

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FDY
 [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is FDY [REDACTED] or FDY [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1971. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. My name was FDY [REDACTED] until I was nine years old, then my foster parents changed it to their name, FDY [REDACTED] I was known as FDY [REDACTED] until I was fifteen. Then I went back to live with my mum and used my step-fathers surname, FDY [REDACTED] That was only for about nine months before I went back to my family name of FDY [REDACTED]

General Information

3. My mum and dad are both still alive. My mum's name is now [REDACTED] and my dad's name is [REDACTED] They are no longer together. I see my mum about once a week. I don't see my dad at all now. The only time I really speak to him is when he's drunk at New Year.
4. I have four sisters and a brother to my mum and dad and my mum has another child, so I also have a step brother. The oldest is my brother [REDACTED] who's 51, then there's FDE [REDACTED] who's 50, [REDACTED] who's 48, me at 47, [REDACTED] who's 44 and [REDACTED] who's 42. My young step brother is [REDACTED] and I think he's 38 now.

Life before going into care

5. Our family home was [REDACTED] in Banff. I do remember my dad was away a lot, he was in the navy, but I have no memories of my mum at all.
6. I remember a pen friend of my mum's came over from Australia with her three children and the woman ended up with my dad. We were all in the same big house, my dad with the pen friend and her children and my mum and all of us.
7. My dad eventually moved out the family home with my mum's pen friend and her kids. He took my brother [REDACTED] and my sister [REDACTED] with him leaving four girls with mum. He only moved a couple of miles away.

Reason for going into foster care

8. My mum then met this really young guy, I'm sure he was a cousin or something, his name was [REDACTED]. He was only about eighteen and I have memories of him beating up mum, and us, really badly. I think [REDACTED] is dead now, he went to jail for what he did. [REDACTED] was horrible, he used to call us by animal names. He would call us pig, sheep, lamb, dog, duck or whatever. I was pig and he would just shout at us by those names and sit us in front of the fire. He was a horrible man.
9. I remember trying to hide under my mum's skirt one day because [REDACTED] was coming for me. He threw me down the stairs and broke my fingers and never did anything about it. I still have broken fingers to this day from when he bashed them. You can see they are broken. My mum did nothing to stop that. It gets me quite angry thinking about that.
10. My mum says she took [REDACTED] down to Reading, where he came from, to stop him beating us up and she left the four girls in the house with her brother and his wife to look after us. She says she was going to dump [REDACTED] and make her own way back. I've been told that we weren't left with anyone and that we were in the house on our

own. The oldest would therefore have been my sister [REDACTED] who was only eight or nine. I would have been about five, [REDACTED] was four and [REDACTED] was maybe two.

11. I remember being in the house and there being nothing to eat. I remember we were wetting our beds and there was no bed changing. We were abandoned there for about a week before, I think, neighbours must have alerted the social services. The police then came in and took us out the house.
12. I remember getting into a car and screaming and crying and not wanting to be in the car. We were then split up, two and two, and I went with [REDACTED] while [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were kept together.
13. I think it was Banff social work, it was my first time ever with social services. I do remember a female and nothing being explained other than saying we were being taken to a safe place. [REDACTED] and I then went to a different foster home from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
14. [REDACTED] and I went to a place called [REDACTED] in the Peterhead area first, they were very old people and we weren't there that long. I don't have any memories of staying at that place. I'm sure they were foster carers but I have no memories.
15. The police got involved because when we were picked up they found polaroid pictures in our Banff house of my mum and [REDACTED] engaged in sex acts. It would have been my older sister that took them and my younger sister was in some, next to my mum, who was naked.
16. There was a court case and I don't know why my mum wasn't prosecuted, I don't know what happened, but she never went to prison. I have seen [REDACTED] and I think [REDACTED] got eight years.

Life in foster care – ^{John Sinclair (JS) and JBS} ██████████ ██████████, Aberdeenshire

General

17. I think I was about six when ^{FDE} ██████████ and I went from ██████████ to the next foster home at ██████████. I have no memory of going there, I was just suddenly there. The carers were ^{John Sinclair (JS) and JBS} ██████████ we knew them as ^{John Sinclair (JS) and JBS} ██████████. When we arrived, my other two sisters, ██████████ and ██████████ were also there, so we were all together.
18. We stayed in two different houses in ██████████ with ^{JS-JBS} ██████████ family. The first one was in ██████████ and was a small house. I remember it being all of us in the one bedroom and a small livingroom. Then we moved to ██████████, which is in the upper part of the village and I remember that house very vividly.

Relationship with foster parents

19. To me, ^{JS-JBS} ██████████ were in their twenties. I think they're still alive, I imagine they would be in their sixties now. John was a coalman and I remember being in his lorry. He used to take us out in the lorry a lot. I think he took all of us out, but individually, because I only remember being there on my own and I remember getting sweeties from various people that he delivered coal to. I remember doing that quite a lot actually. I must have missed school when on those trips as it certainly wasn't the weekends.
20. I don't really remember if anything bad happened on the coal round, I don't think so, but when I look back on it, it feels bad. All I can remember is getting sweeties and being on the coal rounds with him.
21. I don't know if ^{JBS} ██████████ had a job, but she did have a baby while we were there, so I am assuming she wouldn't have been working at that point.

22. I remember being hungry all the time and trying to find food in the kitchen. I remember standing on a chair and then on a unit and hunting for biscuits. I also remember we had to cook for them. We stood on chairs in the kitchen and cooked bacon and eggs. I would have been about seven years old.
23. We didn't go on any trips or holidays with John and [REDACTED] I remember once going to the fair, but that was with [REDACTED] mum, we called her granny [REDACTED]. I think she was okay, we used to go to them quite a lot. We won a coconut at the fair once and I was sick in the car after being forced to drink the coconut milk. I remember I got whacked for that.
24. We did get to play in the garden, they had a rabbit we looked after. There was an iron fence on one side of the garden and I think we had a hut or Wendy House. I fell off the fence and a nail went into my leg once. I still have the hole in my leg. I don't remember going to hospital or getting any treatment for that.

Healthcare

25. I don't actually remember ever going to the doctor from the house, it was only from school, I think. I had a lot of ear and urine infections and I remember a health visitor coming out. I think someone had noticed that stuff was coming out my ear.
26. John used to stick cotton buds in my ear, really, really far into my ear and it made me gag. It was for his amusement, I presume, as I don't know why anyone would stick things in my ears. I could feel them in my throat when he did that and I think that was why I had the ear infections. In fact, he once perforated my ear drum. That was when a health visitor came to the house. I remember on two separate occasions being told by John that if I said anything I'd be in for it and 'Jimmy' would be coming up. He called his gym shoe 'The Jimmy'. He used his white gym shoe, to whack our bare bums.
27. I must have said something at some point to someone at school or a health visitor, but I don't remember. I remember crying at school and my ear being so sore. Next

thing I was on the sofa in the house with this person, a health visitor or social worker, I'm not sure, and they were talking about us needing treatment for lice. That's about all I remember. I don't think we got to speak to them at the house, they were kept in another room.

Education

28. I don't remember much from school, I know it was a long walk and it was an old school with fields around it and a wall. I remember being sent home from school once because I had chicken pox and another time because I had a burst eardrum.
29. I don't remember my sister ^{FDE} [REDACTED] being at school with me but I remember walking to school with other children that lived in another area of the town. I don't remember walking to school with John or ^{JBS} [REDACTED]
30. I'm not sure if people knew we were in foster care, at school. However, we peed our beds all the time, we had lice, we were smelly and our hair wasn't clean. People would surely have known we were in care or were being abused. [REDACTED] is a small community and I did know a few girls that I went to school with.

Visits

31. I have one memory of my mum from staying with ^{JS-JBS} [REDACTED] family. It was a snowy day, maybe near Christmas, and I was looking out the front window of their house, onto the road. My mum was standing waving and we were waving back asking who the lady was. We were told it was our mum. She left presents that day, I remember I got a denim bag with a dolls head on it. That is the only memory I have of my mum, I don't know why I blocked her out.
32. I don't have much memory of Christmas's with ^{JS-JBS} [REDACTED]. I was with them for maybe three of them but I don't recall any celebrations or a tree or anything like that. I don't remember birthdays either.

Nature of abuse

33. Much of the discipline and abuse centred round wetting yourself. I wasn't a bad child, but even if I had been you don't treat a child like they did.
34. I wet the bed until I was about thirteen. The way that was dealt with by JS-JBS was not very good. We were sat in freezing cold baths and he would hold our heads under the water. John would physically put you in and hold you under, he thought that was funny. You would sit there for an hour in freezing cold water and if we tried to get out, we would get a smack.
35. There was no change of bedclothes and we would wet our pants as well. John Sinclair would check us every night and he would whack us with his shoe if we'd wet them. That was 'The Jimmy', that I mentioned earlier, I was scared of that.
36. He also made us wear our wet pants on our heads and stand outside. We would have to stand in the cold for about 10-15 minutes, any weather. I remember one time it was really cold and dark and we just had to stand there, you weren't allowed back in. He did that to me and all my sisters.
37. If we wet our beds, they had this sign on the wall that said FDY and they would write up the name of whoever had wet their beds that night. I clearly remember being FDY. There was then a list of jobs written underneath for FDY to do that day. That could be the dishes, cleaning out the rabbits or lighting the fire. Doing the dishes wasn't just the dirty ones that were sitting, it was washing every single dish in the cupboards, every cupboard. We had to wash, dry and put away all of them.
38. JBS was always there and aware of what was happening. I don't remember her doing anything to me apart from trying to make me breast feed from her and drink her milk. There were other times when I would be aware of her in the bed with us. Me and my sisters all seemed to me to be in the one bed at times. I don't know if

there were other beds in the room or if we just chose to sleep in the same bed for protection.

39. [REDACTED] had an attic at the top of the stairs, like a floor level attic, with a bedroom at the end. If we were bad, and I don't remember what I would have done, we were locked in that attic bedroom. It was pitch black and there was a bed, and we were put in there overnight.
40. I have memories of a hole in the wall and John would poke things through it to try and scare me. Sometimes it was body parts, his penis. There was also a hole in the back of the wardrobe in that room that led out, through another hole in the wall and into the 'special bedroom' in the attic. That's what John called it. You were taken there if you were special.
41. John would come through that hole in the night, out the cupboard and take you away through to that 'special bedroom'. One time my tooth fell out so it was a special time and I was going to get the tooth fairy so I was put in that room on my own and then he would come in and get me.
42. One time I was in the special bedroom and I awoke and he was in the bed. He was forcing my head down to his private area. It felt like I was getting suffocated because I was under the covers and I couldn't breathe. I couldn't bare the pubic hair on my face. Somehow I managed to get out from the bottom of the bed. [REDACTED] was in the bed also.
43. It was sometimes in their bedroom, sometimes in the 'special bedroom' and sometimes he would lift me up and take me from my bed to the 'special bedroom'. I always remember being really scared. He would touch me down below and he would insert fingers and at that age you don't know what's happening and I couldn't escape.
44. One thing I do remember is that he was a small man but very strong and you couldn't get out from under him. I remember fighting but not being able to get

anywhere. He did rape me and I think that is where the baths come in as well because I would be burning and I guess that would cool me down. The cold baths weren't just in the daytime, I can remember them at night as well.

45. That abuse was only in the bigger home we moved to, I don't remember anything down in the small house. I remember the small house was a happier house. I think it happened a few times a week. He was taking my older sister ^{FDE} through to the 'special bedroom' as well. I have spoken to her lately and she has told me.
46. I did think that at the time, that's why we all slept together, so you knew when one of you was missing. Sometimes through fear we would go and sleep in the cupboard in our bedroom so he wouldn't find us. I think he took us all but I don't know about the little ones.
47. ^{JBS} was sometimes there in that 'special bedroom', not all the time, but sometimes she was there with him. You don't know what they're doing when you're that age but I now know that they were having sexual intercourse in front of me. ^{JBS} would take my hand and put it on her breast. She didn't touch me anywhere but John did and she would take my hand and put it on his penis.
48. John used to really hit us as well. It was always bare bottoms when we were bent over the sofa. He would really whack us with 'The Jimmy' and I mean whacking. There was one time somebody pooped in the bath, it was me actually, and there was a little floater in the bath. We were all in the bath so John didn't know which one of us it was, and I didn't tell anybody it was me. We all got bent over the sofa and whacked stupid until one of us admitted it. I am ashamed to say I didn't admit it then, but the next day I did, and I got whacked again.
49. I would say there would be something every day with John. He certainly checked us for wetting our pants every day. One time I was in the kitchen doing dishes or something and he shouted for us to get checked and I didn't want to do it. I started banging the door with my face to try and hurt myself so that he wouldn't check us,

but he still done it anyway. I think the checking was more so he could have his little fumbles.

50. John Sinclair usually used 'The Jimmy' but he used a belt as well. He would take it off and hit you on the bottom. We must have had bruises on our arms and legs but we were small so they would be taken for something else from when we were out playing.
51. Another thing John did was to drop wee bugs in our mouths and make us swallow them. He held our noses, the bugs were alive, he would find them outside and just grab us and put them in our mouths and hold our lips closed until we swallowed. He did lots of things to laugh at us. He once cut my long hair really short and he sometimes made us go to school with wet clothes on, if they hadn't fully dried at the fireplace.

Disclosure of abuse

52. As I have said, I don't specifically remember telling anyone. I can't remember there being anyone at school that I told or felt I could tell. There wasn't any allocated social worker or health visitor and I don't remember any foster care authority visits.
53. My younger sisters don't know I'm doing this. My older sister, [FDE] does because I told her a few weeks ago.

Life in foster care – [ETF-SPO] [redacted] Aberdeenshire

General

54. I don't remember leaving [JS-JBS] home but it was pretty soon after the time I was in school crying with my sore ear. Something must have happened after that. I do remember John Sinclair saying to me, that if I said anything to anyone I would be

locked in the attic, so I don't know if I said anything but something must have been said as they moved us. Maybe it was because we were starting to talk and they wanted to get rid of us.

55. Me and my sister ^{FDE} went to Mintlaw and stayed with ^{ETF-SPO} As far as I know, my younger sisters, and were left with ^{JS-JBS}. I don't know why or for how long. I was about nine years old when I went to ^{ETF-SPO}
56. I presume the social work took us to live with ^{ETF-SPO} family but I don't remember. I also don't remember returning to ^{JS-JBS} family but my sister ^{FDE} says we did. She told me we went back for a few months to give ^{ETF-SPO} family a break because we weren't behaving.
57. I only remember them as ^{ETF-SPO} and that they had two daughters, and was a teenager and had a boyfriend, I remember he came round and they would go out at nights. It was a lovely house, but I do remember being quite bad there. From the time I was there I think I was troubled mentally. ^{ETF-SPO} didn't cope with us so we were only there a short time.
58. I remember being in primary four at Mintlaw Primary School. The school was like a porto-cabin and the only memory that I have is getting my 'busy book' and trying to kiss a boy under a table.
59. My next memory is being picked up at the social work department in Banff by the ^{ETG-SPO} family. All I had was a black bag. I was nine and I was with ^{FDE} I remember and were put in a children's home, Coblehaugh in Inverurie and we visited them when we stayed with ^{ETG-SPO}

Life in foster care – [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] near Elgin

General

60. I remember [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] came and picked us up. They had a little child in a buggy. Her name was [REDACTED] and she was two years old. They were very nice, they made it all very jovial and we got a fish supper and went back to their house for a picnic. I had my fish supper and I remember getting a packet of Opal Fruits.
61. We were only meant to be there for a wee while. I don't know if they were going to put us in a children's home or what they were going to do but I ended up staying with [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] until I was fifteen. They lived [REDACTED] near Elgin at [REDACTED]. It was good with [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] family, they were young, they had a daughter of their own and although they were strict they loved me. I felt cared for, I felt I belonged there and they made me feel very welcome.
62. I called them [REDACTED] and [ETG] [REDACTED], never mum and dad and they changed my name to [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] for going to school. They were both social workers. They wanted to adopt me when I was about fourteen. At that point my sister [FDE] [REDACTED] wasn't coping, she was older and very rebellious. She didn't want to be there and didn't like it. They were very strict and she couldn't cope with that, so she moved out within about a year. That left me and I was very happy. [FDE] [REDACTED] didn't come back, she went to a children's home, then back to my mums very briefly before moving on to her own life in [REDACTED].
63. [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] had added an extension to their house and I had my own little room and bathroom. There was a room for [FDE] [REDACTED] as well but, as I said, she didn't stay there long. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would come and stay for weekends as well. I think [ETG-SPO] [REDACTED] were looking at them coming to stay permanently as well, but something must have happened as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went back to my mum's house. They were both in a children's home before I went home because I remember I used to go and visit them.

64. I have always kept in touch with [ETG-SPO] they were at our wedding. Their daughter is 39 now and she has kids of her own. We're not close and we don't speak to each other every week or anything but there is a bond there.
65. [ETG-SPO] took me through counselling for my bed wetting and did things the right way. I do believe I had a lot of damage and they got help. I had plastic sheets and they were very good about things. I did kick holes in the walls and I was quite aggressive but I remember [ETG] would just hold me and hold me until I stopped kicking and screaming and they got a lot of counselling for me.
66. I had the counselling when I was about ten or eleven. I had hypnosis counselling as well. I remember having to lie down and I remember feeling really warm and getting really upset. The technique they used was to put the events I remembered in boxes and I was then to close the boxes. They told me I could open them at any point in my life if I wanted to or, I didn't have to. I do feel the counselling helped me.
67. I think I spoke to [ETG-SPO] about my experiences, they must have known. They took me to the counselling for bedwetting but have since told me they did not take me to any other counselling. I thought they were there when I was speaking about my experiences. Nothing I said seemed to shock or worry them.
68. The counselling was in Elgin at, what is now, a psychiatric unit. It must have helped as I can put it away and basically live. It has had lasting damage but I am able to live. It could have been a whole different story if I hadn't gone to them.
69. I went to school when I was with [ETG-SPO]s, primary seven at [] Primary School, then Milne's High School. I was in first, second and third year, then they wanted to adopt me, when I was about fourteen.
70. My dad was fine with my adoption and didn't contest it, but my mum, who was with another man by this time, contested it because she wanted to stabilise her life and get her family back. I don't know what she had to do but she had to prove she was going to be a good parent. I was asked and I said I wanted to stay with [ETG-SPO]s.

That was the first time I had been given any say in my care and where I wanted to live.

71. When my mum contested it, she had all the family back with her. I think that happened between the time I was twelve and fifteen, the family all started coming back to her. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had gone to live with my dad, but with them coming back to my mum's home in Banff, everybody came back. The social work department then decided I should start sharing visitation rights between my mum and [REDACTED] ^{ETG-SPO}
72. I have spoken with [REDACTED] since contacting the Inquiry and she told me that when I arrived with them, aged nine, I came with no notes, records or background information. She also told me that I was short term foster care and that I had a womb infection and that she took me to the doctors for that. I was given a course of antibiotics.

Visits and staying again with my mum

73. I was more or less told that was happening. I went along with it as I did feel I should get to know my family. So [REDACTED] would take me down or put me on a bus and I would go stay with my family. Initially for a day, then a weekend. My family made me feel guilty by being with [REDACTED] ^{ETG-SPO} I did get to smoke in my mums house and I was fourteen and had just started so I thought that was great.
74. However, the guy my mum stayed with, [REDACTED] beat her up all the time. He would throw her down the stairs, throw her about by her hair and we saw a lot of violence towards my mum.
75. There was one time [REDACTED] asked if I could come back early from a visit to my mum so we could go out for the night. When I told my mum and [REDACTED], he went skits and that was the first time I saw him direct his anger towards me. I am scared of men shouting and getting irate and I got upset so I just got my stuff and went for the bus. [REDACTED] met me and she comforted me.

76. Stupid me though, because all the while I kept feeling guilty that all my family were back with my mum, but not me. So, it was arranged that I would go back and stay with my mum permanently. Don't ask me why I did it, I don't know why I did it. I didn't want to do it but I did and I think it was more the whole family thing, and that I thought I should be doing it. I went back after the summer holidays, when I was fifteen and going into fourth or fifth year at school.
77. I now know my social worker, Mr Birch, dealt with things for my return. I don't remember a children's panel, just discussions with him. He was the only social worker I ever saw and he used to come out a lot. In fact he drove me to mums the day I was leaving [REDACTED] I never saw him again after that.

Life after foster care

Abuse in the family home - Banff

78. It was pretty dire back at my mums. There was almost daily beatings that my mum got and we were all very scared of [REDACTED] He was a big guy. He wouldn't let us change the channel on the television or even go to the kitchen to help ourselves to food. We had to do all the housework and if we didn't like what he said he would kick off, the TV would go off, the blinds would be shut and he would start racing up and down, ranting and raving and shouting.
79. He would beat up my little step brother, who was not his son, and was only about eight or nine. [REDACTED] would take him by the throat and pin him to the wall. There was one time he did that and I jumped on his back to try and stop him. He took me by the hair and threw me across the room, off a door.
80. [REDACTED] always kept the doors locked so we couldn't get out, we were never allowed out. We had to ask his permission and he would weigh it up, sum it all up, before making a decision. It was a horrible, horrible time.

81. There was one time when mum went away to visit my great gran and he kept me off school. I was hanging out the washing out the back and when I came in he had a porn movie on the telly. He asked me to sit down next to him, I was really scared. He started putting his arm around me and I tried to move away. Then he tried to kiss me, I was saying "no, no", and I got away from him and locked myself in my bedroom.
82. When my mum came back, I don't know what he said to her, but she came upstairs and said it had just been a misunderstanding. She said I wasn't to say anything or all the kids would be taken away again. She said she couldn't cope with that and told me it would all be my fault. I obviously didn't say anything. After that I was on study leave but I made sure I was never alone in the house with [REDACTED] and he didn't do it again.
83. I was on study leave one day when we were having soup and he said to me he didn't like the way I was looking, he said I was evil and had a bad spirit and my spirit wandered at night. It was like he'd gone cuckoo. Then he took his hot soup and threw it all over me. I actually thought he was going to kill me, and my mum was just standing in the corner saying "she's in bare feet". He was coming at me so I got out and ran. I cleared the six foot wall in the garden, I was so scared. I just kept running and he was right behind me, running after me, chasing me. I ran into a shop at the bottom of the hill and I remember screaming for help. They hid me under their counter. [REDACTED] came into the shop and they told him I'd run right past. Anyway, the police were called and my feet were all bleeding, I was in a bit of a state.
84. The police took me to the station and then they took me to the social work department. That was the first time there had been social workers involved since Mr Birch had dropped me off at my mum's house.
85. When I was at my mums, the only people in authority that I saw were the police. I was always running away, whenever I got the chance to get out, I was off. The police would have to chase me because I knew they would take me back to my mum. I

would plead with them not to take me back because of [REDACTED] but they would say they would make sure he was okay before they left. Of course he was going to be okay, with two police standing there.

86. I didn't go back after [REDACTED] had chased me. He burnt all my stuff, all my memories everything that I had taken out of [REDACTED] ^{ETG-SPO} [REDACTED]s when I moved back in with the family. He was such a nasty, nasty person.

87. Even years later when I was on my own with my two boys he would come round to my house at all times of night just trying to scare me. He had pleurisy and died of a heart attack in 2007. I know that for definite as I was at his funeral making sure he was in there.

After the family home

88. After [REDACTED] chased me I went back in with [REDACTED] ^{ETG-SPO} [REDACTED]s for about four months, until I was sixteen. Then I moved out and went to stay with one of my friends, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and her family, in Banff. Her mum and dad were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

89. I do remember someone coming to their house to sort things properly through the social work or something. I had to fill out forms for being there. I don't remember but I do now know that I lived there until I was about seventeen.

90. I did my exams but I didn't do extraordinarily well. At Banff I was put back a year because I had started school at four and I was always the baby of the school. I did my 'O' grades and Highers and then I left.

91. After the [REDACTED] I went and stayed with my dad in Huntly, I gave that a go, but he was an alcoholic and that didn't go well. I did that on my own, there was no social work involvement.

92. I was a scared young individual. Scared of myself but somehow I managed. I got a job through the Youth Training Scheme, met a guy, moved in with him and his parents and then we got a place of our own in Buckie. So that was when I was between 17 and 21.
93. I had two relationships that didn't work out and I was then on my own for a year or so, before I met [REDACTED] I have two sons from a previous relationship, [REDACTED] who's 24 and [REDACTED] who's 21. They are grown up and have moved out now. [REDACTED] and I also have a son [REDACTED] who's 17, and a daughter, [REDACTED] who's 14.
94. My aim was always that my kids would never be brought up like I was. I know my kids have a good life and I never abandoned them. I would kill anyone who tried to abuse them. [REDACTED] is the first person I have shared events with since I spoke with the police and before that at counselling. He has been a massive support for me, and is the only person I really trust.

Impact/consequence of abuse

95. There are the physical symptoms from being touched down below, being raped and being put in cold baths. I feel I had numerous Urinary Tract Infections and I was getting dye pumped into me to see what was happening. I feel that damage was done by John Sinclair, he caused me to have all these infections and things afterwards. Things have been okay since as I've been able to have my children.
96. I have suffered a lot with my ears over the years and I've had several operations on my ear, since my ear drum was perforated all those times. I now have a prosthetic ear drum, so I am partially deaf and wear a hearing aid. I blame John Sinclair for sticking cotton buds in my ear, there was no need for that.
97. I am generally an anxious person and I worry about things. I worry about being left alone and about being in the dark, I always have a light on at night, I don't like the dark.

98. The only way my experiences have affected my parenting are through providing me with the determination that I was going to get it right.
99. Psychologically, I can't go into attic space at all, I am scared of the dark and I have a fear of men, if they're angry. I used to be quite scared of [REDACTED] for no reason, if he was chastising the kids. That's not an issue I hold against [REDACTED] he's been fabulous, it was just there.
100. It's not just men that are angry, it's a general mistrust of men when I'm on my own with them. I don't like that, it scares me. I'm always looking for an exit. My work is remedial massage and reflexology and I often get male clients, which I hate. I get [REDACTED] to come down with me to my work as my companion. It's not ideal and even if they're nice I can't wait to get them out the door. I'm nearly at the point where I'm only going to take female clients. There is an anxiety with men.
101. I used to take bad panic attacks. I had a job as a facilities officer and I would often be in buildings on my own and in the winter it would be dark. Sub-contractors, who were male, would come in and I wouldn't like that. One time a joiner came in and I happened to know him from a long time ago in Banff, and I didn't quite trust him. We were just chatting but I didn't feel comfortable. He wheeled his chair over and blocked the door and I had to try and keep calm and keep chatting. He made me a coffee and I started wondering if he'd spiked it, I was getting more and more nervous and anxious. I started to get dizzy and shaking and I just had to get out of there.
102. I didn't know what was happening but I couldn't breathe, I had to leave the office and I phoned [REDACTED] He came round and sat with me. I didn't realise it but that was first panic attack and that was years after being in care. After that I started to get frequent panic attacks and they would basically disable me. I had to leave that job because the anxiety got to a stage where I couldn't function. I was constantly shaking, constantly scared, constantly dizzy and constantly thinking I was going to pass out. I couldn't breathe and I would hyper-ventilate.

103. I went to the doctor but I have a fear of things going into my body, anything that could harm me or kill me. Of course, they gave me anti-depressants, blockers and diazepam. I ended up in hospital three times and I was signed off for a month with severe anxiety and panic disorder. The diazepam did give some relief to the shaking and let me sleep. I went from full time to part time then I decided I needed to get myself better. I took myself on a journey and I practiced mindfulness and meditation.
104. I found books and downloaded apps and read every day religiously. I was feeling awful every day and it took me three years to get to where I am now. I still use the apps and I need to remember to breathe to control the panic attacks. However I don't think I will ever be right if I'm alone with a man in a room, it will always panic me.
105. The psychological thing is the most damaging for me, that will always be there. I don't know if anything ever happened with a knife but there's been a few times when [REDACTED] has been chopping vegetables and has been holding a knife and I got really upset. I'm really scared of people with knives in their hands.
106. I don't think we were that close a family because, even although I was brought up with three of my sisters, we had bad experiences and we all lost the good memories, if you like. I have no good memories from my time with [REDACTED] family.
107. I have had a hard time with my mum because I have an absolute zero bond with her and I blame her for what happened to me. She is an old woman in her seventies now and I have a hard time trying to deal with her. I look after her and I do her shopping, and I don't hate her, I've never hated anyone, I've been forgiving over the years. I just have no bond with her, I don't know her and I have no memories of her.
108. I can't put a number on how often I think about my times at [REDACTED] but I have thought about it quite a lot this year, what with the Inquiry. I do have flashbacks and I find it amazing how you can remember certain things, from then, so vividly but you can't remember your day-to-day life. I only remember bad stuff from my childhood and that is sad. I don't remember any happy times at all, not even before I went into care.

Current support/treatment

109. I mentioned the counselling I had as a child when I was with ^{ETG-SPO} family and the treatment for the anxiety and panic attacks. I also had counselling for the anxiety and panic but I really didn't like that. I don't think it helped at all. It was very personal and I hate that. I'm not going to sit down with a stranger, I just don't like that, in fact, I probably taught her more. I went for about six weeks or something. I feel it was a token thing that the NHS do but I don't think it helped me in any way.

Formal reporting of abuse/Police proceedings

110. When I was nineteen I got a call from the police and they asked if I would give an interview regarding child abuse allegations against John Sinclair. All they would tell me is that family members had made allegations and they were tracking down foster children from their home between 1970 and 1980. I fell into that bracket with all my sisters, so I presume they were all interviewed as well. I know ^{FDE} was but I'm not sure about the other two.
111. I gave the police a recorded interview and I told them everything I have told you today. I believe John Sinclair was charged with eleven counts of child abuse. I didn't hear anything else about that, I expected I would but I didn't so I left it and just got on with my life.
112. Years later, I did try to find out what happened and I phoned the police but I was told they couldn't tell me anything because of data protection. I wanted to know if there had been a court case against him and if not, why there wasn't and why I wasn't given the opportunity to be there. I wanted to be there to look him in the face.

113. I did get a case number and I contacted another person, I can't remember where it was, but as far as I know he was convicted. They wouldn't tell me anymore because of data protection, so that is why I know he's still alive. I feel it isn't fair, if I was one of the people that convicted him why wasn't I informed, or why can't I be informed of the outcome. It would be nice to know what his sentence was.
114. I was contacted by the police since speaking to the Inquiry and a police officer is now trying to find out information for me about the John Sinclair case.

Records

115. I've never tried to access any of my records but I would like to. It's not one of those things you think about every day. I have always wondered but I didn't know they would release them. I've never thought of contacting the social services and I don't know if there was ever a fostering authority involved.
116. I have now been directed towards Birthrite having spoken with Future Pathways and am in the process of recovering some records. I have also been told by my sister, FDE who has also been trying to recover records, that there are apparently very little, if any, foster care records relating to our time in care.

Lessons to be learned

117. I don't understand why the people who we stayed with weren't vetted. Where were the people that put us there? They did not have contact with me at all, or have I blanked that out, I don't know.
118. There should be one person keeping track of them on a weekly basis, I saw nobody. When you are young and come from that background it feels like you have been abandoned. The whole vetting thing of becoming a foster parent needs to be strict.

119. John Sinclair would not have been given children if there was anything in his background to suggest those tendencies. They need to keep track of the kids, they need to meet with them regularly and build up a trust with them over time. Those people would see that you smell and that your hair is dirty. That would just prove there was nobody around looking after them. Why would you just put them there and leave them without checking. Why presume these people are great foster parents.

Final Comments

120. My hopes are that the Inquiry helps to create a more secure fostering environment where young children are properly looked after and paedophiles cannot get access to damage them. I think the seventies was a really bad time for abuse in all areas, not just in care. There needs to be a more secure and safer way for fostering children.

121. I had thought about fostering myself, but I couldn't do it because of my own children but I have always said that I wanted to give back what I got from my really good foster parents. There are really good foster parents and I think it is much stricter nowadays, but I don't think it was in those days.

122. 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... 27/2/2018