

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

[REDACTED]

Support person present: No.

1. My name is [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1965. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was born in Singapore. My mum's name was [REDACTED], but she passed away in 2021. My dad's name is [REDACTED] and he's 85. My dad was in the Navy and he was stationed in Singapore when I was born. I have two older sisters, [REDACTED] who is four years older than me and [REDACTED] who is two years older than me.
3. We lived in Elgin for a while because my dad was stationed at Lossiemouth. We then went to Suffolk because there was an air station there and my dad had been seconded to the RAF. After that, we moved to Cornwall. It was when we lived in Cornwall that I went to Edinburgh Academy. Part of the reason that I went to Edinburgh Academy was that I was being moved around schools every eighteen months, two years. In the 1970s, my dad was given help to send me to private school because he was in the armed forces.
4. I was at Edinburgh Academy from 197[REDACTED] until 197[REDACTED]. My two older sisters also went to boarding school. They went to a girls' boarding school in Edinburgh. My dad's last posting was in Rosyth. He left the Navy in 197[REDACTED] and then we left our schools in Edinburgh and moved elsewhere. I left home at the age of eighteen and I never went back.

5. My mum and dad came from Edinburgh so it was our home city. We had grandparents who lived in Leith. We were never going to go to school anywhere other than Edinburgh so it was just a question of which school it would be. I'm going back about fifty years so my memory might be a bit fuzzy, but I remember that my parents looked at Stewart's Melville and another school. I think Edinburgh Academy had the kind of status around it that my mum liked it. I visited it and I liked it. I thought it would be good to go there, but I was only nine. I would never send my children to boarding school. I just wouldn't do it. I actually got an offer to do that when I worked abroad for a while, but there's no way I would do it. I can remember a longing and a homesickness that was always around when I was at boarding school.

6. I went to the school for a selection interview before starting there. I did really badly in the test and my interview was terrible. I'm not sure I was selected on merit or if it was because we could afford the fees. I think I was interviewed by the headteacher of the preparatory school. I can't remember much preparation for starting at the school, other than buying lots of uniform. There were things that we had to bring. It must have been really expensive at the time.

Edinburgh Academy

7. I started at Edinburgh Academy when I was nine years old. The boarding houses were on Kinnear Road. The prep school was opposite on Arboretum Road. I think we used to go there for our meals. I was in Dundas boarding house when I arrived. I don't know how many boys were in the boarding house, but I think it was probably six to eight beds in my dormitory. I don't remember whether there was another dormitory. I think it was quite a small boarding house. The housemaster there was John Brownlee. I can't remember whether he had an assistant, but I can remember meeting his wife. She had a big beehive haircut. I think he had two younger sons. I don't remember much else about that.

8. I think that I was in Dundas House for a year and then I went to Mackenzie House. I would have been about ten when I went into Mackenzie House. The housemaster

there was Hamish Dawson. I don't think he taught me at the school as well. I'm pretty sure that I was in Mackenzie House for two years, but I could have it the wrong way round. It's possible that I was in Mackenzie House for one year and Dundas for two years.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

First day

9. I can remember being dropped off at Dundas House and my mum and dad spending some time with me. It was quite a thing to do, really. I'm not sure how I would feel, driving away and leaving my nine year old at a school. I can't really contemplate that, but that was then and this is now. I don't have strong memories of my first day. I just remember being dropped off and my parents being around for a while. I think that they spoke to the housemaster. I think that I met some of the boys. That's really all I can remember.

10. I went into Dundas boarding house. I started at the same time as lots of other boys. I think that's why we were really quite a close group. I can remember most of their names, but I don't want to say who they were. We were having to cope with our feelings about being in a strange place with strange people and living a different kind of life. Before going to school, I'd never really been away from home. I certainly hadn't spent a lot of time away from home so it was a completely new experience for me.

Mornings/bedtime

11. The school was very programmed. As a boarder, you got some free time on a Saturday morning. Everything else was very routine. Your homework time was planned, your mealtimes were always at set times, your waking up and bedtimes were always at set times. It was all very routine and structured and there wasn't a massive amount of free time. When I look back, it was quite institutionalised. We had homework time when we

got back from school and then we had a bit of recreation. After that it was bedtime so there wasn't a lot of time to do anything else.

12. I can remember there being six to eight beds in my dormitory in Dundas House. I can't really remember the morning routine. I think we got woken up by the housemaster or his assistant. We'd get washed, go for breakfast at the school, come back to the boarding house and then go to school. These are hazy memories for me.
13. The matron was around a lot in Mackenzie House, but I don't know whether she stayed overnight there. She would read stories at night time and put the lights off. She read us Roald Dahl stories and things in the dormitory. I can remember that she was quite good at putting voices on. It was a bit of a highlight because it wasn't the norm. She was kind. I just remember her being around and I wonder if that was a protective factor. Hamish Dawson was the housemaster at that time. I wonder if she made a difference, having someone else around who was a female.

Mealtimes/food

14. I've been trying to remember where we ate our meals in Dundas House. I don't remember a dining room. It came to me that we used to go over to the refectory over at the school. It was a short walk away and that's where all the meals were done. We went over there for our meals twice a day.

Schooling

15. I was in both the prep school and the upper school. I think I spent one year in the upper school. There were some really good teachers at the Academy who were really good at what they did. There were also some really poor teachers. When I left Edinburgh Academy, I went to a comprehensive school elsewhere in Scotland. The quality of the education at my state school was way better than at Edinburgh Academy. The standard of teaching was better. I think that with Edinburgh Academy you paid for the name, not necessarily the standard of education. Looking back, I think that it was really pretty poor compared to my next school.

16. The good teachers at the Academy were a bit more lively and different. They were less like crusty academics and more engaged and energetic. I remember that there was an exchange teacher who came from New Zealand. He talked a lot about New Zealand and I remember him. I can remember a few others who were really quite good. We were taught Latin. It was very regimented, like rote learning. That doesn't usually suit me but for some reason Latin did. I was quite good at Latin. It was a mixture of teachers. Some were good and some were poor. I think the teaching at the upper school was worse. There were teachers there who were a bit strange.

17. We were supervised while we did our homework. I can remember that particularly in Mackenzie House. To be honest, school never really ended. It was all very structured. I think the routine at the upper was similar to the prep school. When you got to senior school age, you were bestowed with a lot more freedom. The uniform changed. We wore an oatmeal coloured blazer. We wore long trousers, which were good in the winter time. There were areas that we could access in the school, like common rooms. We had a bit more freedom than in the prep school and we were treated more as an older child or an adult.

18. We used to go to the upper school from Kinnear Road along a cycle path next to the Water of Leith. All the boys from Broughton High School would come in the opposite direction. I can remember there being scuffles and stuff going on. My best friends for life that I now have all went to Broughton High School. The "ruffians" from Broughton High School are my friends for life and I'm very privileged to know them.

Leisure time

19. The routine for boarders was very structured. We didn't get a lot of free time. Free time was good. It was enjoyable because the rest of it was so programmed. We could do sport in our free time. We were encouraged to take our uniforms off and go into town on a Saturday morning. We could spend our meagre pocket money. Goldenacre wasn't too far away. There were often sports planned-in on a Saturday or there was free time. The playing fields were next door to us so we were a short walk away from them. It was all on our doorstep. You could play cricket or go to the squash courts. It

was a bit freer at the weekend. We had to go to church on Sunday morning, but the afternoon was free.

20. I think the atmosphere in Mackenzie House was mixed. We didn't have a lot of spare time and when we did we made the most of it. Because we were either writing letters home or doing homework, there wasn't a lot of talking. We kept things that were bothering us or homesickness to ourselves. When we did have free time, it was a bit of a relief to get away from that and spend time with our friends. When you were in the boarding house, you just got your head down and got on with it.

Trips and holidays

21. We went on trips away to some place up north. I can't remember how old I was, but I think I was still in Dundas House or in my first year at Mackenzie House. We went to a place called Glen Doll, which isn't far from Kirriemuir. It was an outdoor centre. I went there for at least one school trip. We did orienteering, navigation and things like that. Those trips were different. They were a break from the routine, which we were regimented into doing.
22. I would go home for the school holidays. At half term, I occasionally went to my granny's. She lived in the Newhaven area of Edinburgh, so it wasn't far away. I think I did that a couple of times. I was never in school at half term or over the holidays.

Healthcare

23. I can remember there being a sick bay in Mackenzie House. If you were ill, there were rooms upstairs. There was a matron, but I can't remember her name. I remember her as being a kindly woman. I think she might have been a bit of a protective factor. I think she supervised sick bay. It was away from the other rooms so boys could be isolated if there was an infectious disease. I can remember being up there a couple of times. It was quite isolating and away from people.

Religious instruction

24. We had to go to church on a Sunday. I think we went to Inverleith Church, which wasn't too far away. We went to Sunday School there.

Family contact/visits

25. I can remember that my sisters came to see me once. I would see them from time to time. I kept bumping into my sister, who was two years older than me, at the Odeon cinema. That was really strange. I didn't really have much contact with my sisters, but I saw them on occasion. I wanted to be away from them. My mum and dad were away in Cornwall so they didn't visit very often. I'm sure they did visit, but I can't remember that.
26. Contact with home was never by phone call. It was always done by letter writing. I was so bad at letter writing that my mum would give me stamped addressed envelopes, paper and pens. All I needed to do was write them. I've got some of the letters that I wrote at home. I found them when my mum died. It's appalling how lazy I was. I wrote things like, "I am fine, hope you are too. Yesterday I went and played cricket. Love [REDACTED]" I wasn't really into all of that. I think letter writing was supervised and we had to write letters on a Sunday afternoon. It wasn't homework, but we were forced to write home. That's probably why I didn't put much effort into it. I don't know whether my letters were reviewed by staff, but I can't be sure of that. I certainly wasn't asked to change any content.

Peers

27. My memory of being in the boarding house is that we were quite a close group. We started school together. I remember it being quite routine. I can remember feeling dreadfully homesick, but I think we all did. Maybe that's why we formed quite a close group. I can remember the housemaster at Dundas being a bit shouty and people getting rows. I became really good friends with a lot of boys, but I lost touch with them

all when I left the school. I was quite close to them in a really positive kind of way. I missed them terribly when I left the school.

28. There was no adult we could go to if we were upset or homesick. I think we were just expected to get on with it. There was a brutality about it. I don't think we could really approach the adults. They were mostly men. We would go and cry in toilet or we would cry at night when the lights were out. I can remember that the homesickness came in waves. It would be overwhelming at times and then it would dissipate. It became less severe as you got used to it. As we got older, after a year or so, it wasn't really an issue, even though we were still only ten or eleven. Boys in the boarding house supported each other with that. We got to know each other well. We were a comfort to each other in a really positive way. We had a bond.
29. It's unbelievable now, but I was in a sporty group of friends. I was quite good at cricket and rugby. I wasn't ultra-sporty, but I certainly wasn't in the academic group. I don't think I was in the popular group. I'm one of those people who just kind of blends in and doesn't particularly draw attention to myself. I wasn't unpopular. I was the type of boy who could fit between and conform. I think I could be quite mouthy and outspoken, but I was kind of an average Joe. I'm quite good at reading the atmosphere and reading people. Having said that, I didn't read the trauma that was inflicted on other boys. I was only nine so I'll forgive myself for that.
30. I do remember prefects being around, but I don't know what that involved. I don't think I was one of them. I think they wore a wee badge and they may have been given additional privileges. I don't think they had any role in disciplining other children.

Discipline

31. Discipline was quite shouty in the boarding houses. I think we would be punished by loss of privileges and not be allowed to go out. I can remember being given lines and having to write out fifty lines or a hundred lines or whatever it was. That was a struggle for me because I wasn't particularly literate at the time. I don't remember anything else. I don't remember being isolated in any way or a clip around the ear. I don't know

if it was just the atmosphere, but there was a kind of culture of brutality. There would be stuff going on and it was quite brutal when I look back, but the seventies were like that anyway. We did things that you wouldn't do now. For example, we'd flick towels at each other and it was painful if it hit you. We did that kind of thing. In terms of discipline, I think it was being shouted out, being given lines and removal of privileges.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

32. I was at the upper school when the incident happened so it was either my last year or my second last year at the school. I think I was eleven or twelve. I don't know the teacher's name and I don't know when it happened. I could point out which classroom it happened in, but that's all I can tell you. The classroom was at the side of the big hall in the middle of the Academy, at the edge of the playground. I can't even remember which subject it was that we were being taught. I think the teacher was quite small and he had dark hair. I forget details quite easily.
33. I remember being at the back of the classroom. I can't remember what prompted it, if anything. I got a bit lump of chalk launched at me. It hit me just on the corner of my left eye. It just missed the eye itself. I cannot remember why. I was so shocked. It wasn't a small piece of chalk. It was a lump of chalk. I don't think the chalk left a bruise or a mark, but I can remember it being sore.
34. After that, I thought I needed to try and tune in and listen to what that teacher was saying. I can remember putting my hand up in the class and just being ignored. I waited after the class had finished and went up to the teacher. I asked him why he was ignoring me and he made up some reason. I think I told him that I was going to tell my dad if he carried on ignoring me.
35. I don't want to make an issue of the physical side of things. I had worse than that at other schools. It was the ignoring part that was difficult. To be fair to the teacher, whoever he was, it did change after that. I think what happened to me with that teacher was probably symbolic of some of the stuff that went on at the Academy. I was

reflecting recently that what happened then with physical punishment was just accepted. I got the belt at comprehensive school, which was a leather strap with a cut in it. I got it once or twice and I didn't think anything of it. It was just the way things were back then.

36. I've been searching back in my memory and nothing else comes up as having happened to me, other than that incident. I think I remember it because it was so shocking and it was such a surprise. I was never subjected to physical violence or punishment at home. To get somebody launching a piece of chalk at me for whatever reason was shocking to me. There is no justification for that. I think that's why I remember it and I'm sure that's the same for other people. When you're not used to something that happens to you, even though you're very young, you don't forget it. That's the imprint of physical punishment.
37. I wasn't subjected to abuse in the boarding houses. I don't recall witnessing anybody being physically or sexually assaulted. I can remember that John Brownlee was quite shouty and people would get rows, but I didn't see any abuse. It would be wrong of me to think that I did. I'm trying not to think about what other people who went to Edinburgh Academy have disclosed to the media.
38. I decided to contact the Inquiry after reading an article in the [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] 2023. The article featured [REDACTED], who was one of the people I started school with. He talked about being in Dundas House. He described being taken to what must have been Brownlee's study and hell rained down on him for ten minutes. He was beaten with the clachan, which was a wooden instrument. I thought that I was probably in the bed next to him and I knew nothing about that. I was really shocked by that. I had no idea. I spent time with [REDACTED] and I remember him. The fact that happened to him and I had no idea shocked me, which prompted me to contact the Inquiry.
39. I think that the clachan was used as a sporting instrument years ago. It was a bit like a paddle. I don't remember it ever being used on me. It was quite a heavy piece of wood. I would imagine it would be quite painful if it was used as a weapon. I don't

know if it was unique to Edinburgh Academy, but I haven't heard of it being used anywhere else.

Thoughts on Hamish Dawson and further abuse at Edinburgh Academy

40. Hamish Dawson was a strange man. Mackenzie House was his fiefdom. I think that he wandered around the boarding house at night. I can remember being frightened to go to the toilet at night in case I got caught, so he wasn't in his own apartment. His presence was quite pervasive. He was never not there. I certainly didn't feel comfortable with him. Thankfully, I don't think he had a lot of time for me. He was just creepy. I do remember being called through to his study in his own rooms. It was purple. I thought that it was really weird. I can remember jelly bean rewards. It was all light-hearted kind of stuff, but looking back it was strange. I can't remember anything happening to me or witnessing anything happening to others. Maybe perpetrators in those days were much more sophisticated than we gave them credit for.
41. I was aware of allegations about Edinburgh Academy from the media. The BBC journalist Nicky Campbell disclosed some things. He was a couple of years older than me. He also named his abuser, who is now being extradited from South Africa. When I heard about what Nicky Campbell said, I thought to myself that didn't happen when I was there and maybe things had moved on. I thought that maybe the matron in Mackenzie House was put there for a reason, but that's complete conjecture.
42. I then listened to a podcast called *In Dark Corners*. There were allegations made about what people went through that were awful and horrific. I thought to myself that I didn't see that and it didn't happen to me. Because Nicky Campbell was older than me, I thought that maybe things had moved on by the time I got to the school. I then heard a podcast featuring Hamish Dawson's daughter. She was absolutely wonderful. A lot of memories came back to me. I thought that Hamish Dawson had been the housemaster at Dundas, but he was at Mackenzie House. The reason I remember that is how triggers happen. I want to go by my own memory and not what I've heard from others, but Hamish Dawson's daughter described the fire doors that he would go

through at night. I remembered that. He had an obsession with purple, which she spoke about. I remembered that and I've never like purple since.

43. I wasn't subject to abuse by Hamish Dawson, but one of the things that struck me was the fact that everything was a game to him. He would play games. We would get a jelly bean for doing things. I've worked a lot with abuse in my professional career. I've worked with registered sex offenders. When I look back, I remember that Hamish Dawson would give people nicknames. He would pick on them in front of people. He would do it in such a way that it was fun. I didn't think anything of it at the time, but when you start putting the pieces together you can maybe see that there was a bit of isolating going on and a bit of grooming going on.
44. I don't think I had a nickname at school. When I put it together, I think that might have been the way he identified people and made them feel special. Other people might not use the nickname, but he would. I think that might have been steps towards isolating or grooming people. I can't not know what I know about perpetrators and I don't want to taint the evidence with assumptions being made, but when you begin to put the pieces together you begin to see patterns that you might not have seen before.
45. I wasn't subjected to abuse, but I can see patterns in the nicknames that some people got and the attention that some people got. I don't have any evidence of this, but I think that those people were identified by Dawson as being vulnerable. I hope that the evidence for this comes from elsewhere. I wonder if some of the kids at the school were more vulnerable because of their situation. I look back and realise that I was a bit mouthy at school. I think I was able to articulate myself. My dad was in the Navy. I know that some of the kids had older brothers at the school, which might have been a protective factor for them. I can also see boys who were potentially more of a victim for someone who was a perpetrator. I can see that the isolation and the nicknames and everything being light-hearted and fun had a much darker side to it. A lot of that would be done outwith earshot and at night time.
46. We didn't talk about sexual abuse thirty or forty years ago. Now we do and I'm glad of that. In those days, I think people would have been moved on or it would have been

hushed up. We know from the Jimmy Saville abuse that you are never more hidden than you are in plain sight. Maybe that was a factor. The games, the jelly beans, the isolating and the nicknames made me think that there was a pattern I recognised. I wanted to corroborate what was said by others.

Leaving boarding school

47. I left Edinburgh Academy after being there for three years when I was twelve. I knew that I was going to be leaving the school before it happened. My dad was leaving the Navy and the family were moving. I remember that I got chicken pox and missed quite a lot of school in my last year. I was so infectious that I was pulled out of school. I went home that summer. I went back to school for a while and then I was taken out of school. It didn't happen without notice because my dad had to give quite a lot of notice to leave the Navy. I knew that I was going.
48. We were given a bit more freedom in the upper school and treated like older children or adults. That was why when I left, I felt that I was leaving at the time when it was starting to get good. I think I was also starting to become less homesick. I was enjoying being part of an older group of boys and getting the privilege that was coming with the age that we were. It was a bit of a wrench for me. I became really good friends with a lot of boys in my boarding house. I missed them terribly when I left the school, but I didn't keep in touch with them or attend any school reunions.

Life after leaving boarding school

49. After leaving the Academy, I went home which was a challenge in itself. I went to a junior high school and then I went to the secondary school there. I remember getting a phone call from all my friends at the Academy one night. I felt awful. I missed them terribly after that. We'd been through a lot together. We'd been at school together in our formative years. I felt so sad after I left, but you have to move on. The standard of

education in my new state school was much better than it had been at the Academy. It was just generally a better standard.

50. I stayed on for sixth year because I had to. Through persistence, I picked up some exams that I needed and left school at the age of eighteen. I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do. I wasn't going to join the Navy like my dad.
51. After leaving home, I went to work in a night shelter in Glasgow to get experience. I then studied social work. From there, I worked with ex-offenders and then in a drugs counselling service, which I went on to manage for five years. I then left and worked abroad for the Department of International Development, developing social work services overseas. When I came back to Scotland, I headed up a national mental health programme. I've worked for a housing association in Scotland for the last five years. I've done different things and I've done a lot of consultancy work in between. I did consultancy work for the National Confidential Forum, suicide prevention, alcohol and drugs needs assessments, evaluation and research.

Reporting of abuse

52. One of the reasons I came forward to the Inquiry is because of the bond I had with the boys at the Academy. I want to be as good a friend to them as they were to me when I was at the school. Whilst I don't recall being abused in any kind of way, I want to corroborate what other people went through that I'm not aware of. They were good friends to me and I've never forgotten that.
53. What prompted me to pick up the phone and contact the Inquiry was an article in the [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] 2023. The article featured [REDACTED] who was one of the people I started school with. When I read his account I was absolutely horrified. [REDACTED] was a good friend to me. In the article, [REDACTED] talks about two of his friends leaving at the end of the year. I think I was one of them. I don't often buy the Sunday papers, but I read the article online. I saw [REDACTED]'s picture. He was in his

uniform, holding his cap. I realised that I knew that boy. I went out and bought the paper. I read his account and I realised that I couldn't just be a bystander.

54. When the abuse allegations first started coming out about Edinburgh Academy, I didn't think too much of it. I thought that nothing ever happened to me at school. I then began to learn more and it all started to join up a little bit. When I heard about what happened to [REDACTED], I realised that I couldn't not say anything. Maybe I've not got a lot to offer, but if I can maybe corroborate the atmosphere and some of the things that happened I thought that it might help.
55. After I read the article featuring [REDACTED], I actually emailed the [REDACTED] to say that I'd been at school with him and asking them to put me in touch with him. I'm hopeful that he's been in touch with the Inquiry. When you expose yourself like that in the media and then nothing happens, it can be extremely isolating. I didn't want my friend to feel that way. I wanted to reach out to him. It's a really courageous thing that he's done. He's exposed himself and he's talked about himself and everybody that knows him will pick up on that. Who's talking to him? I wasn't going to let a friend be exposed like that without coming in to support him in some way.
56. The article talked a lot about the Inquiry, but it didn't give its contact details down. That's an issue for me because it's the way that the media can be neglectful about these things. I think that there should be guidelines on articles that contain anything related to the Inquiry so people have somewhere to go for support. It should include support helplines, such as the Samaritans or Breathing Space.

Impact

57. The incident when I was hit with the piece of chalk hasn't affected me. I've thought about it a lot and searched my memory banks to see how Edinburgh Academy affected me. I honestly don't think that anything happened to me, other than that incident with the chalk. If I was beaten, I would just know. I can't find anything there. That incident stands out because it was so unusual, which is why I think that nothing else happened.

I may have witnessed things happening to other people but I can't give any details. I wish I had witnessed what happened to [REDACTED]. If I did, I would tell the Inquiry. I just don't remember and I don't want to guess.

58. In a positive way, I think that going to boarding school made me much more independent. I left home at eighteen and I never went back. Maybe I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't been to Edinburgh Academy. The perverse thing about private school is it also gives you confidence. There's something about living away from your family and living with other boys that does that. Although I'm quite shy, I've always had an inner confidence and I think that maybe comes from my time at the Academy.
59. Other than that, I think that I just move on. If I'm honest, I didn't really think about my time at Edinburgh Academy. I don't speak about it very much. For example, it's not on my LinkedIn profile. I don't remember a negative impact that others may have had because I don't think that I was subjected to abuse in the way that they were. The discipline and routine were very institutionalised when I look back now, but for me it was probably quite a brief time. Time goes on and memory fades and your formative years are still continuing. I don't think it's had a negative impact on me in the way it has for others.

Records

60. I've never contacted the school to ask for any records. I remember that after I left I would get invitations to reunions at the school. I did think about it at one point, but I felt that my life was different. I was in my late teens and early twenties and I wouldn't know who people were. I've never had any desire to reconnect or see people from the Academy. I've never requested my records because I wouldn't have a reason to.

Lessons to be learned

61. One of the things I'd like us to learn from all this is that back in the seventies, perpetrators of abuse were twenty steps ahead of us. If the Inquiry can teach us about the patterns of abuse, the methods of abuse and the ways to protect and guard against that then it will have done some good to change things for the better. No child should go through abuse.
62. I know that sympathy for posh rich boys who went to private schools might be limited from some quarters, but I hope that the learning from this Inquiry contributes to the body of evidence on how to prevent, how to spot and how to ultimately eradicate this kind of behaviour. I've worked with people who have been traumatised by abuse. It's an indelible mark that you carry with you. It does more damage than we understand. I think that trauma is a lifetime burden for some people. There are treatments available, but I don't want other people to go through that. A lot of abuse goes on behind closed doors in people's homes. We're still not smart enough to tackle that.
63. I hope that the patterns of offending can be used for learning. I hope that the Inquiry lends more evidence and learning about the way abusers operate, the isolating, the grooming, the names that are given to people, the patterns of behaviour. If that evidence and learning can be used to prevent abuse then ultimately that's what the Inquiry should be about.

Hopes for the Inquiry

64. I hope that my evidence to the Inquiry has been helpful and of value, but it's probably of limited value. My motivation for coming forward was to corroborate what other people might have told the Inquiry. It might help them to remember and realise that things were not their imagination because I was there too. Although I don't remember witnessing certain things, the atmosphere, the people, the names mentioned are not made up. I was there and I can corroborate that. I hope that it sheds a little bit of light,

albeit maybe in a limited way, on other people and what they've been through. I want to be as good a friend to them now as they were to me all those years ago.

65. About ten years ago, I did a consultancy project on how the National Confidential Forum engaged with people who were affected by mental health issues. I think the process I've been through with the Inquiry has been brilliant. It's been really refreshing and absolutely exemplary. I think the professionalism at the Inquiry has been outstanding and the way that it's engaged with me has been exceptional.
66. I think doing such a variety of work is what's kept me going. I also started on the very bottom rung, doing voluntary work in a night shelter in Glasgow. I've seen and done a lot of things which has given me a rounded perspective on stuff. I've done a lot of work on mental health through suicide prevention and other things. My job is [REDACTED] social innovation at the moment. It all contributes to hopefully doing things for the better, which is why I really hope that the Inquiry will shed light on abuse and abusive behaviour, the manipulation techniques that are used.
67. I know that's it really important that people coming forward to the Inquiry get support and can somehow lay to rest some of the trauma that they've experienced. I hope that they get that and the peace that they deserve because what happened to them is unforgivable. I hope that the wider implication is that the Inquiry sheds light on how we can prevent this and be much, much smarter. I think that we're incredibly naïve about sexual offences. We still have a lot to learn about how we can prevent, intervene and equip our children and grandchildren with the tools to do it. I think it is changing and things are so much better. So much more is out in the open, which is absolutely what sex offenders and predators don't want. But we still have quite a long way to go, I think.
68. I work for a housing association. We have a requirement to house people who are schedule one sex offenders. There is opposition in the community. There will be people who want to go to their houses with torches and pitchforks and all the rest of it. I tell them that these aren't the people we need to worry about because we know who they are and they are identified. The people they need to worry about are the people

who are in the crowd with them, people who are beneath the radar, who are pillars of the community, who are lovely and nobody would ever question them. That's how these people operate. They embed themselves and become untouchable. I hope that the Inquiry begins to unpick that, especially at boarding schools and other institutions. I hope that we become much better at that because I don't think we vet people properly. I hope the Inquiry results in change of that for the better.

69. I think it's really important for people to be able to tell their stories, to say what happened to them and for it to be listened to. I hope that some people who have been through really bad stuff get some kind of recompense. I think that the problem with inquiries like this is that it's too late. Most of the people who did this are probably dead. It's come far too late. I think that we need to be much more responsive. Often inquiries take place long after the event. Fifty years is fifty years too late. We need to have inquiries to ensure that we have robust protection policies, better vetting of people, better reporting and better intervention.

70. I hope that people who have been through experiences much worse than mine get the peace that they deserve. I hope that the Inquiry listens to their stories. Thirty or forty years ago, people didn't acknowledge that abuse happened. An awful lot has changed in recent years, which is great. In my professional career, the prevailing thing that I hear is, "I wasn't listened to," or, "Nobody believed me." It's time that we listened properly. The way that the Inquiry has been set up and it's Terms of Reference are absolutely brilliant because it's doing just that. I'm very pleased to see that and be part of that.

71. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..... 15 June 2023