some of the children we looked after had anger
18 issues and they would break some of the furniture or
19 cause damage to my car. If that happened we had to pay
20 for the replacement or repair.

21 I know of carers who are in fostering just for the
22 money. They have used the money they receive to pay for
23 their mortgages and bought nice houses. They would use
24 some of the money for the kids and some of the money
25 they paid themselves a wage. I think if people are

1 treating fostering as a job then they might not be
2 treating the children as part of the family and not
3 giving them enough love and care.

4 However they use that money, I think it should be
5 exempt from National Insurance and Income Tax purposes
6 because inevitably we would end up using our own money
7 as well.

8 The first house we were in when we fostered was
9 a three-bedroomed house. At that time we had two girls
10 and our son. We thought about being able to provide
11 care for more children but we knew we needed a bigger
12 house. We then swapped with 'Dylan's' parents and
13 bought each other's houses so that we had more rooms
14 available. We later sold that and moved to another
15 house. All the houses were in the same area of Glasgow
16 at most a couple of streets apart. This helped when it
17 came to schooling as the kids going to school could stay
18 there even although we moved house.

19 In relation to 'Dylan's' parents they stayed very
20 close to us. His sister stayed just a couple of streets
21 away.

22 When I first started seeing 'Dylan' I got on really
23 well with his family. They were good with 'Dylan' and
24 helped him out when he had been a single parent. In the
25 beginning I got on really well with 'Dylan's' sister.

1 Our relationship nowadays it is very fragmented and we
2 don't have much to do with them. Our youngest daughter
3 always had a good relationship with her grandparents and
4 liked being with her grandad.

5 During the time we were foster parents we looked
6 after in excess of 30 children. The maximum children we
7 looked after at any given time was probably five or six.
8 The ages ranged throughout our time from about 18 months
9 old to 12 years old.

10 We never fostered any children we were related to
11 and we never considered changing the names of any of the
12 children we were fostering."

13 Moving on to the next page and paragraph 27:

14 "The first children we looked after were aged 4 and
15 10. This was a girl and an older boy, who was about the
16 same age as my stepson. We agreed to it despite our
17 requests about younger children. Not only did the
18 social work change the age range, they also changed the
19 length of stay from short emergency care to long term.
20 The older one stayed for five years and the younger one
21 around ten years."

22 Moving over the page again to paragraph 30:

23 "Other children arrived with similar issues [to my
24 adopted daughter] but as I was not the permanent parent
25 then I could not get the right help they needed. The

1 social work was always a barricade. They would say they
2 were going to get help but nothing ever happened. It
3 was different from my daughter as I was her permanent
4 carer and they had to help me because I just kept
5 pushing them. I might have caused the social work some
6 problems but her needs were the most important thing.

7 Our second daughter arrived in 2011, when she was 11
8 years old, and we were able to get full parental
9 [I think it should say 'rights'] after the allegations.
10 When the allegations were made against the family the
11 social were threatening to take her away from us. We
12 were fighting to stop this but felt we were struggling
13 to keep her.

14 The social work came to the house and they removed
15 her clothes and took them to a different house without
16 my daughter even being told about it. They called at
17 the school and tried to take custody of her from there.
18 She refused to go with them. She was about 15 at this
19 time. I contacted a solicitor who gave me details of
20 a lawyer who specialised in child custody issues. This
21 was passed to my daughter and she attended at his office
22 for a meeting. At the end of the meeting the lawyer
23 made the application to block her being removed from our
24 care.

25 We all had to appear at a hearing and the panel

1 asked what my daughter wanted from the process. She
2 told them that she was happy and wanted to stay with us.
3 Our link worker also gave evidence that she was against
4 this and wanted her removed into our care. My daughter
5 spoke with panel members and made a request for that
6 person to be removed as she was not representing her
7 interests."
8 Sorry, just reflecting back on the terms of the
9 previous sentence, I think there must be typographical
10 error in that.
11 So the link worker's position must have been that
12 she wanted the child removed from 'Clair' and 'Dylan' --
13 LADY SMITH: Yes. Yes.
14 MS INNES: -- and the daughter spoke against that and wanted
15 this person to be removed.
16 LADY SMITH: It also perhaps is misleading in the third
17 line; is that right?
18 MS INNES: Where it's referring to the link worker?
19 LADY SMITH: "Our link worker gave evidence that she was
20 against this ..."
21 MS INNES: Yes. The link worker would be the social worker
22 for the foster parents and not for the child.
23 LADY SMITH: Yes.
24 MS INNES: The child should have had her own social worker.
25 I think she goes on in the next paragraph to say:

1 "Another social worker for the child was asked to
2 provide evidence on behalf of the Social Services. She
3 stated that her senior had instructed her to state that
4 she too wanted my daughter removed. She told the panel
5 that she completely disagreed with her senior and our
6 link worker and that she thought we would be good for
7 our daughter. She had made several unannounced visits
8 to the house to check on my daughter and never saw any
9 issues.

10 The panel came to the decision that she could stay
11 with us and we were given a parental rights order until
12 she turned 16. She is now 21 and still stays with us.
13 When she was 18 she came to her own decision about
14 wanting to change her name to the same surname that we
15 have. It was after the process with the custody hearing
16 that the relationship with the social work had broken
17 down and we decided we were no longer going to foster
18 children."

19 Moving down to paragraph 38:

20 "Through some of the training we were shown some of
21 the things that we might have to deal with as foster
22 parents. Some of the kids that we looked after had
23 serious issues that they had experienced prior to coming
24 to our house.

25 When the kids arrived we were never shown any

1 records or care plan for them. Although on most
2 occasions we were given some details of the children we
3 were being asked to look after sometimes this was not
4 enough information.

5 Sometimes we might have been given access to
6 a booklet that had been provided by the Children's
7 Hearing. That might have supplied us with some
8 background of the child. Without all the information it
9 is difficult for people to realise how much damage has
10 been inflicted on the children.

11 In my experience kids being placed in foster care do
12 not have a proper care plan. In my work I have seen
13 kids with care plans make better improvements as the
14 carers have something to work towards.

15 The problem with no plan and no information is that
16 you never know what the child's likes and dislikes are.
17 You are left to find all of this out for yourself and
18 that may take some time. There were times when a health
19 visitor called and we might get some information from
20 them, especially important such as if they had missed
21 some inoculations. Those visits from health workers
22 were random as she might just be passing and calling in
23 to catch up with the young ones. The one we had was
24 very helpful.

25 We sometimes struggled with the lack of information

1 and support provided. The social work would come out
2 with excuses that they were too busy. They were happy
3 kids had placements and were no longer their worry. We
4 always had the option to refuse a new child if we did
5 not want anyone else at that time.

6 There was no matching of the children we were
7 looking after. Some of the children were a good match
8 to our family dynamics. If there was better support
9 given for all, things might have been different.

10 Most of the time when we had a new arrival at our
11 house then the kids that were already there would take
12 the new child to the room to play. That gave my husband
13 and I time to have a conversation with the social
14 workers dealing with that child."

15 From paragraphs 46 to 56, 'Clair' speaks of some of
16 the other children she and her husband fostered, so not
17 'Linda'.

18 From paragraphs 57 to 74, 'Clair' covers various
19 aspects of daily routine in the household.

20 Moving to page 15, paragraph 75:

21 "If any of the kids arrived with their own toys
22 et cetera and if it was memory items we would get them
23 gift boxes so they could store them and keep them
24 separate from the group toys. Each of the children had
25 their own chest of drawers and wardrobe so their own

1 clothes could be kept together.

2 We also encouraged the children to have a memory
3 box. We started this with our own kids and encouraged
4 the new kids to do this. This was also part of the
5 courses we were on, but I had already started it at
6 home.

7 I never opened any bank accounts for the foster kids
8 but we did have a piggy bank for each of them. We would
9 put some money into each of them and encourage them to
10 put some change they might have into it. Whenever they
11 wanted extra sweets or treats they came to ask if they
12 could get some money out of their piggy banks.

13 The older kids would give them money each month.
14 This would be given money for their bus fares when
15 needed, lunch money and pocket money. We tried to teach
16 them to budget their money. They soon learned that they
17 might buy something smaller and cheaper one day and use
18 the unused money to give themselves a treat on another
19 day.

20 Any trips or holidays we did as a family. We have
21 gone to Euro Disney on two separate occasions, the first
22 time just after my mother had passed away. And on the
23 second occasion a new child just arrived a few days
24 before we were due to leave. We tried to get the
25 tickets changed but we were unable to do so. That

1 children went to another family for respite while we
2 were away. We felt bad about that.

3 We also had a caravan we kept at Saltcoats. My
4 sister-in-law also had a caravan in the same park. She
5 tended to have the kids play near to her caravan. Our
6 kids were always encouraged to join in with the
7 activities organised by the site. Other times they
8 would be in the caravan and playing with 'Dylan' by
9 messing about with his hair. Our kids would be able to
10 go to the beach during the day and the disco in the
11 clubhouse at night.

12 Some other foster parents that we knew also had
13 a caravan down in Saltcoats and the respective children
14 would be able to play and have meals together."

15 From paragraphs 82 to 92 'Clair' speaks of schooling
16 and issues in relation to healthcare and bed-wetting.

17 Moving to page 18, paragraph 93:

18 "We treated all the kids as part of our family. The
19 social work were happy with this aspect of our caring
20 but when it came to discipline they rarely agreed. If
21 we had to discipline the kids the social work would tell
22 us that we were wrong and that we could not use whatever
23 measures we instigated. We even had some children tell
24 us that they were not accepting any punishment they may
25 have deserved and would tell us that their social worker

1 had said they did not have to listen to me in this area.

2 If the kids had done anything wrong we might impose
3 a punishment where they might be grounded. When it came
4 to the younger kids we would use the naughty step. We
5 waited until the child had calmed down and then told
6 them that they had to stay on the naughty step for
7 a short time. We used an egg timer and when that ran
8 out they were allowed off it. Grounding was kept for
9 the older kids.

10 With regard to the girl who had been buying drugs,
11 we took her pocket money from her to stop her being able
12 to buy the drugs. The social work were not happy with
13 this approach and telling us that we could not take her
14 money from her.

15 All of the foster kids that were with us were
16 encouraged to make friends and feel free to bring them
17 back to the house. Most made friends but some did not.
18 My youngest had a friend who was also fostered. That
19 made it easier for them to have sleepovers. If the
20 other child was not fostered we would have had to go
21 down the route of having police checks carried out
22 before any sleepover could take place. Some of the kids
23 did not understand about the reasons for checks having
24 to be made before any sleepovers could take place and
25 some of the parents were not happy about doing this."

1 On this page moving down to paragraph 100:

2 "The social workers for each of the children were
3 supposed to come to the house and visit at least every
4 four weeks, but most of them were much longer, usually
5 around six to eight weeks. When they visited they would
6 chat to me and see how things had been since their last
7 visit. They would ask about the house, school and
8 anything else they were involved in. Sometimes they
9 would go to the kid's room where they could have
10 a private chat with the children. Other times they
11 might take the kids round the corner to McDonald's for
12 a bite to eat and a chat.

13 Our link worker would normally do scheduled visits
14 and also carry out unannounced visits. They would check
15 on the rooms and maybe see how much food we had in the
16 fridge and cupboards. A lot of those unannounced visits
17 would be near to mealtimes when it was chaos in the
18 house. One of those visits my daughter and I were
19 really sick and I had to keep her off school. We were
20 both lying on the settee with buckets, tissues and
21 blankets near by us. The link worker then complained
22 that the house was in a mess, despite seeing us
23 obviously sick and unfit to do anything. Other times it
24 was never a bother.

25 I think the visits for both the kids and carers are

1 needed but they should be more frequent. That would
2 help pick up anything wrong.

3 One of the kids we looked after was getting help
4 from one of the charities. I think it may have been Who
5 Cares? Scotland.

6 If there were any looked-after child reviews or
7 hearings that the children were required to attend then
8 we would be there for them. If 'Dylan' was working then
9 it would just be me. I was not given any advice as to
10 what information they would need from me. As soon as he
11 came in from his work he was into automatic mode helping
12 me with the kids.

13 We never kept any records of issues with the
14 children. If there were issues I would contact my link
15 worker on that day or early the next day. We also
16 contacted the child's own social worker and report
17 whatever happened to them."

18 Over the page at paragraph 107:

19 "If a relationship broke down between me and one of
20 the kids it was very quick before the social workers
21 would arrive and remove the child.

22 Other kids there were arrangements in place for them
23 to build up the relationship with visits between them
24 and their natural family.

25 This would be the time when the memory book was

1 really useful, as it showed what it was like during the
2 period they were away from their home and they were
3 loved and cared for. We often asked that they would
4 send us photographs of their progress at home.

5 The social work never had any occasion to call on us
6 to make any complaints about anything to do with the
7 kids in our care. Even if I did have a complaint to
8 make I am not certain what the procedure that both sides
9 should take and this needs to be much clearer to
10 carers."

11 Moving on over the page to page 22, paragraph 112:

12 "I was not aware of any abuse taking place in my
13 house or at my father-in-law's or sister-in-law's
14 houses. After being informed of the allegations from
15 'Linda', my oldest daughter made me aware in the past
16 that she had been bullied from 'Linda'.

17 I am not aware of anything that my sister-in-law or
18 father-in-law may have done as any form of discipline as
19 I wasn't there enough to see anything take place.

20 'Linda' has given a statement to the Inquiry and she
21 says that she was sexually abused by my father-in-law.
22 I was not aware at all. What we saw when we were around
23 my father-in-law was that my mother-in-law did
24 everything. He was always out with the football.
25 I never saw much of him with the kids. He was nice with

1 the kids and my kids admired him. My son grew up with
2 them in their house when 'Dylan' was a single parent and
3 had a great relationship with them. There were never
4 any concerns for his safety.

5 'Linda' made disclosures later and refers to another
6 girl having made allegations against my father-in-law."

7 Just moving to the end of the quoted part, I'm not
8 re-reading the parts of 'Linda's' statement.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes.

10 MS INNES: "We got a phone call from the social work. We
11 were told that one of the kids was making allegations
12 against my father-in-law. We were asked if we could
13 take the two girls into our house. They said it would
14 be easier if they came to us, who the girls knew, than
15 going to a stranger's house. We didn't really have the
16 space, but as it was just to be a couple of days we
17 agreed. We were instructed that there was to be no
18 contact between ourselves and either my sister-in-law or
19 my father-in-law. I am sure it was only a couple of
20 days, maybe three days, that they were with us. When
21 'Linda' came to us we found it difficult to talk to her
22 as she was really distant. I found I could not take to
23 the girl. After a couple of days I was phoned by social
24 work and told they could go back to my father-in-law's.
25 We were never told anything about what the allegations

1 amounted to.

2 I don't know how it came about that 'Linda' went to
3 stay with my sister-in-law. My husband was not getting
4 on with his sister at that stage. I knew that my
5 mother-in-law was not looking to do long-term foster
6 care because of her age, these kids needed long term and
7 I think the reason for them going there was that my
8 sister-in-law was a long-term carer. After the
9 allegations they were back staying with my mother and
10 father-in-law. I think they were back for a couple of
11 years with them before they went to my sister-in-law.

12 We were told a girl had made allegations after
13 arguing with my in-laws about being grounded. We were
14 told that she had made a comment along the lines that if
15 she was going to be grounded then she would say that my
16 father-in-law had touched her. I was told that it was
17 more a case not of him having done anything but that she
18 would make the allegations if she did not get what she
19 wanted. My sister-in-law was the one that phoned the
20 social work to report what she was saying.

21 'Linda' says in her statement later when she was
22 a teenager 'I think the police and social work asked all
23 the other children questions after I gave my statement
24 and I think that's when it came out that another child
25 who was fostered after me had also been abused by him'.

1 Seven years ago when 'Linda' made the allegations we got
2 an unannounced visit from two social workers. They said
3 they needed to speak to 'Dylan' and me. We were told
4 that there were now new allegations made against
5 someone. We were instructed that there was to be no
6 access between the children in our care and anyone else
7 in our families. I was aware that my father was
8 seriously ill and was upset that we could not see him.
9 It was particularly bad for 'Dylan' being restricted as
10 to when he could visit his own father. They eventually
11 told me that there was a serious allegation against my
12 father-in-law and it was a strict no contact. No other
13 details were given to us except to stress that if we
14 broke those restrictions we risked losing all the kids
15 in our care. We followed the rules. It really upset my
16 youngest daughter as they could not see their grandad in
17 the six months before he passed away.

18 I have been asked if I had any knowledge of
19 behaviour or if there were any signs by my father-in-law
20 relating to abuse. They never had much contact with my
21 kids. At that time we did not have a good relationship
22 with my husband's family. My daughter often asks why
23 she never had sleepovers there. The reason she didn't
24 wasn't because of the allegations, it was just that the
25 relationship between us at that time prevented this.

1 I never saw a police officer during the entire
2 length of the investigations. We were not given any
3 details other than what the link worker was able to tell
4 us. The first I knew what it was about was when I saw
5 'Linda's' statement.

6 We were not see my sister-in-law as 'Linda' was at
7 my sister-in-law's at the time she made the allegation.
8 If 'Dylan' needed to see his family I would stay at home
9 with the kids so he could visit.

10 The last time 'Dylan' saw his father was the day his
11 father died. He had received a phone call from his
12 mother saying she had found him lying ill on the kitchen
13 floor and she needed help. He went straight there but
14 I had to stay home. We tried to stick to the social
15 work restrictions but this was something that could not
16 be avoided."

17 From paragraphs 123 to 130 'Clair' refers to various
18 allegations made by 'Linda' against 'Clair's
19 sister-in-law 'Susan'. These included putting foster
20 children outside as punishment, being verbally abusive
21 towards 'Linda' and her sister, making 'Linda' and
22 another girl batter 'Linda's' sister and making a foster
23 child eat cigarettes. 'Clair's response is that she
24 doesn't know about these things, wasn't there, didn't
25 hear the verbal abuse and can't comment. She says that

1 she rarely saw her sister-in-law interacting with the
2 children in her care. She refers to two occasions when
3 they were at each other's houses, at a Christening and
4 a Confirmation or Communion, and there were no issues at
5 those times.

6 Moving to page 26 and paragraph 131:

7 "'Linda' adds that my sister-in-law 'drank whisky
8 and vodka and would tell us to pour it for her. She
9 could drink three-quarters of a bottle of vodka or
10 whisky in one night'. I knew she would have a drink at
11 a party but I did not know what she did in her home, my
12 husband and I are not big drinkers and it is not
13 something we ever paid attention to.

14 'Linda' adds again about my sister-in-law that she
15 would get really aggressive when drunk. She would get
16 really angry and ask you about things and then twist
17 what you said so she could shout at you've. I don't
18 know about that. Any time we saw her at a party it was
19 a happy occasion. Everybody was happy and the kids were
20 enjoying themselves. It seems what she is talking about
21 was within the house and we weren't there.

22 At paragraphs 133 and 134 'Clair' refers to
23 allegations made by 'Linda' against 'Clair's'
24 sister-in-law 'Susan' saying that her family didn't want
25 her, throwing things and saying that they would be taken

1 to a children's unit. 'Clair' says that she doesn't
2 know and is not aware of the matters raised.

3 Moving to page 27 and paragraph 135:

4 "Another thing 'Linda' alleges again about my
5 sister-in-law is in relation to an incident after school
6 one day when she was doing her national 5s and she also
7 makes an allegation that 'Susan' didn't like her
8 studying. Where she talks about my sister-in-law
9 stopping her education, my son is really clever and has
10 a masters in chemistry and he would go along to help
11 tutor 'Linda'. 'Linda' asked for the help and I think
12 it was to do with maths and chemistry. He went along
13 several nights a week helping her. How would my
14 sister-in-law allow this if she was preventing 'Linda's'
15 education? That really confused me.

16 In relation to food, 'Linda' says that she wasn't
17 fed properly at my sister-in-law's. Most mealtimes
18 I was at my own house. I did sometimes take my children
19 to McDonald's on a couple of Fridays a month. We may
20 have met them while we were there. I presume my
21 sister-in-law was taking 'Linda' there as a treat as we
22 did with our kids. I always saw 'Linda' as a slim girl,
23 her sister was slightly bigger built and I always
24 presumed that it was 'Linda's' body make-up, being thin.

25 'Linda' makes mention of an entry in her diary,

1 'I always knew I wasn't counted as family or remotely
2 included'. She never communicated with us or spoke to
3 us much. She would even walk past us in the street.
4 The other kids would pop into our house. If 'Linda' had
5 come to us, we would have helped her."

6 Moving over the page to paragraph 139:

7 "In relation to my sister-in-law's husband, 'Linda'
8 says that 'he could be the same as his wife when he was
9 sober. He would shout all the time'. I don't know what
10 she is talking about. He is a really quiet guy.

11 'Linda' continues about my sister-in-law's husband
12 saying that 'he was especially partial to another of the
13 foster girls' and says that 'it was mostly him that
14 would go off his head at us if we stood up to that girl
15 when she was doing horrible things to us. He was so
16 unfair'. She goes on to say:

17 "Even when she hit us, she didn't get told off. The
18 argument all of us had was that she was old enough to
19 know better but we were painted to be pure bullies'."

20 'Clair' responds:

21 "I am not aware of this, but regarding bullying
22 I have discovered in the last couple of days that
23 'Linda' was a bully."

24 Moving on to page 29 and paragraph 143:

25 "'Linda' mentions 'my uncle at least acknowledges

1 that I am in a funk as he calls it. Little does he know
2 it's much worse than that'."

3 I think that's a quote from 'Linda's' diary.

4 "I presume she is meaning my husband. She never
5 called him that at any other time."

6 At paragraph 144 'Clair' again refers to an entry in
7 'Linda's' diary and in response to that she says:

8 "We did not really see them that much so I never
9 heard or saw anything between them. They would even go
10 to have breakfast by themselves and would not invite us.
11 That's just the way they were."

12 I have to say that I'm not entirely clear as to whom
13 she is referring in that paragraph.

14 LADY SMITH: No.

15 MS INNES: Anyway it then goes on to say:

16 "When our children saw her grandad they had a good
17 time. My daughter does ask why she was not allowed to
18 stay overnight but my sister-in-law's kids might.
19 I think it was because the relationship was not there.
20 It was not us stopping them, it was to do with the
21 grandparents.

22 'Linda' says 'at the bells, they made me sit
23 on ...'"

24 Her grandfather, who is 'Clair's father-in-law, so
25 his knee for a photo'. 'Clair' says:

1 "I don't recall any pictures being taken.

2 With regard to my husband, 'Linda' says 'he was
3 really funny too and I liked spending time with him, but
4 when you got him angry he was so scary. You didn't want
5 to get in his bad books, he was worse than the
6 grandparents'. That is not true. He is a gentle giant.
7 My daughter fought to stay with us and even got a lawyer
8 involved so she could stay with us. She would not do
9 that if he was that bad.

10 Again she says about my husband 'Nothing happened
11 during the few days that they were at our house'. But
12 then she goes on to refer to him being brutal in his
13 discipline. He is not that kind of person. I don't
14 know why she is bringing us into this as this was not
15 part of her original statement. The police and social
16 work would not have left them with us if we were
17 involved in her original complaint.

18 Another thing she says about my husband was that 'he
19 used to make one of their foster girls sit on the stairs
20 for hours at a time as a punishment'. We used the
21 naughty step, we waited until the particular child had
22 calmed down. We would then have them sit on the step
23 for two minutes. If they had hit one of the other
24 children we would ask them if they needed to apologise.
25 We took no other action. The kids would be too young to

1 understand anything else. 'Linda' could never have seen
2 the naughty step being used when she was there.

3 'Linda' says 'they adopted a girl and she told them
4 that one of the wee boys they fostered hit her in the
5 face with car keys and he slapped the boy hard for that.
6 The boy was really young. I didn't see this but one of
7 the girls told me about it'. There is an element of
8 truth in what she is saying. It was during one of the
9 school periods and 'Dylan' was at work. My daughter was
10 there. The boy got a key, not a car key, and put it
11 into my daughter's face threatening to poke her in the
12 eye with it. I was in the kitchen. One of the other
13 children screamed. I ran in and got hold of the key but
14 he had cut her with it. My daughter still has a scar
15 from the cut under her eye. My daughter remembers that
16 incident and can recall when I telephoned my husband and
17 told him what had happened. At the end of this we
18 reported it to the social work but I can say that
19 'Dylan' was definitely not there.

20 Even after the key incident, people and other kids
21 were always asking how my daughter got the cut on her
22 face and she would tell them about the boy who did it.
23 It was never any secret.

24 With regard to the incident with the key, I phoned
25 my link worker and the boy's social worker. There was

1 then a referral made to the Notre Dame Centre in
2 Glasgow. They saw him for about six sessions.

3 If we had any issues with any of the children we
4 reported this to our link worker and also to the social
5 worker who was looking after the relevant child.

6 If the children had concerns they knew they could
7 speak to me. They were also close to my sister and
8 still are. They could speak to my brother or my father
9 as well. The older ones all had the numbers for social
10 work on their phones.

11 If what 'Linda' is saying had actually happened then
12 yes it would be abuse. My concern is that she has taken
13 an incident which she has no knowledge of and twisted it
14 to suit and she has dragged us into it.

15 'Linda' has said in her statement about me and my
16 husband that she saw us drag the girl upstairs and force
17 her into the shower while she was screaming. I know who
18 she is referring to. She was never afraid of the
19 shower. She is the girl I have already talked about who
20 had a fear of the toilet. I dealt with all the personal
21 care for that girl. My husband was not involved, mainly
22 because of her being slightly older and he did not bath
23 the girls at that time. I can assure you that the
24 showers were never an issue. Again, 'Linda' has
25 a little piece of knowledge and has twisted this to suit

1 her.

2 I am not aware of any complaints or allegations of
3 abuse being made. But there was a girl who came to us
4 for a couple of days and she arrived with all her
5 clothes which were pink and white. Over the weekend we
6 were going to the park and it was all very muddy, I knew
7 she was the same size as one of my daughters so I gave
8 her a tracksuit she could wear instead. They all had
9 fun in all the mud and when we got home we got changed.
10 It was a miserable weekend as far as the weather was
11 concerned and we were just hanging about in the house,
12 playing, but dressed in pyjamas and casuals. When she
13 was leaving at the end of the couple of days the social
14 work complained that we had not dressed her in her own
15 clothes. We were just trying to protect them from
16 getting all muddy.

17 The girl's parents made a complaint to the social
18 workers about the clothes not being used and they said
19 she had coal up her nose. My link worker carried out
20 the investigation and came to the house. She checked it
21 and confirmed we had nothing in the house which would
22 need us to use coal. I explained to the link worker
23 that we just did not want her designer clothes getting
24 ruined. The link worker told us that she had no issue
25 with what we did.

1 'Linda' further states about 'Dylan', 'One time at
2 Christmas he told me and two other girls to clean the
3 bathroom. I used bleach and didn't wear gloves and
4 didn't wear gloves and we got punished for that. Both
5 of them took the three of us to a Christmas fair in
6 Glasgow, along with a boy who was a relative of hers.
7 Only he was allowed to go on any of the rides. We had
8 to just stand and watch and they made comments like,
9 "That's what you get for being bad", it was horrible,
10 I was so upset the whole time. I think I was about
11 eight'."

12 'Clair' responds:

13 "I never took 'Linda' to any Christmas fair. I have
14 asked my brother about any fair and he reminded me that
15 during the period 'Linda' was talking about he was in
16 a wheelchair. He had been hit by a car in late 2006 and
17 his legs were smashed to pieces. He used the chair
18 until around 2009. In 2009 'Linda' was eight and my
19 brother had a cage with pins in his legs and the
20 carnival people would not allow him on the rides. At
21 that time I also had our own children and I would not be
22 taking other kids without taking my own. My brother
23 thinks the only time I took him to a carnival was before
24 I was married, so I would not have known any of the
25 kids.

1 None of the children were allowed to use bleach or
2 any like product. As far as the cleaning is concerned,
3 I had my own way of doing the cleaning and would not let
4 anyone else do it.

5 I have been asked if it is possible that my memory
6 has been affected with the passage of time. The exact
7 dates and times, that is a possibility. As far as the
8 relationship with 'Linda', that is not true, we never
9 had that relationship."

10 At paragraph 163:

11 "I don't know why she is bringing it up now. We
12 were never part of her original investigations. We did
13 everything that our link worker instructed us to do,
14 partly because if we didn't, they were threatening to
15 take our kids away. The effect of that was the kids
16 missed out on seeing their grandfather before he died,
17 and they struggle with that. No police officer ever
18 came to see us and there were no issues with any of our
19 kids."

20 At paragraph 165:

21 "I have not made any statement to the police or any
22 other organisation.

23 I don't think the kids were always comfortable
24 talking to their social worker about things that are
25 going wrong. I think it would be better if they had

1 someone like a befriender that they are more comfortable
2 to speak to. They could maybe go out and have a private
3 conversation with someone who is not linked to social
4 work and would help them.

5 I think they need to be looking into more of what
6 kids say when they have been abused. I know that what
7 'Linda' is saying against my husband and I is false, but
8 if anything else is said they need to look at it. If
9 what she says against my father-in-law is found to be
10 false, where is the protection for the carers? He died
11 of a heart attack and a stroke caused by the stress of
12 the allegations. 'Linda's' sister was removed and she
13 said that she was upset as she was happy where she was.
14 Again, if this is all found to be untrue, who is
15 responsible for all this? I fully agree that if any of
16 it is true then 'Linda' needs to be protected, but what
17 about all our other kids affected by what she said?

18 I have no objection to my witness statement being
19 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
20 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
21 true."

22 'Clair' has signed her statement on 29 March 2022.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS INNES: Ms Rattray will do the next read-in.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 Ms Rattray, when you're ready.

2 'Dylan' (read)

3 MS RATTRAY: This read-in is of a witness who is anonymous

4 and has the pseudonym 'Dylan' and the cypher is FLP.

5 'Dylan's' statement is at WIT-1-000000956.

6 We've already heard about 'Dylan'. 'Dylan' is

7 married to 'Clair' and they were foster carers for

8 Glasgow City Council from about 2003 until 2015.

9 An applicant with the pseudonym 'Linda' was in foster

10 care with 'Clair' and 'Dylan' for a few days in 2008.

11 She also spent a period in foster care with 'Dylan's'

12 parents from 2004 to 2008 and another period with

13 'Dylan's' sister, who has the pseudonym 'Susan', and her

14 husband from 2008 to early 2015.

15 LADY SMITH: We heard from 'Susan' this morning.

16 MS RATTRAY: We heard from 'Susan' this morning, and

17 obviously we have just heard from 'Clair' in her

18 read-in.

19 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

20 MS RATTRAY: As with the previous read-in, whilst the whole

21 statement relates to foster care, I will read some parts

22 of it and not others.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS RATTRAY: "My name is 'Dylan'. I was born in 1971. My

25 contact details are known to the Inquiry.

1 Previously I worked for the council as a joiner but
2 I had to quit my job when my wife and I adopted a child
3 as that was part of the requirements set out by social
4 work. We were told that this was to allow me to spend
5 time with our adopted kid. That was about 15 or 16
6 years ago. I don't know how long I had to stop working
7 but two years is in my mind. We were still fostering at
8 this time.

9 My wife and I applied to become foster carers just
10 before we got married, which was about 20 years ago.

11 I was brought up with foster kids from when I was 15
12 or 16 years old so it seemed natural to become a foster
13 carer. I would come home from work and would be handed
14 a baby instead of a dinner. I was used to feeding
15 a baby first so it made me want to foster kids. It was
16 always something that was a nice feeling of achievement
17 when you see what they are like when they first come
18 into the house to when they leave. It is good to see
19 the big difference.

20 I don't remember clearly the process we had to
21 follow when we applied but we went for meetings in
22 a social work office and we had to attend a meeting
23 a week for maybe three months. I also think we went in
24 front of a panel for an interview-type thing. We
25 applied to Families for Children in Glasgow but I don't

1 remember if we had to apply in writing first.

2 I don't think we were required to have any
3 particular experience or qualifications to become
4 a foster carer.

5 I think they would have done police checks and
6 things like that for both of us. I am quite positive
7 they done all that.

8 I think it was about a year to a year and a half to
9 complete the process before we were approved. I could
10 be wrong but I think it was at least a year.

11 After we were approved we did do some training
12 courses and I think the link worker we had would come
13 out and visit the house to check on things every so
14 often. I would say every couple of months but I could
15 be wrong as at that time I would be working.

16 I remember we were given some training about child
17 abuse but I don't remember the other topics covered.
18 I would say we didn't receive specific training about
19 dealing with children who had perhaps been physically or
20 sexually abused, neglected, had disabilities or had
21 suffered bereavement. My wife had a lot of professional
22 childcare experience and had worked with disabled kids
23 before we started fostering. My wife had a lot of
24 qualifications linked to that work experience.

25 I honestly cannot remember what child protection

1 training was given.

2 I don't think we were given any training about
3 disciplining children or managing difficult behaviour.
4 Obviously you could speak to the link worker about that
5 and they would ask you things. I think at that time
6 there was a woman called Supernanny on the TV. She
7 would show parents how to deal with difficult behaviour
8 and that could help us. I would say we would ask for
9 advice if a situation came up. I would say though that
10 sometimes when situations did come up it didn't mean you
11 would get any training. We would always run things past
12 social work though.

13 We could refuse to take a child, however I would say
14 that the social work put it in a way that was a guilt
15 trip. They would tell us they just needed the kid
16 looked after for a short time but we could have them for
17 a year. We had a lot of difficult kids who came to us.

18 I don't remember if there was any training in the
19 different types of foster care but we were emergency and
20 short term, however we also had kids that were long term
21 as well. We ended up having a wide range of different
22 types of placement.

23 I do know that I had to get time off my work for
24 a training course which was over ten weeks. We had to
25 go for a full day each week and it was in a building in

1 the centre of Glasgow which wasn't a social work office.

2 Other than a book we got with each child who came to
3 us, I don't remember any written guidance that was given
4 to us.

5 Thinking about things now, I think social work
6 should give foster carers a lot more training. This
7 should cover absolutely everything. I say that because
8 I think we were underprepared for a lot of the children
9 who came to us. I think because of my wife's background
10 she had a lot of experience but I didn't have that kind
11 of training. Say for instance a child with any health
12 condition, maybe cancer or something, there should be
13 training for carers to know how to cope and support the
14 child. I don't think the training should cover one
15 specific thing. It has to be general as well to cover
16 things children might have experienced like a recent
17 bereavement or abuse.

18 We were definitely not employed as there was no
19 salary paid. It was an allowance that was paid.
20 I wouldn't class it as being self-employed. I don't
21 think we had any rights such as an employed person would
22 have and I didn't feel we were working for someone.

23 We did get to choose the type of foster care
24 arrangement we wanted but it was a weird one because we
25 could get an emergency placement, which I am positive

1 was only meant to be for up to three months but which
2 lasted a year. My times could be wrong but I think
3 emergency placements were up to three months, short term
4 was from three months to about a year and long term was
5 a year plus. It never ever worked that way. We had
6 a kid who was with us for about nine years who had come
7 in as an emergency.

8 We did get a choice of the age range of the children
9 as well as the number of kids we would take, but then
10 again it never always stuck to that. For instance, the
11 girl who ended up staying with us for nine years had
12 come to us with her sister who was above the age range
13 we had specified. From memory I think we wanted
14 children up to the age of ten but I might be wrong.
15 I know that we could have said no to social work when
16 they asked us to take kids out of the age range we
17 wanted but they were emergencies and we would be told
18 that they had tried everyone else and we were their last
19 hope. It's hard to say no when you have this kid who
20 needs somewhere to go. It was like emotional blackmail.

21 We were allocated a link worker for our own support.
22 They changed all the time and I couldn't even tell you
23 any of their names now."

24 Now to paragraph 25:

25 "We treated our role as a profession where we

1 treated the kids like we did our own and took them on
2 all our holidays and things like that. We didn't
3 believe in sending them to respite. I do think that
4 fostering should be considered a profession.

5 I don't know if it would be a good idea for foster
6 carers to have childcare qualifications, as the problem
7 with this is it would reduce the number of people who
8 could become carers. There are a lot of good carers out
9 there that don't have childcare qualifications. Don't
10 get me wrong, it might be an idea that after someone
11 becomes a carer social work put them through the
12 qualifications if they don't already have them.
13 I wouldn't say it should be a requirement to have it
14 before becoming a foster carer so it doesn't exclude
15 anyone. I think by putting them through qualifications
16 and maybe stipulating it needs to be done within a year
17 of becoming a carer would help get different people into
18 fostering.

19 If I think of anything that could be changed about
20 the foster carers work arrangements I would say
21 definitely qualifications. I think they should have
22 something in place to give two weeks a year to give
23 foster carers a break and it would be their choice
24 whether they take it. You should be given holiday time
25 because if it was a proper job you would be given

1 holiday time. That's a difficult one as you want to
2 treat the kids as your own family and we chose not to
3 have a break without the kids. That was a matter of
4 choice for us.

5 You got an allowance per kid per week or fortnight
6 and I think the amount differed depending on the age of
7 the child. I'm positive the amount was higher the older
8 the kid was. I'm not 100 per cent sure, but I would say
9 it was something like a couple of hundred pounds
10 a fortnight per kid. It was the social work who would
11 pay it and as it was an allowance it wasn't taxable.
12 I think by the time we were finishing they were trying
13 to make it that tax would have to be paid on it.

14 The allowance was all spent on the kids. At
15 Christmas they would maybe give you £100 to £150 for
16 Christmas presents and the same for their birthday. We
17 spent at least twice as much as the social work gave us.
18 We would also take them on holidays and at one point we
19 had a caravan and we would go there every weekend.
20 Every single penny got spent on the kids. I think you
21 do get carers who spend as little money as possible on
22 the kids but it wasn't like that with us.

23 We weren't given any other financial support for
24 other things like clothes or toys unless it was
25 an emergency placement. When kids arrived they would

1 give you £100 if they came with no clothes at all.

2 Until the first payment of allowance you only had that
3 £100 and we had kids arrive dressed in these forensic
4 suits with just underwear on underneath. We would use
5 our own money because there wasn't enough to get kids
6 fully kitted and feed them until the first pay.

7 I didn't feel the financial support was adequate.
8 I think if you only had one kid it might be, but at one
9 point we were up to six kids and that means extra
10 finances. We worked it out at one point and the pay was
11 something like less than £1 per hour we got. We had
12 a lot of kids who would wet the bed a lot and they
13 didn't give you anything to help with things like that.
14 We went through a lot of mattresses and bedding and
15 there was no help for that. I do think that if the
16 government was to pay foster carers a proper wage they
17 would go bust.

18 It was me and my wife who were fostering. My son
19 lived at home as well and he would have been 12 or 13
20 when we started.

21 I think our son came along to a couple of the
22 meetings at the start and spoke to social work. He was
23 taken away from us so they could talk to him alone about
24 things.

25 My son has been brought up around my mum and sister

1 who fostered kids long before us so he was used to
2 having foster kids around him.

3 When we first started we were living in an area of
4 Glasgow then we moved to another house in the same area.
5 We then moved to another area close by. When all the
6 stuff happened with my father being accused of abusing
7 a foster kid we moved to another house which was a fair
8 bit away. The last move was sort of agreed but it was
9 also forced because of the stuff against my father.

10 The first house was four in a block on the ground
11 floor. It had three bedrooms so it was one for me and
12 my wife, one for my son and one for the foster kid. We
13 had two foster kids but it had to be siblings. We had
14 a kitchen and living room and there was a back garden.

15 We moved to a bigger house, which had a living room,
16 kitchen, bedroom and a toilet downstairs. Upstairs had
17 three bedrooms and a bathroom. The attic had been
18 converted, which gave another bedroom. I don't remember
19 how many kids we were allowed in that house.

20 I think social work had a ratio for the number of
21 kids a foster carer could have but I think that changed
22 if they were desperate. That meant the number of kids
23 we could have was not set in stone in any of the houses
24 we stayed in. Kids didn't all have their own room and
25 siblings could share and I think we had times where it

1 would be two non-related girls who shared, but it
2 wouldn't be mixed. You wouldn't be allowed to have
3 a girl and a boy in the same room.

4 The houses were in perfect condition. My wife is
5 OCD when it comes to cleaning. Put it this way, social
6 workers were in and out all the time and not one of them
7 mentioned anything about a dirty house.

8 We had heard that a lot of foster carers had got
9 money off the social work for extensions and things like
10 that and we did ask if we would qualify to extend our
11 third house but we didn't get anything.

12 Over the 10-15 years we fostered I don't know
13 exactly how many children we have fostered. It is
14 definitely over 20 and possibly over 50. The children
15 who came to us were aged from newborn to 17/18 years
16 old. We could take boys and girls. I think the most we
17 fostered at one time was six, but I could be wrong and
18 it might be five.

19 We didn't know any of the kids before we fostered
20 them and none of them were related to us. It was always
21 Glasgow City Council who placed kids with us.

22 Other than my own kid, who we adopted, I didn't
23 change any of the foster kids' names.

24 In general for emergency placements the amount of
25 notice we got about a foster child coming really

1 depended on where they were at the time. It was a phone
2 call and however long it took them to drive to us. Some
3 placements could be ten minutes to an hour's notice.
4 Other placements could have been as much as a few days,
5 but we didn't get notice that stretched into weeks or
6 anything like that.

7 I don't think that children were matched with foster
8 carers. I am under the impression it is just who they
9 could get. I am not sure I can say as I don't know if
10 the social work did try or not.

11 When I consider if I think if the other children
12 were well matched to us it is hard to say but we still
13 have one of our foster kids staying with us when she
14 fought to make us her legal guardians.

15 Sometimes kids would arrive with no information
16 given to us, but most of the time I think we were told
17 that parents couldn't look after them. Other than that
18 we didn't get a lot of information. A kid came in
19 wearing nappies and we didn't know about that until she
20 was staying with us. We didn't even know if social work
21 had tried to find out why she was still in nappies.

22 Each child arrived with a book which was either blue
23 or red and it had medical things in it. I was working
24 so it was mainly my wife who dealt with this.

25 When a kid comes in, social work are not allowed to

1 tell you anything about them. They just don't tell you
2 anything about their history. That was hard to deal
3 with. As an example, back in those days, AIDs was a big
4 thing and we asked if they were allowed to tell us if
5 a kid had it. Social work told us they would not tell
6 us that. That didn't allow us to prepare and also
7 prepare our household. They didn't go into any depth
8 about kids so they would give some minor information but
9 not a lot. In my mind they have to let carers know
10 a lot more.

11 I don't know what preparation was done with the kids
12 before they got to us but we didn't get any. It was
13 just a phone call. We met all the others when they got
14 out the car and came to our front door. Don't get me
15 wrong, a lot of these kids came in the middle of the
16 night, but even with the non-emergency placements we
17 didn't meet the kid until they arrived to stay.

18 It's hard for me to know what a child was thinking
19 but I would say most of them settled quite quickly.
20 Most of the time all the kids got on with each other.
21 My son at that time and even when he was older sat in
22 his room like a typical teenager playing video games, if
23 you know what I mean. Even now I can't get my two
24 lassies out of their room. It's just an age thing.

25 I definitely think there should be a lot more

1 preparation when kids are moving to a new foster
2 placement. The new carers should get to know some
3 background and what experiences they have had going from
4 one care placement to the other. We had one where they
5 went from one foster carer to us and the phone call we
6 got was something like the boy had just hit another wean
7 over the head with a spanner and social work were asking
8 if we could take him. We were thinking that he had just
9 assaulted a kid and they wanted him to move to a house
10 with other kids. We agreed to take him on the
11 understanding if he assaulted any kid in our house we
12 would be calling them to have him removed. Don't get me
13 wrong, the wee boy turned out to be an absolutely
14 fantastic kid. What we found out was that he was very
15 small and the boy he hit had been making fun of him
16 about his height. He was only seven or eight and he hit
17 the boy because he was being tormented. He was
18 an absolutely amazing kid.

19 The child we adopted came in as a foster kid first
20 with a view to adopt. We already knew she was going up
21 for adoption when we took her in as a foster child.
22 Timescales aren't my best so I am not sure how long she
23 was with us before we adopted her. She arrived when she
24 was one or two and she is now coming up for 17.

25 I think social work did try to carry out a matching

1 process with us and our adopted kid. They knew she was
2 going for adoption so I think it was our link worker who
3 thought she was a perfect match for us. Social work
4 were aware we were looking to adopt as we had gone
5 through these processes as well.

6 The only child I met before they came to us was my
7 adopted daughter. We went for a wee hour visit."

8 From paragraphs 56 to 86, 'Dylan' speaks about the
9 daily routine in the household. The children had full
10 access to the bathrooms and the doors had locks.

11 'Dylan' and 'Clair' provided clothing from the
12 allowance. 'Clair' did the laundry. She also did the
13 cooking, sometimes making several different meals to
14 cater for the children's tastes. The children had
15 access to toys and books and could take them away when
16 they left. Every child got pocket money.

17 'Dylan' and 'Clair' enjoyed being more active with
18 the children outside rather than sitting in the house.
19 They helped the children with their homework and usually
20 attended parents' evenings.

21 To paragraph 87 on page 16:

22 "It depended on what the kids done when it came to
23 discipline. We tried to follow the methods shown by
24 Supernanny. When you went into our house the living
25 room and the stairwell were all in one, as there wasn't

1 a hallway. We could put the kids on the naughty step
2 for two minutes, which was the step at the bottom. When
3 they came off it we would talk and find out if they
4 wanted to apologise for what they had done. We had
5 an egg timer we would use to check the time. It was
6 usually when a kid hit another kid type of behaviour we
7 would send them to the naughty step. They would
8 apologise and that was it. Most of the time that
9 worked. I don't think anyone was ever grounded so maybe
10 the older kids would be sent to their room to think
11 about things and half the time they would come down
12 after a wee while apologising for whatever it was.

13 It would be either me or my wife who would deal with
14 discipline. Whoever had witnessed the behaviour dealt
15 with it. We would have times when one kid would say
16 another had done something but you can't discipline if
17 you haven't witnessed it. That was how it was in our
18 eyes. We didn't have to discipline the children very
19 often.

20 Children were never physically punished ever.
21 I have never physically done anything to any kid in my
22 care.

23 There wasn't any advice or guidance given to us from
24 social work about managing children's behaviour. Every
25 social worker had a different view of discipline and

1 things like that.

2 We didn't have to keep any records of any discipline
3 we used for the children.

4 I think I had a brilliant relationship with the kids
5 who I cared for and we still talk to a lot of them.

6 I think I had a good and fun relationship with the kids.

7 The way my wife and I behaved is we treated the kids
8 as our own, so any holidays we went on were the kids'
9 holidays as well."

10 To paragraph 98, page 18:

11 "I did try to give emotional support and show
12 emotion but a lot of the time the social workers would
13 say we weren't allowed to. I wouldn't have any of the
14 kids sitting on my knee or anything like that, but one
15 of the wee boys would love to come up and just sit
16 beside us on the couch watching cartoons. I was
17 brilliant at watching cartoons. He would just love
18 that. Some social workers would have an issue with
19 this. When we went to the meetings to become a foster
20 carer they would tell us we must treat the kids like
21 they are one of our own. They drilled that into you but
22 then they started tying your hands behind your back
23 telling you when you were fostering what you were and
24 were not allowed to do. We tried to never be alone with
25 a foster child as that was something we were always

1 taught but see if a kid wants to snuggle in watching
2 cartoons with other kids there, what's wrong with that?
3 Some social workers told us we weren't allowed to do
4 that and some were okay with it. You really didn't know
5 what was and wasn't allowed. I used to play a game
6 where I would just lie on the floor and the kids would
7 all jump over the top of me. They loved it but I had
8 one social worker who asked what would happen if one of
9 them was to say I had hit them. I said I could be
10 sitting on the couch and someone could say that that
11 happened. I told her I don't move, they just use me as
12 a bouncy castle.

13 I would say the relationships with the foster kids
14 and my own children were fine. They even went on
15 holidays with us, so that says something. My boy was
16 there for Euro Disney as well and there were a few
17 foster kids there. They all had a ball.

18 My wife had a fantastic relationship with the foster
19 kids. There were actually an awful lot of kids who
20 asked if they could call us mum and dad in front of
21 people. We would say that it had to go through social
22 work, because everything like that had to be approved by
23 them. We didn't mind at all but some of the parents
24 would not want this.

25 The foster kids were treated the same as our kids,

1 no one treated them differently."

2 Moving to paragraph 109, page 20:

3 "I think social work should think more about the
4 contact kids have with their parents. I think it would
5 be good to have set places for the contact. I think
6 there was a contact centre in Pollokshaws, but having
7 the contact in the social work office was not fair on
8 the kids. These places are not normally the brightest
9 places and are not child friendly. I always thought the
10 children would view that building as the place where
11 they were removed from their parents. I never ever
12 thought that was the greatest of things. I think
13 somewhere neutral would have been better. They could
14 use an old school or something like that and do it up so
15 each classroom was used for different things. Maybe one
16 room could have the wean's social worker and the others
17 for visitations."

18 Now to paragraph 112 on page 21:

19 "The social workers for the kids would visit quite
20 regularly at our house. They would speak to me and
21 would ask me things, like how their behaviour had been,
22 how they have been doing in school, any problems and
23 just general chit chat. They would also speak to the
24 kids without us being there. If you had three or four
25 kids you would have three or four social work visits.

1 I don't think there was a week that we didn't have
2 social workers visiting. The kids' foster carers didn't
3 speak to our kids. There would be no need to.

4 When everything happened with my father, all my kids
5 were spoken to by social work.

6 Our link worker would visit quite often doing
7 planned and unplanned visits, we would have chit-chat
8 and just asked how things were going. They would ask if
9 there was anything they could do and if you said they
10 would just ignore it anyway. They would ask general
11 welfare things, but I don't think anyone ever asked me
12 or my wife about our welfare. I do think they probably
13 spoke to us about how things were going and I would say
14 we had a couple of really nice link workers but they
15 changed quite a bit. Our link worker would speak to the
16 foster kids and that was done in private so we wouldn't
17 know what they said. I will take a guess and say that
18 they spoke to the kids in case they wanted to speak
19 about something they didn't want us to hear.

20 There was no one other than social workers who would
21 come and speak to the kids.

22 I know there is a lot of criticism about social
23 work, but I would also say that there were some really
24 great social workers. They weren't all bad.

25 I would say there was no link between our link

1 worker and the child's social worker. They are from two
2 different sections. The link worker is from an office
3 on the south side, whereas the kids' social workers were
4 from all over. They weren't even in the same building
5 as each other. I did feel there was a bit of
6 a disconnect and even when we went for meetings my link
7 worker for most of the time kept quiet. I always felt
8 there was a lack of communication in the social work and
9 that, coupled with different social workers having
10 different views on how things should be done, left
11 things unclear. As an example, one of our boys got his
12 pocket money split up, so that if he had a good night he
13 would get 10 pence and if he went to school the same.
14 We were trying to work with him to reward good
15 behaviour. It was that kind of thing but it was great
16 to see him go to the van and spend his money. The
17 following week if he was say 30 pence down you could see
18 him thinking that if he actually behaves he gets more
19 money. We had some social workers saying that that was
20 a great idea, but the senior link worker told us we
21 weren't allowed to take a wean's pocket money off him.
22 We just have to accept what they said even if other
23 social workers [I think this should read 'didn't agree']
24 with it. She was a woman who had never had a kid and
25 was high up telling people like us, who had lots of

1 experience looking after foster kids, how to do things.
2 I'm not saying I am an expert, but I feel we had valid
3 opinions to help look after children.

4 The problem with the social work department is that
5 if some things get said then you are guilty until you
6 prove yourself innocent. I think that has to change,
7 being automatically guilty no matter what it is or no
8 matter how outrageous it is needs to change. It never
9 happened to us, but I know a couple of carers that it
10 did. Even now I still talk to a lot of carers and it
11 has never changed.

12 No offence but everything this girl who has made the
13 allegations about me says about us is absolutely crap
14 and the more people who pay attention to that, it is
15 just going to get worse and worse.

16 I think they could have social work visits more
17 often, even if it's only for five minutes. If they pop
18 in when passing and have a cup of tea. They don't need
19 to make all the visits official, make it look like
20 they've just dropped by. That could make things more
21 relaxed for the kids.

22 We had a foster carers' review every year. If
23 anything had been said about us they would bring it back
24 up, even if it had been proved it was a lot of rubbish.

25 Reviews for kids all depended on the situation for

1 each kid. If it was an emergency I would say that the
2 reviews were more often, short term would be further
3 apart and if it was long term then they could maybe be
4 once a year.

5 We did have an input into the kids' care plans but
6 I would say that social work never listened. I don't
7 think we ever saw any copies of care plans.

8 We would go to Children's Hearings at the panel at
9 Bell Street, Glasgow. The foster child would be there.
10 Each kid went to a panel once a year and we went with
11 them. My biggest thing with social workers is when they
12 were in a meeting they didn't really speak to people at
13 a level they could be comfortable with and understand.
14 I think some of the kids and their families needed to
15 hear it in a more basic level. I have an HNC and other
16 qualifications and some of the things they would say in
17 meetings would leave me not knowing what they were
18 saying. A lot of the arguments with the kids' parents
19 was because they were confused. When they actually put
20 it into simpler terms it didn't cause the same problems.
21 I would be sitting at meetings thinking that if they
22 worded things differently they could have avoided near
23 ruckuses. I would say that there was a whole lot of
24 lack of or poor communication."

25 Now to paragraph 128 on page 24:

1 "I think there needs to be an awful lot more
2 communication between social work and foster carers.
3 From my understanding I don't think things have changed
4 that much from the time we fostered. Back then social
5 work would come and talk to us and then talk to the kids
6 privately. Even if there wasn't anything negative said
7 they wouldn't tell you. I understand if a kid put in
8 a complaint about a carer then that is fair dos. I have
9 never had a bad complaint about us.

10 We weren't given any written or verbal guidance or
11 instruction about keeping written records. We were
12 never asked to keep any. Basically any updates we were
13 told to give verbally to our link worker. We were not
14 told to keep a diary or anything.

15 In this day and age everything is done on computers,
16 so they could actually do something where they get
17 a laptop with a program where everyone adds things onto
18 a central database, it could hold records and things
19 like that. When you are at your yearly fostering review
20 you could be asked about something that happened nine
21 months before, which you might have forgotten about. If
22 there was something there, then the carer could sit on
23 the laptop and be able to refer to things that had
24 happened months ago. The foster carer's link worker and
25 the kid's social worker should have access to this.

1 This would maybe help the communication between all the
2 different people involved in the care of a child. It
3 would help them work a lot closer."

4 To paragraph 136 on page 26:

5 "I don't know if there was a procedure to complain
6 about social work or any aspect of a child's care. You
7 worked for them so if you put in a complaint what
8 happens? They force you out the door because they don't
9 like you questioning them.

10 We made a verbal complaint to our link worker's
11 senior following an incident where one of our kids was
12 assaulted by a teacher at nursery. Nothing was done and
13 that is part of the reason we decided to retire from
14 fostering.

15 I think you should be able to make a complaint
16 without any kickbacks from social work. I don't know
17 how you would do it. Whoever the complaint was about
18 would find out, even if it was an independent body. For
19 example, if I went to an independent body to report the
20 senior I complained about for failing to investigate
21 an assault on one of our children they would have to
22 speak to her and she would know where it came from.
23 An independent body might make sure the original point
24 of the complaint was investigated. They would have to
25 do their investigation quickly without the social work

1 knowing."

2 From paragraphs 139 to 148 'Dylan' speaks about
3 challenges with social workers in respect of other
4 foster children. He says that he has no previous
5 convictions. He then speaks of an allegation that
6 a nursery teacher had abused a foster child which his
7 wife reported and which he says was not investigated.

8 I'm now moving to paragraph 149 on page 29:

9 "If I witnessed any abuse by anybody, no matter who
10 it was, I would have reported it.

11 I have never been the subject of any complaint of
12 abuse."

13 Now to paragraph 153 on page 30:

14 "With the benefit of hindsight I do not believe
15 there was anything that was abusive and should have been
16 reported when we were fostering. I believe if I saw
17 something abusive I would have reported it.

18 There was no kid in my care ever abused so no
19 reports were ever needed to be made to the police.

20 I have never given a statement to anyone about my
21 time as a foster carer. I can't actually remember if
22 the social work asked for a statement about the thing to
23 do with my dad, but I don't think they did.

24 I definitely never gave a statement to the police.

25 In relation to allegations of abuse against my

1 father and sister:

2 "All of this was meant to have happened 12 years ago
3 and all of a sudden it is coming out. Why was it not
4 mentioned 12 years ago? The lassie who made the
5 allegations about my father was never in my house other
6 than for two days and she would actually walk past my
7 house and ignore me.

8 At the time I wasn't aware what the accusations were
9 against my father, I just knew it was allegations.
10 I never questioned what they were because I thought if
11 I had the right to know they would tell us. They would
12 probably have told us it was none of our business. It
13 was just put to us that could she come to us until they
14 had done their investigation into the allegations.
15 I don't know the outcome of that investigation but
16 I would guess he was cleared because he was still
17 fostering after it. He was never charged.

18 I really don't know if other people in the family
19 knew about the allegations, but I would take a guess if
20 it happened in my sister's house she would know about
21 it. As it was against my dad, my mum would know about
22 it. I don't know if my brother knows about it.

23 It wasn't discussed as a family unit. It's not that
24 I don't love my family but it's a weird one. I clash
25 heads with them. I have my own way of doing things.

1 I had a close relationship with my family growing up but
2 not when I got married.

3 I was sent a statement of 'Linda' [that's
4 a pseudonym] by the Inquiry but I haven't read it all,
5 my wife has. Some of it is just too difficult to read.
6 The things my dad was meant to have done just made me
7 feel sick. I just couldn't read it. I am aware there
8 are allegations made about my sister and if I had
9 witnessed any of these I would have reported her to
10 social work. I wasn't aware of my sister doing the
11 things said in the statement. I wasn't that often in
12 her house. We had our caravan for four years and
13 I think my mother and sister must have been in it
14 a couple of times. They had a caravan at the same park.
15 This is where it really annoys me because everyone
16 thinks I must have known something was going on but
17 I wasn't in their houses very often. Usually if I was
18 in my mum and dad's house they needed something fixed in
19 their house and I could do joinery.

20 'Linda' has said 'I already wore a bikini and had
21 been in the hot tub and the foster father had made
22 an inappropriate comment to me'. I don't know anything
23 about an inappropriate comment. I have never witnessed
24 any inappropriate comment from anyone in my family.
25 I barely knew the wee girl who's made these allegations.

1 I had her in my house for two days and other than that
2 she was never in my house and she was never in my log
3 cabin.

4 I feel that we were victimised by social work in
5 linking us to my dad and tarring us with the same brush.
6 We abided by absolutely everything that the social
7 worker put down to us. Social work asked us if we
8 believed the allegations and I said I didn't know as
9 I never saw it. Anything that has been said about my
10 dad I can't comment on but no offence, the amount of
11 lies she has made up about me, I am more inclined to
12 stick by my dad now. I am not saying this as if he's
13 guilty, but I never saw anything. I told social work
14 that if I had witnessed anything I would have dealt with
15 it and handed him to the police. I told social work if
16 I had seen anything, whether it was my dad, mum, sister
17 and even my own kid hurting a child, I would have
18 reported it. I wouldn't care who it was, I would tell
19 social work. Kids come first.

20 One of my daughters told social work she was lucky
21 if she saw my dad three or four times. That's it. We
22 had our own life.

23 Don't get me wrong, with the physical stuff that was
24 wrong, with my dad the stuff that she is saying is
25 physically impossible in my eyes but I wasn't there and

1 I never saw anything so I don't know. In my heart I am
2 hoping that it never happened, but in another sense
3 I hope someone wouldn't make it up. You do get girls
4 that do that as well. It's not that this broke up my
5 family but it did take its toll.

6 The biggest thing in my head is the lassie who made
7 the allegations against my father, and now about me, was
8 in my mother and father's house when all this happened,
9 so why would she fight to stay in the family. She
10 fought to move to my sister's so she would still have
11 contact with somebody who had done all that to her.
12 That I don't understand. No offence, but if all of that
13 had happened to you, would you not want away from it?

14 All I can say to the Inquiry is any allegations
15 against my father, if I had witnessed it, I would have
16 leathered him. I would have ended up doing time, but
17 I would have reported him to the social work as well.
18 Anything like that, I don't agree with child abuse so
19 I don't care, I would report it no matter who it was.
20 Even if I hadn't witnessed it but heard about it,
21 I would have phoned social work as I would have wanted
22 it investigated."

23 Now to paragraph 168 on page 34:

24 "I didn't know the girl who's made the allegations
25 that well. Other than the two days she spent in my

1 house everything in that statement about me is a lot of
2 rubbish.

3 We never had any conversations with my mum or sister
4 about the girl who has made the allegations when she was
5 living with them. It was just that I never saw them
6 that often and if I did it was maybe for half an hour or
7 something.

8 The girl who has made the allegations has made out
9 like she was in our house a lot and she wasn't. She
10 made an accusation against my dad although another girl
11 who was fostered by my sister had made accusations
12 against him. It could have been because of the other
13 girl's allegations that social work removed her from my
14 parents' house. I am just not really sure. Social work
15 wanted somewhere for her and the other girl to go for
16 a couple of days until they did an investigation. That
17 was it. We looked after them and then they went back.
18 I could be wrong but I think the girl who made the
19 statement the Inquiry sent me went back to my mum and
20 dad's. I didn't think she went to my sister's until
21 quite a bit after then. I can't remember if they were
22 two sisters or if it was the one who made the allegation
23 and an older girl.

24 She was never given any sanction or punishment when
25 she stayed at our house. I never abused her. I have

1 never laid a finger on any kid.

2 'Linda' has said in her statement, 'Nothing happened
3 in those few days we were at 'Dylan's' but we used to
4 visit him at times and he could be really brutal with
5 his discipline, if you did one tiny thing wrong he could
6 make a big thing of it'. Nonsense, absolute nonsense.
7 She never visited our house.

8 It is not possible that the passage of time has
9 affected my recollection. I don't know why she is
10 saying this. I can only say she is telling lies. If
11 what she said had happened, I do accept that this would
12 be abuse.

13 She has also said, 'He used to make a foster girl
14 sit on the stairs for hours at a time as a punishment'.
15 That never happened. That girl was a good wean who we
16 fostered.

17 It is not possible the passage of time has affected
18 my recollection. I don't know why this girl is saying
19 this. She is making it up. If a child was treated in
20 that way, I do accept it would be abuse.

21 She has also alleged, 'Another girl who was fostered
22 by 'Dylan' and 'Clair' was really afraid of the shower,
23 'Dylan' and 'Clair' dragged her upstairs and forced her
24 into the shower, she was screaming'. One thing, she
25 wasn't scared of the shower. This was a wee girl who

1 was scared of the toilet pan, not the shower. She went
2 and showered with absolutely no problem at all. That
3 never happened. Another fact which was noted by social
4 work is that I never dealt with that child because of
5 her age. She was not scared of the shower and she would
6 take a shower as many times as she wanted. I am going
7 to take a guess that this girl who says this is meant to
8 have witnessed this, but she was never in my house when
9 that child was there. I don't think that child was
10 there at that time. At the very top of her statement at
11 this part she said, 'Nothing happened during those few
12 days', so she has already stated that in those few days
13 she was in my house nothing happened. So it couldn't
14 have been at the time she was at my house. So she's
15 contradicted herself. It is just gutting that someone
16 would make this up.

17 I don't know why she is saying this. I can only say
18 she is telling lies. I don't know if it is because she
19 can't get back at my dad so she is just trying to start
20 on other people in the family. I don't know why she
21 would make this up. If a child was treated in that way
22 I do accept that would be abuse.

23 She also said, 'Dylan' and 'Clair' adopted a girl
24 who told them that one of the wee boys they adopted hit
25 her in the face with car keys. And 'Dylan' slapped the

1 boy hard for that. The boy was really young. I didn't
2 see this, but a foster girl told me about it'. I wasn't
3 even in the house, I was out working. Another foster
4 child was in the house when that happened so that didn't
5 happen like that. What happened was that the boy did
6 hit my kid but it wasn't a car key and what I was told
7 is that she had a wee tiny dent with a toaty bleed from
8 it. That was it. My kid told everyone that it was the
9 boy but no one witnessed it. It could have been
10 an accident, so you can't do anything about that. That
11 was reported to social work as well and they were in the
12 house all the time visiting. No offence, but if I had
13 slapped a wean it is going to be noticeable. It wasn't
14 until I got home from work that I found out about this
15 and the boy was in his bed by then.

16 I can only think that she is saying these things to
17 try and get at the family because she canny get my dad.
18 If a child was treated in that way, I do accept that
19 this would be abuse.

20 She has also alleged, ''Dylan' told me, a foster
21 girl and my sister to clean the bathroom around
22 Christmas one time. I used bleach and didn't wear
23 gloves and we got punished for that. 'Dylan' and
24 'Clair' took the three of us to a Christmas fair in
25 Glasgow, along with a boy who was a relative of 'Clair',

1 but only the boy was allowed to go on any of the rides.
2 We had to just stand and watch and they made comments
3 like, "That's what you get for being bad", it was
4 horrible, I was so upset the whole time. I think I was
5 about eight'. Under no circumstances was she ever in my
6 house around Christmas and under no circumstances did
7 she ever clean my bathroom. As for my wife's relative
8 being at a carnival at that time, he was in a wheelchair
9 with a leg break and he had a big metal thing around his
10 leg for four years during that time. He was never at
11 a Christmas fair because he wouldn't be allowed on any
12 of the rides. She is saying that I took a foster girl,
13 her sister and 'Linda' to a Christmas fair with my
14 wife's relative and I have left my own son and daughter
15 in the house? The girl was a kid we fostered and
16 'Linda' and her sister had come to our house for two
17 days when social work asked us to take them, but that
18 was not at Christmas time. I don't think I have ever
19 been to a Christmas fair. She never spent any time with
20 us socially and my wife's relative was in a wheelchair
21 from 2006 to 2009, then limited from 2009 to 2014 due to
22 his injury. That will all be on record. What she
23 alleges never happened. There is no way I was going to
24 take three kids and leave my own two kids in the house
25 if I was going to a Christmas fair. If I ever took any

1 kids to a fair every one of them would be allowed on the
2 rides because I don't want to be on them as I am scared
3 of heights.

4 I don't know why she is saying this, but she is
5 making everything up and that is why I am thinking other
6 stuff is made up. I don't understand why she has made
7 all this up and I am hurt that all of this has been said
8 about us. It doesn't matter what it is, I can't stand
9 to read about things happening to kids. It just turns
10 my stomach.

11 If a child was treated in that way, I accept that it
12 would be abuse.

13 There are some answers I will never find out about
14 why she has made these things up. Maybe she feels with
15 my dad dying, if it did happen, she will never get her
16 justice, but if it didn't, I just don't know.

17 I also think that it is interesting that everyone
18 she says in her statement that were backing her up now
19 don't want to have anything to do with her. That is
20 what she says in the statement.

21 The hardest part of fostering was not the kids but
22 social work. There has to be better communication
23 between all social workers and also between social
24 workers and foster carers. If kids come with certain
25 illnesses they have to inform the foster carers. I also

1 mean mental illnesses, because these are important too.

2 The way I feel right at this moment is that there
3 should be more done to protect foster carers from these
4 allegations. There has to be a lot more protection.
5 Don't get me wrong, I do think changes can be made to
6 protect kids.

7 Carers have to have it drummed into their heads that
8 there has to be two of them around kids at the same time
9 all the time.

10 I know it is difficult but there needs to be better
11 matching for kids and foster carers. I know in certain
12 circumstances it is hard for them to do it, but they
13 have to have some better system even for emergency
14 placements.

15 There needs to be more training which would include
16 childcare training such as SVQ level 3 or something like
17 that, but do that while they are foster carers.

18 I think when allegations have been made don't tar
19 other people with the same brush, even if they are
20 related to them. My wife and I were crucified for
21 something that had nothing to do with us or connected to
22 our house.

23 I suffered for years after my father passed away and
24 I was on medication for that as well. My contact with
25 the Inquiry has brought it all back and I have not been

1 sleeping as much since it all started. I just feel as
2 if this Inquiry isn't taking mental health, which I know
3 the Scottish Government pride themselves in, into
4 consideration. I feel the Inquiry considers itself more
5 important than my mental health. It was basically that
6 this was voluntary but if you say no they will go to
7 Lady Smith and she can make me do it. That's not
8 voluntary then, especially when I do have a lot of
9 things that have been brought back up with that contact.
10 I was starting to get over things and it is all coming
11 back. Don't get me wrong, if there's anything I can do
12 that can stop abuse of children then 100 per cent
13 I would want to help. The things to do with my father
14 brought a lot of things back and affected my mental
15 health. Even our kids know that something is going on.
16 They don't know what, but the impact on us means there
17 is an impact on them. I struggle to understand why all
18 of this wasn't said at the time and suddenly comes out
19 six or seven years later. Even if she found it
20 difficult at the time to talk about the stuff my dad was
21 meant to have done to her, why didn't she speak out
22 about the stuff I was meant to have done? I don't
23 understand why she would fight to live with my sister
24 and maybe it is just me being a guy but I would have
25 thought she would have wanted as far away as possible

1 from that family.

2 I have no objection to my witness statement being

3 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

4 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

5 true."

6 'Dylan' signed his statement on 5 April 2022.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

8 We haven't had a break.

9 MS RATTRAY: We haven't had a break, no.

10 LADY SMITH: Were you hoping to fit in any other read-ins

11 this afternoon or should we just stop there?

12 MS RATTRAY: Probably not, because the next one, the shorter

13 one, would take 20 to 25 minutes plus records.

14 LADY SMITH: Too much.

15 MS RATTRAY: If we factor in a break, absolutely not.

16 LADY SMITH: Very well. It is Friday and we have managed to

17 cover a lot of evidence this week. I think we will stop

18 now until Tuesday morning.

19 Can you give me a summary of what we're expecting to

20 happen on Tuesday?

21 MS RATTRAY: We are expecting to have three oral witnesses

22 on Tuesday --

23 LADY SMITH: Very well.

24 MS RATTRAY: -- and, if time allows, further read-ins.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 Until Tuesday morning, 10 o'clock, thank you all
2 very much and I hope you have a good weekend. I think
3 the foul winds are dropping possibly to only 20 miles
4 an hour by late afternoon, so stay in rather than go out
5 until then.

6 Thank you, I'll rise now.

7 (3.38 pm)

8 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on
9 Tuesday, 4 October 2022)

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