

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

George QUINN

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is George Stewart Quinn. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I have already provided a statement to the Inquiry, dated 5 July 2017. I gave evidence about my life before going into care and my experiences in Smyllum. I was in Smyllum from the age of six until the age of twelve. I came forward to the Inquiry again to give a further statement about my experiences in borstals and prisons.

Life before going into borstals

3. When I left Smyllum at the age of twelve, I was living in Glasgow. By the age of sixteen, I was living in a flat. I rented it from the father of a friend. It was just somewhere we could party. There was no adult supervision. I wasn't working at the time so I was only getting unemployment money. It was pennies, so I struggled to pay the rent. I was running wild.
4. I was with two older guys, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were about nineteen or twenty. We had been drinking and we went by a shop. We broke the shop window. They went in the back of the shop and I just stole some Mars Bars. We went back to my flat, but we were so drunk that whatever we stole was dropped. It was like

a trail to the door. About ten minutes later, the police kicked the door in. There was quite a stramash and the police were hitting us with batons. We were taken down to Orkney Street Police Station in Govan and placed in separate cells.

5. Half way through the night, the police came in, woke me up and asked me what I had stolen. I told them that I'd stolen Mars Bars. They thought that I was taking the mickey out of them so they were kicking and punching me. They burst my head. They didn't believe anything I was saying. The police officers in the police station were different from the ones hitting us in my flat, but I don't know any of their names.
6. The next morning, I was up at court. My head was full of dried blood and my face was messed up. I must have looked a state. Nobody asked what happened to me. I was given a charge sheet, which I'd never seen before. I was charged with resisting arrest, attempted police assault and housebreaking with intent. The resisting arrest charge was from when they beat me up in the cell, so it was to cover that up. I'd been to court before, but only for daft things like playing football in the street and stealing. It had just been wee courts before. This was the first time I'd been in a big court.
7. I had a chance to speak to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the court. I asked them what I should do. They told me that I'd get a lawyer and that I should see what the lawyer said. I was given a court appointed legal aid lawyer. I asked the lawyer what I should do. The lawyer told me to plead guilty. He said I'd get a slap on the wrists and sent home. I did plead guilty. The judge looked at my background. Smyllum must have been in it. He said that he was sending me to Longriggend for three weeks in order to obtain reports. I didn't even know what Longriggend was.
8. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] pled not guilty and they got off. They had set me up like a patsy. I had been a wee bit in awe of them because they were older than me. I thought I was a wee hard guy, but I was just a kid who didn't know any better. They knew better. After I'd pled guilty, I was put into the cells again. I didn't have a clue where I was going. You didn't know where you were going until you got onto the bus.

Barlinnie, Glasgow

9. I was about sixteen and a half years old when I was jailed. I think Longriggend was full, so I went to Barlinnie first. That was when I knew things were heavy duty. I was in a police wagon approaching the prison. I was in what was called a 'dog box', which was a small cubicle. We would be put into a dog box whenever we were transferred and also when we arrived at each prison. I think we were still hand-cuffed when we were being transported. I was only getting wee glimpses out of the window. There were people shouting and swearing in the van. Someone knew someone else and they were banging.
10. I was taken into the reception area of Barlinnie and put into a dog box again. I think we all got stripped down and our clothes were taken off us. They did a body search and a mouth search. I had long hair at the time and the warden told me it would be coming off. I told him that it wouldn't because I hadn't been sentenced yet. I knew that much. My hair had cost me enough money. I was a bit of a poser back then.
11. I can't remember how we got from the reception area to our cells. I think they just did whatever paperwork that needed to be done and then took us to our blocks. Nobody from the jail took me aside and explained how things worked. I was just thrown in and I had to get on with it as best I could.
12. It was big, old Victorian blocks with stairs and cells on either side. There were dormitories at the bottom. I was put into a cell with an older guy. I asked him every question that came into my head. My cellmate was good with me. I didn't have any cigarettes so he gave me some. He looked out for me as best he could. He could see that I was a young boy. I was asking about Longriggend and he told me it was a dawdle, but the worst thing about it was I'd be locked up all the time.

Routine at Barlinnie

Mornings/bedtime

13. I think we got up at about 7:00 am. Nobody got you up, but the cell doors were opened. We had to slop out. That was really horrible. We got washed and went down for breakfast at about 8:00 am. Trying to sleep at night was a nightmare. There was always shouting and bawling and people doing daft things. If I hadn't been sharing a cell I would have cried in my cell at night. It was a scary place and I didn't know what was going to happen to me when I went up to court.

Mealtimes/food

14. Breakfast was lumpy porridge, bread and butter and tea. It was disgusting. I don't take butter or margarine so I was just eating the bread. Lunch and dinner were no better than breakfast. The steam pudding was about the only thing that was nice, but we didn't get it often. The food was just disgusting. The tea was horrible. Everything was just horrible. There was nothing luxurious about Barlinnie.
15. You were given a metal tray for meals. You had your soup in one compartment, your dinner in another compartment and your dessert in a third compartment. You had to walk up three flights of stairs, so by the time you got to your cell it was all a mish-mash. It was a horrible, degrading thing to walk upstairs with the tray, trying not to spill it and eat what they gave you.

Washing and bathing

16. We washed in the morning. I think we only had a shower once a week, but I wasn't in Barlinnie for long before being moved to Longriggend. I think they gave us a toothbrush when we arrived. We used powder toothpaste.

Work

17. Because I was on remand, I didn't have anything to do during the day. Remand prisoners weren't allowed to work and I didn't get any education or training.

Leisure time

18. I'm sure there was a table tennis table downstairs. People would play cards and things like that. There was a TV. I was a wee boy amongst all these men. There were a lot of young boys in there. We were trying to take it all in and kid on that we weren't scared, but it was a scary place.

Personal possessions

19. I didn't have a tuppence in Barlinnie. Prisoners who worked were given wages, but I wasn't able to work. My cellmate would give me a few cigarettes every now and again and I just ticked over with that.

Healthcare

20. I wasn't ill in Barlinnie so I didn't have cause to see a doctor.

Religious instruction

21. I was Catholic, but I didn't worry about religion in prison. I didn't ask about a chapel, but there might have been one.

Visits/inspections

22. I didn't get any visits in Barlinnie. I didn't know the regime for getting visits. I'm dyslexic so trying to write things down was difficult. My spelling is atrocious and I couldn't remember any phone numbers. Very few people had phones in those days. I don't remember seeing a social worker while I was in Barlinnie.

Abuse at Barlinnie

23. I watched a programme called *Time* on TV recently. It's a drama set in a prison. It made me realise that there were so many things happening in jail when I was there that are still happening to this day. Nowadays, it's on a far bigger scale. There are always big noises in the jail that are in certain gangs. There were quite a lot of gang fights in Barlinnie. They were over just as quickly as they started. I saw someone getting hit over the head with a steel tray. His head was split open. I didn't know what it was about and I didn't want to know. I saw other people fighting, but nothing ever happened to me in Barlinnie. I didn't experience any abuse, other than the mental abuse of being locked up all the time.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Barlinnie

24. When the tray was smashed on the prisoner's head, we were all thrown into our cells. Nobody saw anything. You just took your punishment and got on with it. In those places you can't grass. As much as you think you might say something, you can't. If you're caught as a grass, you're a grass all the way through your jail sentence. It doesn't matter which jail you go to, the word would get round. A lot of the time, the wardens would spread it around. The wardens didn't like grasses either, but they wanted information.

Leaving Barlinnie

25. I was only in Barlinnie for about ten days. I don't have any good memories of being there. It was really weird, getting thrown in there. There were doors being banged all the time. I was transferred to Longriggend after a number of days.

Longriggend

26. I think Longriggend was for young offenders. I don't remember seeing older prisoners there. It was scary. I was used to being in institutions because I'd been in Smyllum and other homes. It was similar to those, but different. There was barbed wire fence all the way around it. You knew it wasn't going to be a walk in the park, but the wardens at Longriggend weren't too bad to me. I was stuck in a cell, which we called a 'peter', with a guy I'd never met before. My cellmate changed a few times over the weeks that I was there. We were stuck in that cell for 23 hours a day, sometimes 24 hours a day at weekends.

Routine at Longriggend

First day

27. When you arrived at Longriggend, they put you into a dog box again. It had a ledge about twelve inches and there were three feet from the back of the box to the door. It was about six feet in height. You could be left in that box for quite a while, not knowing how long you would be there. You sat there and they gave you your prison clothes. You had to get stripped in that area, which was very small. You took your own clothes off and then they gave you your prison clothes. I know I was strip searched, but I'm not sure when that happened. I was scared and intimidated when they told me to bend over and spread my cheeks. It was all very professional and the wardens didn't make any comments. We were put into cells.

Mornings/bedtime

28. The cell door was chapped at about 7:00 am. We had to slop out. We then got washed in the shower facilities, which were all open. I think I was given a toothbrush and used the powdered toothpaste. I didn't have any money to buy toothpaste. We were given red carbolic soap to wash ourselves.

Mealtimes/food

29. The food in Longriggend was standard prison food. It wasn't good. It was all boiled.

Clothing

30. I think we were given stripy shirts at Longriggend. We were also given denims.

Work/leisure time

31. I was still on remand at Longriggend, so it was a similar routine to Barlinnie. I couldn't work so I had no money. I couldn't even afford a letter. We didn't do much during the day at Longriggend. At the weekend, we were locked up from Friday night until Monday morning. We even ate our food in the cells. The only time we left the cell was to slop out in the morning. When I first arrived, my cellmate was a young guy as well, but he was wiser than I was. I just followed his lead. I didn't get into much trouble and I didn't see much trouble at Longriggend.

Visits/inspections

32. It's possible that my court reports were prepared when I was in Longriggend, but I can't remember seeing a social worker. I don't remember getting any visits when I was in Longriggend.

Abuse at Longriggend

33. I felt a lot safer in Longriggend than Barlinnie. I didn't see any violence or abuse there. It was a sort of nothing time.

Leaving Longriggend

34. I went back up to court after being in Longriggend. I remember [REDACTED] was in the court. I had the same lawyer that I'd had for my first court appearance. The judge said that he was going to do me a favour and sentence me to two years in borstal. I'll never forget that. It was because of my background reports. I thought that two years was a hell of a long time. I didn't even know what borstal was. [REDACTED] was crying.
35. I was put into a court cell with another prisoner. I think his name was [REDACTED] and he was going to Barlinnie. I told him I'd just been sent to borstal, but I didn't know which one. He was really friendly and trying to make me feel better. I remember speaking to another prisoner. I told him some of the things that had happened to me. He said they'd probably checked my background reports and saw that I had an unstable life, I was running riot and I was living in a flat by myself. He said the two year sentence was probably to teach me a lesson and try and get me on the straight and narrow. I thought the sentence seemed really harsh. He told me that I could appeal the sentence, but I had to wait until I got to the borstal. My lawyer didn't come to see me after I'd been sentenced.
36. The other prisoner said that I'd go to Polmont for eight weeks' assessment. After that, he told me that I didn't want to go to Carrick House because that was where all the nutters went. He did say that you got 50p extra for being a nutter. He said Castle Huntly in Dundee was a good place to go. I was trying to take all this information in and the fact that I'd just got two years. I was put in a van and taken to Polmont. I was still only sixteen. That was a whole new experience altogether.

Polmont Borstal

37. My liberation date wasn't mentioned when I arrived at Polmont. It was a very cold and scary place. When we went in, the doors would go 'bang', we'd be told to stand there, then another set of doors would go 'bang'. As soon as you went in, your contact with the outside world was shut off. We were taken into a reception area for prisoners and

asked our names. We were told to strip and then strip-searched. We were given our prison numbers and told not to forget them. I had a remand number, but I was given a different number when I arrived at borstal.

38. We all stood naked with what we called packages, which contained overalls, denims, two tops, a t-shirt, underpants and socks. We were standing at a door. The warden told us that when the door opened, we had to run for our lives across the hall and that we shouldn't stop for anything. The door opened and we all ran through it. My heart was pounding through my skin because we didn't know what we were running for. As we ran through, we realised that it was the dining area and everybody was eating. All the boys were killing themselves laughing. I couldn't make sense of it. I'd probably have been laughing myself if I'd been sitting there. That was our introduction to borstal.
39. We stood with all our stuff and the warden told us to come back. I found out that they did it to most new inmates when they arrived. I felt humiliated. We were then put into the dog boxes to get dressed. The dog box was a small cubicle, big enough for a dog. You had to try and get dressed in the small space. The wardens decided when you could come out. You could be in there for an hour, an hour and a half. They would tell everybody to come out and then tell you which floor you were going to. I ended up on the third floor, which was the top one. The first thing I got after that was a haircut. My hair was my pride and joy, so it was sore getting that done. Once my hair had been cut, I knew that was me in the jail.

Routine at Polmont

Mornings/bedtime

40. I was put into the 'peter', my cell. I was in a cell by myself. I was on the top floor. There were two floors below me and below them there were dormitories. The first thing I saw in my cell was a stack of blankets with sheets in between. They were absolutely spot on. The warden told me that was the way my bed had to be made every morning. He said that he didn't care if I had to be up early, when the alarm went off it had to be

ready. I was shown how to do it a couple of times. I thought I'd never get it. He told me how my socks, toothbrush and soap had to be every day. He said that was the routine in there and the routine wouldn't be broken for me. I was trying to take it all in. The bed block thing was a nightmare.

41. I was waking up at 4:00, 5:00 am to try and get the bed block ready. When the alarm went to get us up, we had to get ready. The door would be open and we had to stand at our doors with our arms at either side of the door. When we were told to get out, we had to push ourselves out and stand to attention right away. The officer would come along and check all the rooms. He looked at my bed blocks and said, "What's that?" I said, "It's my bed block." He gave me a punch in the arm and said, "What did you say?" I said, "It's my bed block." He told me to call him sir. I said, "Sorry, sir, it's a bed block, sir." He said, "You call that a bed block?" He threw it up into the air. He said I wouldn't get recreation that night and that I had to spend the time in my cell, getting my bed block right. That happened for quite a while. It took me some time to get my bed block the way the officer wanted it. Other boys would help me do it until I got used to it. Eventually, I got the hang of it and I didn't have to get up at the crack of dawn. Every morning was the same.
42. I can't remember the officer's name, but I can remember his face. He was a medium sized, skinny guy. He was clean-shaven. He was a smoker because I could smell the smoke off him. He was a bit of a jack-the-lad. He would tell you to do as he said and when he told you to do it. I was bigger than him and I was desperate to hit him, but he was the boss and we had to do exactly what he said. He would ask you what your prison number was. If you forgot your number, you weren't allowed down for recreation with the other inmates. Once a month, we got to watch a film and we wouldn't be allowed to watch that either. Eventually, I got the bed block right and they left that alone. Then they would come in and look at your cupboards. They'd ask why your socks were facing a certain way and then they would go up in the air. Your recreation would be withdrawn again.
43. I think we went to bed at around 8:00, 9:00 pm. As soon as I went to bed I was absolutely exhausted, not just physically but mentally as well. The last thing I would

say to myself was, "Christ, I've got all of this tomorrow again." I don't know what happened to boys who wet the bed in Polmont, but it wouldn't have been good.

Mealtimes/food

44. The food was better in Polmont than it had been in Barlinnie. We were timed to eat our food. If you hadn't finished, you had to leave it. We ate our meals together. You'd have people telling you that was someone else's seat and all that sort of carry on. I was from Glasgow so I got friendly with Glasgow guys. I sat with them. Nobody really bothered us and we didn't bother them. You could see the guys that weren't physical enough to put up a fight against the bullies. They were the ones who were picked on.

Clothing

45. We were given stripy shirts to wear. They were blue and white and red and white. Blue and white was for the boys in Carrick House.

Work/physical training

46. After our cells were inspected in the morning, we were given jobs to do. I think I was outside doing the garden. There was a wee bit of fresh air, so it was a bit of peace. Nine times out of ten, the officers didn't bother you out there. As long as you were doing what you were meant to be doing.
47. We also had circuit training all the time. They were very much into physical training at Polmont. We had to march everywhere and it was always, "Yes, sir, no, sir, three bags full, sir, jump how high, sir." It was very regimental. Our uniforms had to be spotless. They would take all of us out of the building and we had to run a mile. What we didn't realise was that they were timing the mile. I thought that I was going quite fast because I was trying to impress them. I did my best, but it wasn't good enough for them. They told me I had to get my time down further. I never got it down anywhere near what they were looking for.

Leisure time

48. After work and physical training, we would be down in recreation with the other inmates. I realised that it was a different world from Barlinnie. I was in amongst it. We could play table tennis or watch the TV. We did have some access to books, but there was no educational programme at Polmont. Reading wasn't a big thing. We didn't have much time to read because it was all so regimented.

Personal possessions

49. We got wages, 32p a week sticks in my head and I think that's what we got. We could buy a quarter ounce of tobacco, a packet of cigarette papers and a letter. Some boys were lucky enough to work outside of Polmont. It was called 'Working for Freedom' and they were getting ready for release. They got £2 or £3 wages so they were millionaires compared to the rest of us.

Healthcare

50. I didn't ask for any medical attention when I got injured. I think the most they would have given me would have been an aspirin anyway.

Religious instruction

51. There was a church or chapel. It could be either or, depending whether it was a priest or a minister conducting the service. I went to Mass once. I think I just wanted to get out of my cell. I didn't bother with it much after that.

Visits/inspections

52. I didn't get any visits in Polmont. I didn't see a social worker there either. We didn't have access to phone calls. I found out who was who and I'd get other people to write letters for me. I can read, but I can't write and spell.

Abuse at Polmont

53. There are always bullies in these places. Every day, I got physical and emotional abuse. Prison officers would give you digs and punches. If you were running the mile, they might trip you up when you passed them, just for a laugh. There were prison officers who were bullies and bullies amongst the prisoners as well. Whenever you got punches from a prison officer, it was always wee digs. It wasn't just me, I saw it happening to other prisoners all the time.
54. You were always wondering whether the officers were going to come in and make you do the bed block or whatever else again. You were always on your toes. You had to get over the fear very quickly. You had to toughen yourself up. You had to be very wary of who you mixed with and who you talked to. Sometimes, other people would tell you to be careful of someone because they were trouble. You had to take advice and do what you could.
55. Not long after I went into Polmont, I was standing at my door, waiting for an officer to shout me out. There was a guy down in the bottom cell. He was in one of the dormitories. He started gesturing that I was a tosser and things like that. I'd never seen the guy before. The officers came and did what they were doing. He was making gestures that he was going to slash me. Later on, I was sitting watching TV for recreation. A guy came up to me and said that somebody wanted to see me in the toilets. I asked who and he pointed to the guy that had been gesturing from his dormitory. I said that I didn't want any trouble, but he said that if I didn't go I would be a coward and the guy would bully me.
56. I went into the toilets. The boy came in with two of his pals. I had to defend myself. One of his pals was watching for the screws and the other two were having a go at me. When the screws came, two of them jumped into the toilets. It was just me and the boy there. The officers asked us what was going on and we said we were just having a laugh. They could see that we were puffing and panting and we had marks on our faces. They told us we were going to the cells. I still to this day don't know why the boy wanted to fight me. I never spoke to him again. My saving grace was that I

didn't bottle it. Through my life, I tried not to back down and it got me into all sorts of trouble.

57. I ended up getting three nights and three days in the digger. That meant I was locked up 24/7. I got all of my meals in the cell. I was given a book for an hour. I would read it and give it back. At night, they would give me another book. It didn't matter what the book was, it was something to do. I thought I could read a couple more chapters at night, but they gave me a different book and then a different book again the next day. It was their idea of showing me who was boss again.
58. After being in the digger, we had to go up and see ^{SNR} [REDACTED]. I had been told that I needed to wait until I got to borstal before I could ask about an appeal. I thought I needed to ask ^{SNR} [REDACTED] but I had never met the guy. The two of us were standing outside to attention. I was the first to go in. I was marched in and I had to stand in front of his desk. It was a big, solid, walnut desk. Behind it was the warden, wearing a three-piece Harris tweed suit. His hair and moustache were perfect. You could see your face in his shoes. He was over six foot and immaculately dressed, as if he had been a soldier all his life. He was probably the smartest dressed man that I'd ever seen. He was a very imposing person.
59. He asked me what I had to say for myself. I said that it had been a misunderstanding and that we had been carrying on, but it had gone too far. He asked who had started it and I said that it hadn't been that kind of thing. He told me not to tell lies. I knew that if I said the other guy had started it, it would go around the place that I had said this or that. I would get a hard time of it. I thought that I'd rather take the punishment the warden was going to give me than take the punishment from the rest of the inmates. The warden said I'd lose privileges. I had accepted the punishment for what I had done. I wasn't cheeky to him or anything like that. I didn't do anything disrespectful. I said, "Excuse me, sir, can I ask you a question?" He said that I could. I told him that I'd been sentenced to two years and that I thought the sentence was very hard. I said that I'd like to put in an appeal.

60. I got the word 'appeal' out and he smacked me right in the jaw. I came off my chair. It was a right smack. He said, "What did you say?" I said, "I'd like to make an appeal." He came over again and he was going to kick me. I said, "It's alright, it's alright, I don't want to appeal. Sorry, sir." He told me to get outside. I had to wait outside and my face was swelling up. The other boy went in and he also had his privileges removed. We were then sent back to our cells. I never spoke to SNR again in all the time that I was there. I was terrified of the man. His nickname was GIL. I'll never forget the smack. It was a cracker. I had a very sore and swollen face, but I didn't get any medical treatment. I didn't even mention it to anybody. The warden wrote down the punishment. That was the only time that I got into trouble at Polmont. I tried to do my time there quietly. It was eight weeks of solid torture.
61. I saw other boys being bullied. A lot of bullying went on in the dormitories. There were vulnerable boys in Polmont. There were a few gay guys and most of them were vulnerable. I think sexual things were happening to them. I never saw that happen, but I heard things. The gay guys were made to give guys blow jobs or whatever the bullies wanted them to do. I wouldn't imagine the gay guys were doing these things because they wanted to. You could see the bullies. They always had wee dafties hanging about them. You just knew to stay away from them. I wasn't scared of them, but I thought they were horrible people. They still had to do their time like the rest of us. The prison officers must have known what was going on.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Polmont

62. I didn't see anything sexual happening to other boys, I just heard about it. If I had seen it happen, I probably wouldn't have reported it because I would have been too scared. When I was in the fight with the other boy, I would still have got the same punishment if I'd told the warden the truth. It wouldn't have done me one bit of good. I didn't tell anybody that the warden smacked me in the jaw.

Leaving Polmont

63. We knew that we would be allocated somewhere after eight weeks, but we had no idea how they had graded us. We could stay in Polmont, go to Carrick House, which was up the road from Polmont, or go to Castle Huntly. I had no idea how I had been graded after the eight weeks so I didn't know where I'd finish my term. A lot of boys went up to Carrick House. They went from being red shirts to blue shirts. They said it was for nutters, but it was boys who wouldn't bend to the wardens' will. I was allocated to Castle Huntly. I knew it was in Dundee because people had told me. I'd never been to Dundee and I didn't know anything about it. I was handed all my stuff and I was wearing my own clothes to travel to Castle Huntly.
64. Thank God I was only in Polmont for eight weeks. I don't know whether I could have coped if it had been anymore. I don't have any happy memories of being there, other than saying cheerio to it. I'd love to erase it from my mind altogether. For a young boy, my experiences at Polmont and Barlinnie were mind blowing. Nobody tells you why you're in. I think Polmont tried to knock you down as far as they could and build you up the way they thought you should be. When you'd done the eight weeks, you went from being a wee ned and a nobody to being able to do your bed block and look after your hygiene. Those things were positive, but it was the way it was done.
65. When you go into a place like Barlinnie, you know your place. You keep your mouth shut and keep your head down. In a young offenders' like Polmont, you had to stand your ground. You had to pretend that you could do things that you couldn't do. It was a horrible thing. You had to change your whole persona and your whole way of thinking until you got out. It changed your whole mind set. It was survival.

Castle Huntly

66. I think Castle Huntly was for young offenders. I think I was still sixteen or seventeen when I went there. Sometimes, there might be older prisoners from Jessiefield in Dumfries who came to Castle Huntly to serve the end of their sentence. Castle Huntly

was completely different from Polmont. When we drove up, I could see that the grounds were all open. There were no fences or barbed wire. It was a castle. A few of us were going there from Polmont. Some of them were saying that it looked like a dawdle.

67. When we arrived, we were taken in to meet the governor. He told us that we'd done the hard part. He said that this was the part where they got us ready to go home. He said that there was a long way to go, but the more we behaved the better it would be for us. He said our sentence was irrelevant and that he would decide when we were ready to go. He said that we could be out in six months. I had done two so I thought I might only have four months to go.
68. Castle Huntly was much more relaxed than Polmont. When we were meeting the officers for the first time, they were so nice to us that I thought something was going to happen to us. It didn't feel right. They were treating us like human beings and calling us by our names. We had to strip and we were given our uniforms. I think it was red and white stripes. We were given a denim jacket, denim trousers and boots. We were then shown to our dormitories. We were calling the prison officers 'sir', but they said we could call them by their first names. The first time I did that, I thought I was going to get a slap. Eventually, I realised that was what they were doing. They were trying to rehabilitate us. We still had to put our hands up and ask to go to the toilet. Although the prison officers were more lenient, we still had to give them respect.

Routine at Castle Huntly

Mornings/bedtime

69. I was put into a dormitory at Castle Huntly. I think there were six boys in the dormitory. It was weird being in with other people, but good. There were boys who wet the bed in borstal. I don't think it was out of fear. I think it was just an illness that they had.

Mealtimes/food

70. The food was a lot better in Castle Huntly. We had limited time to eat our food in Polmont. When we first arrived at Castle Huntly, we were rushing. The officers said we didn't have to do that. We were able to take our time. We had porridge or cornflakes for breakfast. We could also get toast and jam. That was always good. Lunch would be a ploughman's lunch, cheese, tomato and things like that. If you were working outside, you got a cup of tea and a smoke at about 3:00 pm. We got our tea at about 5:00 - 5:30 pm. It could be anything from macaroni to a steak pie. A lot of the food was steamed, but it was a different class of food from the other borstals and you could eat it.

Schooling

71. We had outside teachers at Castle Huntly. They were nice to talk to. They weren't there to punish us, they were there to teach us. They taught us history and things like that if our schooling wasn't up to scratch. I used to enjoy doing that. I took history, English and home tech. The home tech teacher was good looking so I took that subject. There were a lot of good things at Castle Huntly.
72. I didn't know what dyslexia was at the time. My whole life, I'd been told that I was stupid and I believed that. I used to go for job interviews. If I was given an application form, I'd walk out because I couldn't fill it out. I worked in a lot of manual labour jobs because I didn't have to fill out an application form. I think the teachers at Castle Huntly knew that something was wrong. I liked English there. I could understand everything the teacher told me to do. I could read everything. I just couldn't spell things. I just did the best I could. I always loved history so I enjoyed that. The teachers were nice people so it was good.

Work/chores

73. I was put outside to work on the farm. I was planting and picking tatties, making sure the tomatoes were watered and digging ditches, things like that. It was great. I was

outside and I could have a joke with the officers. It was completely different. There was always an officer with us to provide instructions, but they were laid back. There was a prison officer called McKenna who had one of the staff houses down the road from Castle Huntly. We would sometimes clean his house and do work on his house. We would get a packet of cigarettes for doing that. It was completely alien to be given anything.

Leisure time

74. We played football until 8:00 pm. We played against other teams. We played Dundee's team when Tommy Gemmell was the manager. We all loved football and we would do anything, as long as we could get to play football. The coaches were good. It gave us some normality back.
75. We had sports days and things like that. I won the 880 yards at sports day. We had to do a qualifying race. I didn't want to do it so I deliberately came in fifth, knowing four people qualified for the final. One of them pulled out so I ended up running in the final. [REDACTED] were there. I was running and running and I realised I could win it. I won it by quite a bit and I was lying down at the end. [REDACTED] came over and asked whether the police had been chasing me. That was what Castle Huntly was like. It gave you a bit of normality back and encouraged you to do things like that. We were doing our time, but we didn't want to cause any trouble because everything was so good.

Personal possessions

76. I didn't have much at Castle Huntly, just whatever I had taken with me. We were given wages. There was a tuck shop and we could spend our wages there.

Healthcare

77. There was a matron at Castle Huntly, but I didn't need any healthcare while I was there.

Christmas and birthdays

78. They would wish you happy birthday on your birthday, but it was nothing special. At Christmas time, we had Christmas dinner. They did their best for us. We were too big for presents and things like that. We would play the officers at football on New Year's Day. We could get a wee kick at them, but it was all done in good fun. God knows what Christmas and birthdays would have been like at Polmont.

Visits/inspections

79. I did have family visits at Castle Huntly. My mother and [REDACTED] came to see me. [REDACTED] and his wife also came to see me. The visit passes were requested by my family. Any letters I wrote home, I asked someone to write them for me. I would tell them what to write and give them some tobacco or something for doing it.

Running away

80. The time at Castle Huntly felt so much more normal. You still knew that you were in a prison, but you could have ran away at any time. Eight weeks before your release, you were given a train pass so you could go home for a weekend's parole. The staff gave you a lift down to the station on a Friday. You had to be back for 7:00 pm on the Monday. It was hard coming back when I had been out, but it was common sense. I only had eight weeks to serve. It was a long eight weeks. There were boys who didn't come back after the weekend leave. They would be caught and there was a good chance they would get more time added on to the end of their sentences. They wouldn't be allowed to come back to Castle Huntly. They probably went to Polmont or Carrick House.

Abuse at Castle Huntly

81. I didn't experience any abuse at Castle Huntly. There was always verbal stuff. Guys from Stirling would try and noise up the guys from Glasgow. It was wee stupid things.

I remember there was one prison officer who used to give me a hard time, but it was nowhere near what I had experienced at Polmont. I was outside and I told him that I would bust him. One day, we were coming out of the dormitory. He told me to hold on. He locked the door behind us and took his jacket off. He said, "Right, come on then." I said, "I was only kidding." I think he knew. He burst out laughing and told me to get out. That put me right back in my place.

Leaving Castle Huntly

82. Eight months into my sentence, I went up for parole. I was knocked back. The second time I went for parole I was given a release date eight weeks later. I ended up serving a year of my sentence. They treated me like a human being when I was released. I was given a borstal suit. It was like something the Krays might have worn on a bad day. Everyone knew you were from the borstal because you had this horrible suit on. My belongings were in brown paper bag with a bit of string. They gave me a train warrant and a little money. They dropped me at the station, tooted the horn and were very nice. They wished me all the best and said they didn't want to see me back there. That was it. They were away and I was standing there on my own. I was free. It was very surreal.

83. Castle Huntly was day and night compared to Polmont. It helped me mentally, doing my time there. I'd spent time in Castle Huntly, Polmont, Longriggend and Barlinnie. It was all within a year. It was quite a lot for a young guy to take in. At the end of it I remember saying that I wouldn't go back to the jail again. I met people at Castle Huntly who were in and out of the jail all the time. I would ask them why they kept coming back. They said that they were put into places like Castle Huntly. They can't have had much of a life outside. It was a home from home for some of them.

Life after leaving care

84. When I got back to Glasgow, I went to stay with [REDACTED] and his family. They lived in the Govanhill area. I had a parole officer for a year. I can't remember his name, but he was based in Govan. I had to see him once a week at first, then it was once a fortnight and then it was once a month. The parole officer was happy, as long as I was working and turned up at appointments. I got a job within two days of being released. I went to work in a scrapyard. I was quite lucky that way. I told my employers where I had been, but they felt that everybody deserves a second chance.
85. I ran about in quite a rough area, Kinning Park. I was in a Catholic gang and we used to fight against a Protestant gang before I went into borstal. When I came out, everybody thought that I was a hard man. I just kidded on with it. I didn't have to fight anybody or do anything about it. My best man asked me why I was acting like a hard man. He said that there would be a hard man who would want to fight me. I told him I would calm it down. I started to read situations a bit better. I could see if something was going to kick off. I'd rather walk away than get involved in it. If I could talk my way out of it, I would. I knew that if I went to court, I wouldn't get a fair hearing and I'd be sent away.
86. That nearly happened one time when I was with [REDACTED] who became my wife, and some friends at my aunty's house. The door was banged and there were girls outside that I knew. They asked me where the party was and I sent them away. I pushed the girl away and shut the door. The next thing I knew, the police were at the door asking why I'd hit a woman. I told them that I hadn't, but they huckled me into the back of the van and took me to Orkney Street police station.
87. When I got to the police station, the officer said I was there for resisting arrest. I was kept in overnight to appear in court the next morning. I was still on parole so I thought I'd be going back to borstal. The sergeant came in during the night and I thought I was going to get a doing. He asked me what had happened and I told him. He said the other officer was over-eager. He told me he'd get me to court early in the morning. I told him a lie and said I had to get out to play in a cup final. He told me that he'd speak

up for me. The sergeant spoke up for me to the judge. He said I'd been a perfect prisoner and that I was playing in a cup final. I was given a £5 fine. That was my only good experience with the police.

88. I met my wife, [REDACTED] about three or four months after leaving borstal. If it wasn't for her, I don't know where I'd be. We were still young when we got married. I was nineteen and [REDACTED] had just turned eighteen. [REDACTED] saved me. All my pals were still toe-rags and getting up to things. A lot of them were going down to London to work and I was heading in that direction. When I married [REDACTED] we moved away from Kinning Park where all the trouble had been. She took me away from it all.

Reporting of abuse

89. Before coming forward to the Inquiry, I'd never reported what happened to me in borstals. I saw that the Inquiry were investigating borstals after I'd given evidence about my experiences in Smyllum. [REDACTED] said I should come forward because somebody should know what happened to me. I know what I did was wrong, but I don't think I should have been given two years for it. I'll never forget the judge telling me that he was doing me a favour.

Impact

90. I don't trust the police. I've had them in the house and I've told them that I don't trust them. I've had problems with authority all my life because of the things I had to go through. I've always wondered why I've been an angry young man and an angry old man. I've always been an angry person. It wasn't until Future Pathways put me onto a counsellor that I realised where it all came from. I saw a counsellor for two years. Before then, I didn't realise that there was a reason for it. It's not me, it was what I was made into. I often have to apologise for my temper.

91. Borstal is not a part of my life that I like to think about. I keep a lot of things to myself because it's not nice. I'd love to erase Polmont from my mind altogether. When I came out of the jail, I was still calling conductors and people like that, 'Sir.' It was stuck in my head. I was just so glad to get out when I left Castle Huntly. It was hard to adapt to being normal again. I remember telling [REDACTED] that I was going to the toilet and he asked what I was telling him for. I was just so used to it. It was daft wee things that they'd regimented into you. I would wake up at 6:00 am. It was doing my head in. I couldn't get a long lie.
92. I didn't take any positives from my time in borstals. I think the only positive thing that came out of my time in borstals was that I didn't want to go back there again. I don't know what I would have ended up as if I'd done two years at Polmont. Even in Castle Huntly, I was still a prisoner. It reinforced my mistrust of the authorities and of the police.
93. Years later, I sat back and thought about it. I realised there was no help from anybody. There was nobody there to help [REDACTED] when we got married either. I was out earning a labourer's wage and she was trying to bring up our wee boy. It was really hard. For a while, I was stuck in the same routine. Slowly but surely, I managed to get back into the way of things. I needed to work and I needed to earn a wage. I needed to go out and socialise. Being in a pub again was weird. Everything I had taken for granted before borstal had been taken away from me.
94. Social workers didn't do anything. There was no follow-up or anything. I don't remember seeing a social worker when I was in borstal. I've had very little dealings with social workers all my life. I was only about five when I started going into institutions. The only time I ever really saw a social worker was when they took you from A to B. After they dropped you somewhere, you never saw the same person again. The only time I've ever sat down and spoken to someone about my life was when I went to see a psychologist in Castlemilk. I had been having panic attacks and I couldn't sleep so my GP referred me. Even [REDACTED] hasn't heard everything.

95. It's always in your head, always. You think it's away at the back of your mind. My counsellor says that you lock things away at the back of your mind, but every now and again it comes right to the front of your mind. I've had to live with what happened for so many years. We were just kids. I've wondered why I'm angry and I don't trust people, but it's staring me right in the face.

Records

96. I tried to obtain my records from the borstals. I was told that Castle Huntly had no record of me. I won the 880 yard race there so I was a bit annoyed about that. We emailed someone at Longriggend, but nobody got back to me. I didn't know where to go after that to find records. I've tried going through the council, but they didn't get back to me either. Future Pathways have tried to help me, but they're just as bamboozled as I am. I've now contacted Birthlink so I'm hoping they can help me.

Lessons to be learned

97. Maybe you had to earn it, going to Castle Huntly. Otherwise, there would be chancers who would spoil it for everybody else. Maybe you had to go through the borstals to get there, but the brutality of Barlinnie and Polmont was mind-boggling. It didn't matter what age you were when you went in. If you hadn't been in there before, it was psychologically very difficult. People committed suicide when I was in those places and I can understand why. They just couldn't cope. It was too much at the one time. That was the way they got you. Everything had to be right on top of you. They were in charge and you had to do everything their way. You ended up doing it and then they wouldn't bother you so much. The reward was Castle Huntly. I don't know what it would have been like to do my whole sentence at Polmont. I think that I would have done something silly.
98. There was a system at Polmont and it must have been a winning system for them. What they did to me, they'd do the exact same to the next person coming in. It was a

conveyor belt. It must have been a tried and tested system. I think they were wrong in the way that they degraded you, but how else do you learn? You get people in the jail now who have televisions, kettles, cigarettes, sweeties and three meals a day. You have pensioners who can't put on a fire and these people are living in something like a holiday camp. They don't mind going back to it because they know that's exactly what they're going to get. There's no deterrent. I had a deterrent not to do it again and I never did it again.

99. I don't think there's a deterrent to stop people committing crimes anymore. But what do you do? What should the deterrent be? It's a horrible, vicious circle. Since I was a boy, the drugs have set in and it's a different mind-set altogether. You can get drugs easier in jail than you can outside it and that's scary. You've got to get your family to bring them in and it's a dirty, vicious, horrible cycle. The guy at the top never gets caught. The corruption is still as bad with some of the prison officers. It's a horrible world. I'm 66 and on my way out and I'm not bothered. I fear for my grandchildren in this world.

Hopes for the Inquiry

100. When I gave evidence to the Inquiry about Smyllum, I made sure that I showed my face. I had nothing to hide and I don't see why I should hide because of the crimes they committed. I then became a member of INCAS and I'm on the committee. I want to help other people tell the truth and get it out there. I've seen older people at meetings and they're so timid and terrified to tell their stories. It's horrible. So many people have already died. We won't let it be forgotten. We go to Smyllum the first Saturday every August and we hold a memorial for the children who died there. They were forgotten about for so long. We won't let them be forgotten.
101. There's going to be some sort of financial redress now. Money's great, but money's not the issue. I don't think anybody will be held accountable for what happened. The Daughters of Charity, who were in charge at Smyllum, have apologised to INCAS as a group. They've not come out to the world and said sorry. Helen Holland says they

can't do that because of insurance companies. It's all about money now, which it should never have been. It's going to sound grubby. People will say that survivors are just after money. I've never had money so I don't need it.

102. I hope people get heard by the Inquiry. I hope they tell the truth as best they can and they don't make it up. They should tell it like it was. Even if I can't remember names and things like that I can still see the things that happened to me. Every time I think about it, I can see it. To be heard is a great thing. To come out and say it is brave, but it helps to get it off your chest.

103. I would love somebody to look into ^{SNR} [REDACTED] of Polmont and see how many people he assaulted. He was the sort of guy we looked up to and respected, other than what he did to me. I've never seen a more smartly dressed man. He was like a tailor's dummy. I was in their care and that was the first thing I got.

104. I don't know what else I want from the Inquiry. I can't see any more answers coming from it, other than what I already know myself. Were they right or were they wrong? I had to go through the hard stuff to get to the good stuff at Castle Huntly. People used to get sent to Glenochil for three months. They called it a short, sharp lesson. It was harder than the military. I heard a lot of bad things about it. That was where I thought I was going to go when I went up to court. I couldn't see myself getting two years.

105. 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..... [REDACTED]

Dated..... 4 8 21