

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

**Thomas JORDAN**

Support person present: No.

1. My name is Thomas Chandler Jordan, but I like to be called Tam. My date of birth is the [REDACTED] 1953. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Edinburgh and my parents were [REDACTED]. My father was in the fire service. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
3. When [REDACTED] young we moved [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] in Addiewell. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] child I felt unloved and left out. I was always getting the blame for anything that happened at home. [REDACTED] physically abusive [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was in the Lodge, a Freemason and part of the Free Kirk. We were Protestants and we went to church three times on a Sunday. [REDACTED] wouldn't allow me to play with Catholic children and I can't remember having any love at home. [REDACTED] would beat the hell out of me and I would regularly run away from home to get away from [REDACTED]
4. My grandad on my mum's side was my best friend. I loved him and he owned a garage in West Calder. I used to spend a lot of time with him.

5. I attended at Addiewell village primary school. I was bullied at school because I was brought up in Glasgow and had a different accent. I used to get caught by my mum for stealing money from her purse to buy sweets for the bully's. There was only one village shop, so she would get to know what I was doing. I would be terrified when I was waiting for [REDACTED]. I tried to hide [REDACTED] would drag me out. [REDACTED] would beat me with a belt until I had welts on my back.
6. My teacher Mr McLeod noticed the welts on my back when I was stripping off to change for PE. The school contacted the cruelty officer and he took me back home. The cruelty officer was in the same Masonic Lodge as [REDACTED] and nothing was done about my injuries. I used to regularly run around with the Catholic children in the village just for attention. When [REDACTED] caught me [REDACTED] would beat me. I used to wet the bed in fear of [REDACTED] beatings. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I was the dunce of the family.
7. At the age of eight or nine, I remember regularly talking to an old road night watchman that I would see in his hut on my way to school. I would see him in the morning and on my way back home for a wee chat. Eventually the old man started to sexually abuse me. He would get me to masturbate him and suck his penis, and then he would pay me. I didn't know what I was doing or what was going on. The thought of him still comes back to me now, it was horrible and I can still taste him.
8. I started to get into trouble in the village which was an embarrassment to my father who was a pillar of the community. At the age of nine my Catholic mate and I stole a lorry and we were caught. The police took me back home and saw my parents. I was regularly getting into trouble and at one point I was living in a hay shed. My parents decided that I couldn't live with them anymore, I felt abandoned.
9. I was eventually charged by the Police for lorry theft and maybe house breaking. I appeared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court and I was placed for two to three weeks in Gilmerton Remand Home. I was either ten or eleven years old. I was subsequently sentenced to one to three years at Balrossie School.

### **Gilmerton Remand Home**

10. I have very little memory of Gilmerton. I remember it being a big house with a garden and a school within it. The front door was always locked. I was very scared and frightened and I didn't know what was going on. I lived in fear for the whole time I was there.
11. I remember that there were dormitories and about thirty to forty children in total at Gilmerton. They were mixed sex. I attended school classes whilst I was there and I wore my own clothes. I would address the staff as sir or madam. I remember that we were fed quite well. I received no visitors whilst I was there.

### **Leaving Gilmerton Remand Home**

12. With no warning or explanation I was driven to the Balrossie Approved School by a social worker, I didn't at the time fully realise why I went to Balrossie and not somewhere closer.

### **Balrossie School, Kilmacolm**

13. On my first day at Balrossie I met with SNR [REDACTED] Mr GK F and SNR [REDACTED] Mr zGKS [REDACTED]. Mr zGKS [REDACTED] was a very skinny individual. After I had seen Mr GK F [REDACTED] I remember that the hard man of the school, who was a pupil, came up to me and punched me in the face. This was to put me in my place.
14. The main building was very large with a long drive. It had a big turret on top and two big bay windows. There was also a building built on, with the head's house to the right hand side of the front door. There were about six to eight houses for staff within the grounds. The caretaker Mr GPN [REDACTED] lived in one of the houses in the grounds.

15. Once you entered through the front door there was a dining room to the right, a kitchen and on the other side a playroom. There were steps up to about six to eight dormitories. There were about twelve boys of mixed ages to a dorm. There were about a hundred boys, who were aged between ten and fifteen There was a teacher and a matron assigned to my dormitory. I remember the teacher as being a big guy.

### **Routine at Balrossie**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

16. The bell would sound in the morning for us to get up and staff would come around. You would make your bed. If you had wet the bed you were made to stand at the bottom of the bed and tell a member of staff. You would shower and do your stuff, and then you would go downstairs for breakfast. You would then have chores to do. You would attend school in the building. After school you'd come back into the house and be allowed to play. Before going to bed we would be given cocoa and a bun or a biscuit. We would be in bed for about seven or seven thirty. Lights out would be between eight thirty and nine. There would be staff on duty at night.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

17. For meals you would eat in the communal dining room, and you would sit on a table of six with a table captain. The table captain was one of the prominent members of the school. You would have to rush to eat your meals. If you didn't eat your meals quickly he would be take it away from you.
18. If you didn't eat the food you would get it again the next day. The table would be rewarded with points if you all ate your meals. If you did something wrong, the table captain would physically punish you out with the view of the staff. . He would shout and bawl at you after the meal was completed. There would be a deduction in table points earned which would result in loss of privileges.

### *Washing/bathing*

19. There were shower rooms situated outside of the dormitories, and there were wash basins in the communal toilets. You could shower twice a week. You were given a bar of soap and toiletries to last you a week. There was no privacy when bathing. The staff would be outside the door when you were showering. You had an underwear change once a week.

### *Clothing/uniform*

20. We would wear a blue uniform with grey short trousers with a shirt and tie on a Sunday. We would wear every day clothes made from a dark blue rough army type material, shirts and a bomber jacket. In the winter you would wear long trousers and sometimes boots. All the clothes were supplied by Balrossie and cleaned by the matron.

### *Point system*

21. Points were allocated to a table or a house. I can't remember the names of the houses. You could earn them for bits of work and could also earn sweets.

### *Leisure time*

22. In the summer we would play in the playground during the evenings. We would also play snooker with staff supervision. We would play tennis outside in the grounds. There was an old swimming pool, but we weren't allowed to go near it.
23. There was a guy who was a PE teacher who would hold games in the hall. We would play murder ball and kids would get their arms broken. It was very much a gang culture. If you weren't part of it you would be bullied. The PE teacher would make the Kids hang off the wall bars for what seemed hours but it was probably only twenty minutes. If you let go you would be forced to hang there again.

### *Trips and holidays*

24. If you were well behaved you would be allowed to visit people in the village on a Sunday. I visited an old lady who gave me afternoon tea and played games with me.
25. The school took us to Gourock, where we fished off the rocks using hand lines.
26. In the summer we went to Bucksburn in Aberdeen and we stayed in a school similar to ours. There were dormitories and classrooms. We were there for a week and we played with the local kids and we had a fun time. We did this every year.
27. You could also earn a weekly swimming trip to Port of Glasgow or Gourock.

### *School*

28. There were about four or five teachers at the school. The school was situated within the main building and we had age group specific classes. I remember the woodwork classes which were run by a really nice guy and he would play a tune on the saw. I liked him, he was a very calm guy. He had been in the Japanese prisoner of war camps. He knew how to treat kids, he was very spiritual.
29. The school taught the normal curriculum and there was the eleven plus exam. I was a dunce, I wasn't interested in school and the staff didn't like it if you didn't work.

### *Healthcare*

30. Doctors and dentists would come in to see us, but the matron would generally care for us. The nit nurse came in to inspect our heads. Matron saw the welts on my backside, but she never questioned me about them.

*Religious instruction*

31. You would be marched to the church at Kilmacolm every Sunday in all weathers. The church was a Protestant church and everyone attended. You daren't talk about anything Catholic particularly about Celtic football club.

*Work*

32. I used to have to stoke the boilers and sweep the leaves and clean the playground. Some of the kids didn't do anything. I'm not sure what favours they were getting, but I just had to do what I needed to do to survive. I would do chores whatever the weather. I could earn two bob for doing chores which I would spend in the tuck shop. You would never physically receive money but credit in the shop. You would also receive sweeties.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

33. The children would receive Christmas presents from people in Kilmacolm. They celebrated Christmas at the school.

*Visits/Inspections*

34. People would come in to do craft with us. They would bring sweeties and they were very nice to us.

*Family contact*

35. I did go home at the weekends when I was good. I used to spend most of my time with my grandad.
36. My parents visited me at the school a couple of times.

37. On one occasion my parents were due to come to the school to pick me up but they didn't appear. I had to stay with SNR [REDACTED] whose name I think was Mr zGKS [REDACTED]. My parents arrived to collect me a couple of days later.

#### *Running away*

38. The whole school decided to run away one night. We ran over the hills to Greenock and we all got caught and we were all battered by SNR [REDACTED].
39. I never ran away on my own because I was too scared.

#### *Discipline*

40. The SNR [REDACTED] or SNR [REDACTED] and sometimes the gym teacher would administer the tawse which was a leather strap with a split on the end. This would be if you were cheeky to teachers, for back chatting, or for running away. I talked to one of the staffs daughters and I got the tawse for that.
41. One of the staff would hold onto you and your shorts would be pulled tight. Your head would be placed between the knees of the person holding so you were unable to move or resist. You would be bent over a stool and receive between six to twelve smacks with the tawse. The punishment would be handed out in the SNR [REDACTED] office. I was punished a lot whilst I was there, at least once every ten days.

#### *Bed Wetting*

42. I used to wet the bed. Whenever I wet the bed I would be dragged out of bed by staff and I was made to stand in a cold shower whilst a member of staff hosed me down. I would then have to drag my bedding and mattress out of the dormitory. I would be made to wash it and hang it out so the people knew I had wet the bed.



43. As a punishment for wetting the bed, Mr <sup>GPN</sup> stood and supervised me and a mate whilst we scrubbed the square with a tooth brush, it took hours. If you dropped litter or spat on a wall it would be the same punishment.

### **Abuse at Balrossie**

44. Whenever I wet the bed, I would be dragged out of bed and hosed down with cold water in the shower whilst the staff screamed and shouted at you. The staff would slap you and shame you in front of other children.
45. If you did something wrong at the dining table, the table captain would take you out the back and beat you.
46. There was a lot of staff and peer bullying going on at the school.
47. There was a lot of peer abuse within the dormitories. I was getting sexually abused by the older boys. During most nights masturbation and sucking off would occur and I think that staff knew about it. I think the staff were covering it up. It was very clear what was going on as there were other boys present. I was abused by a boy who was called [REDACTED] because he pissed in five directions. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who abused me. I couldn't do anything about it or else I would be beaten up.
48. If you soiled your underwear, the punishment would depend on which member of staff was on duty. You would be made to stand in the dining room and you would be shamed in front of your peers.
49. I went to stay with <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] Mr <sup>ZGKS</sup> [REDACTED] when my parents failed to pick me up on one occasion during the holidays. I slept downstairs whilst his wife and two children slept upstairs. Mr <sup>ZGKS</sup> [REDACTED] came down and sexually abused me. He tried to rape me. I think that this happened two or three times whilst I was at Balrossie. He threatened to kill me if I told anyone. I knew that if I told anyone he would just say that it was my fault. I was very scared of him.

## **Leaving Balrossie**

50. At the age of about twelve or thirteen my time was up at Balrossie. I returned home to the same environment that I had left. I had shut down emotionally and no one was ever going to make me cry again. These feelings stayed with me for a long time.

## **Life after being in Balrossie**

51. My dad was made the [REDACTED] and we moved to Craigshill in Livingston. [REDACTED] continued to physically abuse me.
52. I attended big school and again I was bullied and picked on. I beat the bully up and I ended up going to the head teacher and he gave me the tawse. I just laughed at him. I was dunce at school. I was about fourteen years old.
53. My mum was on Valium and I stole it out of her purse. I also smoked a bit of dope which helped to keep the anger and rage that I was feeling down. I was getting into trouble and my dad threw me out. I was living on the streets and got arrested for stealing.
54. My parents were killed in a car crash when I was fourteen and a half. My grandparents had passed away some years previously. I had no one to give me parental guidance.
55. I worked in a paper mill [REDACTED] in Livingston, and I met one of the [REDACTED] called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was about thirty five years old and he drove an old Citroen. I went to live with him. I allowed him to sexually abuse me as I wasn't paying rent. [REDACTED] supplied me with alcohol and some food and I lived with him on and off.
56. I started breaking into places. Both my parents and grandparents had died. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I got a job at Patterson's making shortbread, but I couldn't keep a job or relationships.

57. At the age of about fifteen, I moved to Edinburgh and started working as a live in commis chef at the Adelphi Hotel. I was eventually sacked for being drunk in the kitchen and I was blaming everyone else for my drink problem. I worked there for under a year.
58. I moved to Leith and my life was chaotic. I was taking a lot of drugs and committing crime.
59. I was eventually arrested for breaking into a dental surgery and stealing a sterilizing unit for my needles. I was convicted and sentenced at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. My sentence was to serve between nine and a half months to three years at borstal in Polmont. I was sixteen or seventeen. I do remember that there was a social worker, but I don't recall his name. I recall being on remand in I think Saughton, but I cannot remember any detail. I do recall that the prosecutor at the time wore a kilt and he was an MP.

#### **Polmont Borstal, Polmont**

60. Polmont contained over one hundred boys, aged between sixteen and eighteen. The building was sandy coloured and there were four houses in total within Polmont. I can remember Douglas House. This was a feeder wing which was the first wing you went into. I also remember Stuart House. There was a set of dormitory's which I went into after Douglas. I think that there was another house somewhere else.
61. Polmont was a lock up, a closed borstal. There were bars on the windows and all of the doors were locked. It was like a prison. I remember that there was a swimming pool.
62. There must have been over sixty members of staff. There were two members of staff on each night. There was also teaching staff, workshop staff, and civilian staff who were all supervised by borstal staff.

## **Routine at Polmont**

### *First day*

63. I arrived at Polmont and was immediately made to strip off. I was given a uniform which was made from army type rough cloth. I was given shorts because you would only get long trousers if you earned them. I was placed into Douglas house. There was lots of shouting by the staff and I remember that the floors were shining. The regime was military. The governor inspected with a white glove every Saturday. You had to ensure that your bed block, which was your folded blankets, had to be perfect as they were measured for perfection by a stick. The floors had to be shiny. If a penny didn't bounce off your bed you would be in trouble, all the corners had to be spot on. There were regular spot checks.
64. Whenever the governor arrived to inspect your cell, the staff would stand just outside your cell to listen in so you would never speak with him. You would always have to seek permission to talk to the governor. We would always address the staff as "Mr".
65. I was called Jordy whilst I was at the school. I mixed with a guy called [REDACTED] from Paisley, and a guy called [REDACTED]. We addressed ourselves by nicknames. I also protected the younger guys. There was a guy called [REDACTED] and a guy whose name I am unable to remember who came from Inverness.

### *Mornings and bedtimes*

66. You would be woken and have to go to the gym at 5 am. Lights out were at nine or ten in the evening. You would use a slop bucket at night to go to the toilet. If you needed to go for a poo in the night, you would have to hold it in. If you pooped in the bucket you were in trouble.

*Mealtimes / food*

67. The food was stodgy but you had to eat it to build yourself up. There were lots of stews and puddings like plum duff and custard. You would have three meals a day and supper.

*Washing and bathing*

68. There were showers at Polmont and different baths surrounded by curtains. You would have one bath per week and there were enough baths for twelve people

*Leisure time*

69. There was boxing in the gym which the kids used to build themselves up, I never did it.
70. We would be allowed to smoke inside and outside our cell.

*Schooling*

71. I attended school for a half a day per week. I didn't pay much attention to lessons as there was always staff shouting.

*Personal Possessions*

72. You didn't have personal possessions. Tobacco was the currency of choice in Polmont.

*Health care*

73. If you ever asked to see a doctor in the morning, the staff would always talk you out seeing him.

74. I was admitted to the hospital wing with cracked ribs and a bleeding anus after being raped.
75. The staff knew I had been raped. I was asked what had happened but I didn't say anything. I wouldn't let anyone touch me until it started becoming infectious, and they then X-rayed me.
76. Dentists would come into the school to see us.

#### *Work*

77. We would make prison officers' uniforms in the workshops. Some of the guys would put razor blades in the stitching. There was an iron shop for making things like beds. We would get tobacco for working.

#### *Visitors / Inspections / Review of detention*

78. There were outside visitors who came in to listen to evidence and preside over a discipline court. I think it was called the visiting committee.
79. I was given twenty eight days at one point for something I had done. The sentences in the block were seven days, fourteen days and twenty eight days which was the longest you would serve. I don't think that the governor could give you any more than fourteen days. It was up to the visit committee to sentence you to longer in the block. You were never ever found not guilty.
80. You would go before the visiting committee before release. The committee was held in a separate room at Polmont. This was very much accepted as being part of the regime within the establishment.
81. I would never grass up staff to anyone or I would have been in trouble.

*Family contact*

82. I never received home leave whilst I was there.

*Running away*

83. I never ran away, but there were those who didn't return from home leave. They would receive a maximum punishment in the block of twenty eight days. They would also receive additional time added onto their sentence.

*Discipline*

84. If you were in trouble you would have to physically run a mile or scrub floors. I remember scrubbing the big floors when a member of staff appeared and they would walk over it and they would kick the bucket over and water would go everywhere. This happened to everybody.
85. If you got into trouble for something like fighting you would be sent to the block. These were separate cells situated downstairs. There wasn't a bed just a mattress on the floor and you had a slop bucket at night. You used to have an hour of exercise in the block. All you had to do was stay fit, there were no books, there was nothing. You had to try to shut yourself down to stay out of trouble.

*Suicide / self-harm*

86. I tried to harm myself a couple of times and I know that other boys tried to kill themselves. There were a couple of deaths when I was at Polmont which I heard about, but I don't know any other details.

## Abuse

87. At 5 am each morning you would have to attend the gym, and you would have to show a physical improvement. If you were sick in the gym you would be made to lick it up.
88. I was in Douglas House for about six weeks and then I was moved to the dorms. I was immediately picked on by the dormitory top man, the [REDACTED]. I beat the shit out of him. One night I was dragged out of my bed and raped by six guys. They inserted a broom handle into my anus. I was bleeding from the anus and I had cracked ribs. I also sustained a black eye and a cracked cheek bone. One of the officers saw me and got me out of the dormitory. When I was asked what had happened I wouldn't tell them as I didn't want to grass anyone up. I was initially placed into the hospital wing for treatment and later moved to a single cell in Stuart House.
89. From then on I kept going to the gym and building muscle and I was raging. I did get my revenge on two of the guys who raped me, but it was horrible and I was living in fear. No one ever came near me again.
90. I witnessed a guy getting hit over the head with a metal bar in one of the workshops and he ended up like a cabbage. This guy ended up in a wheel chair and a guy was convicted for attempted murder. There was no one to talk to. You were brought up to keep your mouth shut.
91. The place was dominated by a Glasgow gang culture. There were all different mobs in Polmont and they all fought each other. You had to constantly watch your back.
92. Sexual abuse took place in the bathrooms between the boys. I think I was abused a couple of times in there.
93. There was lots of trauma in Polmont, kids were being stabbed with scissors.



94. There were lots of mental health problems and some of the guys shouldn't have been there. A lot of the guys were being physically and mentally abused.
95. I was never assaulted by staff but I saw the staff using choke holds to put the kids onto the floor to restrain them. It sometimes took up to five staff to restrain a kid and it would be chaos. The rest of us would be locked down and then the shouting and the banging would start and we would be shouting at and abusing the staff. The kids would be placed into a padded cell.
96. I saw liquid Valium being administered by the staff as often as they needed it to calm the boys down.

### **Life after being in care**

97. At the age of seventeen I went before the visitors' committee and I was discharged from Polmont. I received a small discharge grant and some new clothes and I was put on a train to Edinburgh Waverley. I think I may have been given a letter for the dole. I was given no preparation for release. I purchased alcohol from an off licence in Polmont to drink on the train.
98. On arriving at Waverley I was met by a mate of mine who is now deceased and whose name I don't wish to mention. He had purchased alcohol and drugs for me.
99. I went to Leith and pawned my new clothes for alcohol and drugs and I signed on the dole.
100. I was arrested shortly after and served a sentence of three months at Saughton Prison.
101. On release I returned to Leith and took a job on a fishing boat but was eventually sacked for substance abuse. I was on drugs and I was drinking. I was in a pub one night and someone said that I should go to London so I jumped on a train and went to London. I ended up in Piccadilly and Soho and I met a guy called [REDACTED] who was Scottish.

102. ██████ was a rent boy and I started to sell my body for money to enable me to purchase drugs and alcohol. We were thieving and doing drugs and alcohol. We ended up with three months each in jail.
103. Things were getting desperate, we were living in Pimlico and I couldn't get out of bed one morning and I had the shakes. ██████ pulled out his own gold teeth to buy drugs for us both to enable me to get up and start grafting.
104. I had ripped off a drug dealer in London and he was a high placed gangster who threatened to kill me. Things were so bad that I had to get out, and at the age of nineteen or twenty I went to Cornwall.
105. My life in Cornwall was chaotic. I was suffering from substance abuse and I was in and out of temporary accommodation, prison and bail hostels. I hitched around the country for jobs and I would sign on. The best job I had was waiting on tables in a hotel in Wales.
106. I nearly died on a number of occasions from drug overdoses. My second home became Exeter prison.
107. Eventually I got arrested for fraud and I was on remand in Exeter and to my surprise I was granted bail. A condition of my Bail was that I could not enter licensed premises. I ended up in a bail hostel called Meneghy near Camborne. Although I wasn't allowed to enter pub premises I got drunk and was taking very hard drugs. I recall sending other people into the pub to buy drink on my behalf while I waited outside. I would return to the hostel either drunk or under the influence of drugs. If I was drunk I would collapse and go to bed. If I was high on speed I would talk to the staff for hours. I think that in my mind they were not aware of the condition I was in but they knew fine. The manager of the hostel was John Cousins and he introduced me to a drug treatment psychiatrist called Ben Charnaud who made numerous attempts to support me through my addiction.

108. The first time I asked for help was when I went into Camborne town centre and got very drunk and out of my head on prescription and illicit drugs. I got a taxi back to Meneghy Hostel and on route I was sick, evacuated my bowels and urinated in the back of the taxi. I was carried into the hostel and that was my first acknowledgement of my issues. It was the first time I showed any emotion.
109. As a result of me asking for help I was sectioned at Trengweath hospital in Cornwall. I was subsequently referred to Cloud's House treatment centre in Wiltshire in 1991. I remained there for six weeks. I was introduced to the "twelve steps". Which is a spiritual programme run by the members of Narcotics Anonymous.
110. I attended one Narcotic Anonymous meeting when I came out of Cloud's House Treatment Centre. I took what I thought was a low-alcoholic drink and I was able to function and socialise in my local pub. I was the captain of the pool team in the pub and the night we won the league I started to drink again. I also started that night to take drugs. About a week later I became psychotic. I was still under the drug treatment programme but my life was chaotic and I sold all the furniture in my flat to finance my addictions. I was again sectioned into Trengweath Mental Health Unit.
111. After being discharged from Trengweath Mental Hospital on Tuesday 12th May 1992 I took an overdose in effort to finish my life. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The police were called and I died three times in the ambulance. I have never touched drink or drugs since.
112. I moved to Gloucestershire and was instrumental in starting up some Narcotics Anonymous meetings and getting involved with the fellowship and the twelve steps of recovery. I worked voluntarily on the first Multi Agency Working Group in Stroud. I was instrumental in forming this group along with the local police. I went into schools and told my story to the senior children. I became a part of the school curriculum. I also spoke to local agencies.

113. I was able to rent my first flat and furnish it myself and learn how to pay my own bills. This was something that I hadn't been capable of doing before. I was helped by my sponsor who I had met when I joined the fellowship. My sponsor was an American man who was running a treatment centre.
114. I met and had a relationship with a woman and we subsequently had a little girl. I after some time realised that my partner was using drugs and I fought for parental responsibility of my daughter. After a long battle I was awarded custody and my daughter is now twenty five.
115. I moved back to Cornwall with my daughter and I met my wife and we married in 2008.
116. I have attained a degree in drug and alcohol counselling and I have subsequently worked in a number of front line community counselling type roles. These roles have included the Probation Service, and work with addiction and the homeless. Eventually I have come away from front line roles to become a gardener.

### **Impact**

117. I have felt anger and rage over my time in care, and I wasn't able to cry for years.
118. I attribute my drug and alcohol addiction and my lifestyle along with other issues of my childhood to my experiences in Balrossie and the other institutions. I used these substances at first to shut out the feelings that I felt in care.
119. I have found that my relationships with females have been difficult. I would find myself picking women with similar addiction problems as me. I couldn't keep a normal relationship. I would over compensate, I would just pull a woman and have sex with her as if I was proving myself.

### **Revisits**

120. I can remember that in 2008 I was on honeymoon with my wife and I went back to visit Balrossie as I was nearby. It was closed and I recall going into the building and feeling the presence of all the children. I felt shame for what had happened to me and the other children that had been there.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

121. I have never reported the abuse that I suffered in care and my wife still doesn't know the half of what has happened to me.

### **Records**

122. I haven't recovered any of my records, I don't want to know. I have sent away for my Disclosure and Barring Service check but it doesn't show anything from my distant past.

### **Lessons to be learned**

123. There should be more involvement with the process before the kids are presented at court. Courts shouldn't send little boys away and I feel the system let me down badly.
124. People report things quicker now but they didn't back then. Family secrets were kept within the family when I was a child. When issues are identified intervention needs to be made earlier. My parents just discarded me.
125. Staff need to be trained to stop bullying and being abusive in a system that back in the day protected them.
126. The whole institutional system needs to be looked at. Abuse still continues to this day in the care system.

127. Kids need to be prepared for life after care and not just abandoned to the streets where they will continue to be abused. I was in my forty's and I couldn't pay a bill.
128. The biggest thing was that they closed approved schools, detention centres and borstals. Once I had entered that system I didn't have a chance and my life spiralled into chaos and addiction and a life of homelessness and petty crime.
129. I hope that my statement helps other children out there. I feel very strongly that by reporting what happened to me in care will benefit children currently in the care system to be able to have a voice of their own and to be heard.
130. 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.....



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Dated.....

15/7/2021

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