

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EVH

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is EVH. My date of birth is 1986. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born and grew up mainly in Paisley. My mother was but when I married I took on my wife's surname EVH. I am not aware of who my father was other than he may have been a man named '. There were five siblings, an older brother and my younger siblings and .
3. My mother was married to a man who was 's father, but that marriage did not work out. A couple of years after that she became involved in the criminal justice system and she was placed on a probation order. After was born she was suffering from post natal depression. I was born a couple of years later and by the time was six years old mum had five children to look after.
4. Sometime after I was born my mum began to struggle quite severely with alcoholism. Sometimes she left us on our own, in the house. We did have a health visitor who called at the house and after one of her visits she expressed concern about the state of the house.
5. The area we grew up in, , was a deprived area in Paisley. I also went to Primary School. I saw a lot of violence, not only in the community but also within our house. There were many people who would come to the house, drinking and fighting. When I was about three years old I was found wandering on the

railways. I think my first contact with the police was when I was brought home by them after having walked to the nursery without wearing any trousers or pants.

6. The social work were involved with the family and at that time we were under the supervision of Strathclyde Council. My first placement was on [REDACTED] 1990 when I was sent to a foster family in Crookston, East Renfrewshire. I have no memories of this and found the details from my records. I was only there for a short time before I was back home with mum. I think I was only sent to the foster family for a short respite.
7. When I was back home it was good to start with but it did not take long before it went back to the old ways. The routine in the house was the same as before where there were lots of visitors, drinking and violence. One day, when I was about four or five, there was an incident with my mother where I was hit in the face with a bin which caused a cut to my mouth. As a result of this the social work placed me on the Child Abuse Register. Although I was placed in care under the Protection Order my siblings were placed under a different Order.
8. On [REDACTED] 1990 I was sent to Carsewood Children's Home, Hillfoot Drive, Howwood, Renfrewshire on an emergency placement. This was the first time I was placed there but would spend other times there during my time in care. At that time I was too young to have any memories of my time at Carsewood, but I do not recall anything wrong. After three months I was allowed home again.
9. When I was back at the house I would spend some days at neighbour's houses. The council decided to provide mum with some support. We had support workers who visited the house five days a week and they would help with things like cooking, to ensure we all ate properly. They were also there to check on us to ensure we were all okay physically. I did not know they were from the social work as I was only aware that new adults were coming to the house, but I did not know their names. I did go for counselling about four years ago and it turned out the counsellor had been one of the flexi workers who visited me.
10. During this time I had no understanding of what was happening to me. One day I would have memories of being in my house and next memories being in care somewhere. It

was also common in the early days that when I was in care there were times I would have some of my siblings in care at the same time. It was not always the same brother, some may be there at the start, move on, and be replaced by another sibling. It was never my sister as she was sent for adoption by a family known to my mum.

Gryffe Children's Home, Kilmacolm Road, Bridge of Weir

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Gryffe Children's Home, Kilmacolm Road, Bridge of Weir

54. It was about eight months to a year before we left Gryffe, that I was aware I would be returning home to live with my mum. Part of that process were the visits to the cottage

for my mother to be shown different methods of bringing us up, making sure we were fed regularly, all with a view to us being in a better place when we were back together. This process had lots of logistics involved with the distance and the number of occasions mum had to be at the cottage and that would be why it took this long.

55. Not long after I was allowed to go back to live with mum she moved to the [REDACTED] area in Paisley. I was happy with being back with mum, but it was tainted when I was told I would be moving to another school, [REDACTED] Primary School. When I was back my brothers [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all in the family home.
56. Over the next two years at home life graduated back to our previous home experiences. There were days when she would offer us permission to go to my gran's house for the day, rather than being at school. If I chose Gran's, mum would have the freedom to drink all day. There was also a lot of violence as the area we were in was another rough area of Paisley.
57. There was also a return to violence taking place in the house with some of the relationships my mother was having with the men she was seeing. People were also coming back to our house so they could drink alcohol.
58. We were being visited at home by a social worker, Robin Lawson, although I can't remember his name, he was very good with us. During his visits I would be putting on a façade that all was well in the house, when in reality it was chaotic. I am sure there was a time that mum lost control and she slapped him. There was another occasion he came to see me while I was at school. While he visited me at the house I was always protective of my mother, but when he visited me at the school I was away from the house and he must have picked up a difference in my nature that led him to come to the conclusion that things must be back to the old ways at home.
59. The social work did try other interventions where I was allowed to stay on occasions with a neighbour for a while. I also recall there being visits to Children's Panels and there were reviews carried out. This would involve all us kids in the house but I don't remember any changes to my status on the Child Protection Register.

60. My appearance, clothing and diet were all getting worse. My brothers were getting into trouble with the police and mum was getting into more violence with the men she was seeing. It was a culmination of many days and weeks when it was decided we had to go back into care.
61. The day I was due to go into care I remember I climbed up a drain pipe and was refusing to come back down. My brothers were all being placed into different foster care at different times. When it came round to me leaving I was placed into care with [REDACTED] family.

Foster Care, [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED], Paisley

62. It was on [REDACTED] 1996 that I was taken to the [REDACTED] family and I stayed there for five months. I moved there with my brother [REDACTED]. I am not entirely sure when he left as I have little memory of him at the house and then I remember he had left. [REDACTED] arrived just before I left. The family lived in a semi-detached house in the [REDACTED] area in Paisley. This was a better area than we previously lived. The house was near to [REDACTED] Primary School.

Routine at Foster Care, [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED], Paisley

63. [REDACTED] was a full time bus driver and his wife, [REDACTED], was the full time foster carer. They previously had a daughter who I think had passed away. They still kept her room as a shrine and it had some Garfield toys there.
64. When we moved in we shared a room with a boy called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was with the family on a full time foster basis and was eventually adopted. I thought everything was going to be alright as there were books available. The room itself was quite colourful. Not long after that I was moved into the daughter's room. When I moved in there I was not allowed to touch any of her things or move anything in the room.
65. As we got to know [REDACTED] a bit better we would play together. When we played he was quite mischievous when we were outside. I found he had some challenging behaviour

and would make allegations of inappropriateness about the [REDACTED] I began noticing how they were treating [REDACTED] and I think some of that treatment was abusive.

Religion

66. When I stayed with the [REDACTED] I was made to go to Sunday school at the church every week. It was an Evangelical church nearby. Eventually I was excluded from that because of my behaviour issues.

Abuse at Foster Care, [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED], Paisley

67. There was a lot of emotional abuse handed out to [REDACTED], who would have been about eight or nine at the time. As a result he was always angry and would swear a lot. Despite him being there for so long it always seemed to be a volatile relationship. They always insisted he was to call them mum and dad, but he would shout back that they were not his parents.
68. Sometimes if they deemed [REDACTED] had done something wrong they would make him stand in a corner. On one occasion he had been standing for a while and asked to go to the bathroom. They refused to allow him to move from the corner and he ended up wetting himself.
69. Sometimes if the [REDACTED] had decided he had done something wrong they would use restraints on [REDACTED]. I did not think that was right and from my adult career I know as foster carers they were not allowed to physically restrain children. Only staff in residential care are given training, and foster parents are not trained. Sometimes there would be shouting by the [REDACTED] towards [REDACTED]. This got really heated and some things got smashed up. [REDACTED] would then physically restrain [REDACTED].
70. There were many occasions the restraining the [REDACTED] used on [REDACTED] would be in the hallway. They would use their weight to hold him and push his body into the stairs.

71. About three to four months into this placement I was getting really upset by all this and EVK started using restraints on me. They would hold me in the restraint for between half an hour to nearly an hour. EVK would be saying "I should take it like a man". Sometimes If I said anything I was threatened with being dressed in a girl's skirt. EVK would sit on me, wrap his arms and generally pin me down.
72. EVK was always goading me during that period. Although EVJ was not saying much, she did sometimes restrain me. She was a weighty woman and I could see she was struggling to restrain me as she was always going red in the face.
73. I did not report any of the restraining to my social worker, Robin Lawson, or any of the teachers at the school. There must have been something they noticed was wrong as I was sent for an assessment by an Educational Psychologist. I have seen a note in my records from that assessment that mentions that I had been restrained for thirty minutes with very little other detail. The psychologist did add a note that there was only my word for the allegations. I made the disclosure to someone I was supposed to trust and he discredited what I was saying. He did not report anything to my social worker.
74. Despite those notes in my records there was no intervention during that time by any social workers. I did manage to tell them that I was unhappy in the house. They did nothing at that time to get me out of this house, but that changed when my behaviour deteriorated. It was only after EVK and EVJ were telling the social work that they were having difficulty with me, that things were put in place for me to be moved on. Not long after I left, my brother was moved in. I found this totally wrong, after all the things they were aware of and they still placed him in their care.
75. My schooling was deteriorating and the teachers were noticing, but there was no one I could trust to tell what was happening. Every time I told an adult I was disbelieved.

Reporting of abuse at Foster Care, EVJ-EVK family, Paisley

76. Later in my life, I am not sure what year, but I met and he told me that he had been subjected to sexual abuse by an unnamed neighbour. was able to describe

where the man stayed, describe the layout of the house and the room it happened in. He also told me that my brother [REDACTED] was also a victim of the same neighbour. I never knew about this and [REDACTED] never talked about it.

77. [REDACTED] told me he had reported the abuse he had been subjected of to, to the police, but that no action was ever taken. The [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK were making [REDACTED] out to be a liar and were not believing anything he was saying. By this time [REDACTED] had already passed away so I could not go back and ask him. I told [REDACTED] that if the police were to come and ask me about his time in care, that I witnessed, then I would give a statement to them. Nothing ever materialised. I have never spoken to [REDACTED] about his short period in the house.

78. [REDACTED] did say that his younger brother was placed in care with the [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK and to my knowledge he is still there. [REDACTED] did talk about some of his time there. He would mention being restrained and that there were many things in the house he was not allowed to even touch, but nothing about the neighbour.

Leaving Foster Care, [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK family, [REDACTED] Paisley

79. It was on [REDACTED] 1986 when I was moved out of the [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK house. The day I moved I knew I wanted to be with my brother [REDACTED]. The social work agreed and I was moved into Beech Avenue Children's Unit in Paisley. I was there for the next four years and four months.

Beech Avenue Children's Unit, Beech Avenue, Paisley

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Leaving Beech Avenue Children's Unit, Beech Avenue, Paisley

137. My brothers [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all in foster care with the [REDACTED] family. [REDACTED] and I were aware that there was a plan by the social work for us to move there as well. Over a long period we built up the relationship which started with staying on overnight visits and building up until we were spending the summer holidays with them.

Foster Care, [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED] Barrhead

138. After the build-up of nearly eight months, I was taken into [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] family home at [REDACTED], Barrhead. I was still in overall care of the social work at Beech Avenue.
139. Prior to me officially moving in with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I was probably staying with them almost every day each week and back at Beech Avenue, one or two days a week. I was also taken on holiday by them. All this and they were never paid for me or my brother [REDACTED]. They were doing it out of their own heart and for the good of the family. I can see from my records that for a period the social work did recognise [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as being my official foster parents.
140. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at various points had teaching backgrounds. [REDACTED] moved from teaching and went into engineering. [REDACTED] was a primary school teacher. They were both in their fifties and with four grown up children. They took time out to help other foster parents by sharing their experiences to help show it was for the good of the children. During their time as foster parents they looked after over three hundred children, some under short emergency cover and some for longer periods.
141. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all living with the [REDACTED]. I am not sure of the exact dates they moved but it was some time after the [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK I can't recall if any of them came home to stay with mum or not, but they stayed with the [REDACTED] for a few years, and remained there for the rest of their time in care with that family, with the exception of [REDACTED]. His behaviour changed and he was moved to a residential school. Even during my time there were some emergency placements at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Sometimes it was a young child and other times it might be a teenager.
142. The house itself was a large old building. The [REDACTED] occupied the bottom part of the house and there were neighbours in the upper floor. In their house there was a bathroom off the hallway, two lounges, a spare room and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] room. To the right side there were two bedrooms which had been converted into four, a kitchen and another room. There was a cupboard to the rear which had been converted into

a small toilet. Out the back door there was access to the garage and the large garden area. In the drive there were a couple of cars and boats.

143. The [REDACTED] treated me as part of their family. It was never regimented and always relaxed. They included me in everything they did. It was full of love and care there and you did not feel you were in care.
144. I made friends when I stayed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was allowed to visit with those friends and they in turn were also allowed to visit in the house. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had an open door policy with regard to us and friends visiting.
145. The [REDACTED] enjoyed lots of outdoor activities including, walking, sailing and skiing. We were always encouraged to take part and would go away wherever they were holidaying.
146. [REDACTED] had been sailing all of his life and was a member of the local club. When the council realised he was taking us out sailing they insisted he go on sailing courses. At a later date as the council persisted, it became unsustainable and all the children living with the [REDACTED] were not allowed to go.
147. When I met the [REDACTED] and would spend Christmas with them and my brothers. They made an effort to ensure we enjoyed it. We also saw that if alcohol was being drunk by the [REDACTED] it was much different from what I was used to. It was safe when they were having the drink.
148. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] celebrated all our birthdays. It was marked as it should be in a normal family environment. When I was seventeen they gave me a flying lesson.
149. I was attending Arthurlie Primary School. If I was having any issues with the school [REDACTED] would be someone who would go to the school and defend me to the best of his ability. He would try to find the cause of any misbehaviour rather than concentrating on what we were doing wrong.

150. [REDACTED] was a very patient man and we were never physically punished by him. Unlike the homes and my time at the [REDACTED] EVJ-EVK [REDACTED] never considered using restraints if we were doing anything wrong. They both saw beyond difficult behaviour that me and others may have suffered from. [REDACTED] preferred we talk those situations through. He allowed us to be children, make mistakes and learn from them.

Leaving Foster Care, [REDACTED] family, [REDACTED], Barrhead

151. A decision was later made by the social work that I could not stay permanently with the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] told me there had been a dispute between the social work and them over some money. I was told that with all five of us living with the [REDACTED] space was tight and they were needing to put on an extension to the house. The requirement was from the council and related to the number of toilets against the number of children being cared for. The dispute the social work had, was they did not want to pay the £7000 cost. The council also wanted to put clauses in that if the relationship broke down the [REDACTED] would have to pay the money back. I know as an adult that this was such a low cost in real terms but the council were insistent keeping the clause in. This was nothing when you think of the cost of staff, premises and everything else that is needed to look after me. I just found it so wrong as the [REDACTED] had been looking after some of the family and wanted us all to be kept together, which would have been such a benefit for me and my siblings.
152. The social worker put a note in my records that the main reason for leaving the [REDACTED] was primarily down to a financial dispute with the council over the funding for the extension. He also added a note that it was me who had a change of heart, but that is not the case, I never wanted to leave the [REDACTED]. The council sent staff from Carsewood to persuade me to want to move in to another Children's home as living with the [REDACTED] was not an option.
153. Before I moved I met John and Carol who said they were residential workers from Carsewood Children's home. After building up a relationship with them I said that if I could not stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I would rather go to Carsewood. I filled in a form for my review saying that I thought Beech Avenue was not right for me and did not feel safe there, saying some of the reasons were a break down in the relationship with the

staff. They showed me how to manipulate the system to get a result or decision that I wanted.

154. Even after I moved away the [REDACTED] still took me on holidays with them and my brothers. I was also given a key to the house when I was about fourteen or fifteen. The council still allowed them to take in more emergency foster placements after I left.
155. When my brother left and got his own flat [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] helped with the £8000 deposit he needed. They gave it to him from money they had saved for themselves. They were financially independent and did not do the fostering for money.
156. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were fostering right up until [REDACTED] passed away. At that time [REDACTED] was looking after two girls, but she was in her seventies and it became unsustainable. [REDACTED] then had to give it up but she still took time to visit the people she had looked after. She even took time to visit one of the girls when she ended up in secure accommodation.

Carsewood Children's Home, Hillfoot Drive, Howwood, Renfrewshire

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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**Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone, Renfrewshire and
Chapel House, Care Home Service for Children and Young People, Ardgowan
Street, Paisley**

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Leaving Carsewood Children's Home, Hillfoot Drive, Howwood, Renfrewshire

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Roneil Children's Home, Stanely Road, Paisley

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Life after being in care

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217. After leaving Roneil I got my first tenancy in Seedhill in Paisley. I was also allocated Linda Brown as a through care worker and as an after care worker. Normal practice was this would be two different people but I was lucky in having her through both processes. She helped with the forms I needed to complete.

218. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later I started my working life working part time at Morrison's
and went to college for a year studying Heart, Sport and Fitness. Secondary Institutions
Secondary Institutions - to be published later
219. At this time I was in a tough relationship with a girlfriend and her baby. We had a couple of years together, before the relationship broke down.
220. When I was leaving care I was seeing my mother much more and had a good relationship with her. I also understood more of her life trauma and I think after care she became more of the mum I needed. She would come round to my place and help with my washing.
221. When I was about twenty one, my younger brother [REDACTED] would have been about eighteen. He had left care and ended up homeless. With circumstances similar to my older brother [REDACTED], [REDACTED] suffered from Mental Health Issues and died from an overdose.
222. Both of my brothers' rights and responsibilities were assumed by the Local Authority, who were legally their parent. Yet, both were allowed to return home to my mum before the age of 16. Both ended up homeless, unemployed, and dead by the age of 18. I feel angry about that and feel that the Local Authority did this so that they did not have to support them beyond 16 under aftercare. I feel that they were negligent in their decision making. This could have been avoided if they has stable loving relationships and should never have been allowed to return home.
223. My Who Cares Worker spoke to me and suggested I apply for a job working with young people between sixteen and twenty five. I went on to work in the Children's Commissioners Office in Edinburgh. This was where I met my friend Bruce Adamson, who at that time was the Parliamentary Legal Officer and is now the Children's Commissioner.

224. From being in care to six months later working in Edinburgh, being near the Parliament, all this was such an experience for me. With Bruce I was able to go to Lithuania and go out for meals with people. This was so different from the life I had at home and in care.
225. I was enjoying working here but there was a big financial cost, travelling back and forth between Glasgow and Edinburgh. The local authority helped with some of the travel cost. Staying with this organisation I became [REDACTED] and at the same time I studied for my Diploma in Community Education. I also studied for my HNC in Social Care with help from my employer. I was there for four years building up experience working with young people. I was working with [REDACTED] and travelling throughout Scotland seeing parts I may not have had the money to see. Money was still tight and the salary was aimed at someone just starting an apprenticeship and not having their own place to cover.
226. In a strange twist my next job was working with Who Cares Scotland as an Advocate for children. At that time I was covering the Glasgow area.
227. After two years with Who Cares Scotland I gave up my flat as I had decided I wanted to do some travelling. I then moved around the USA and onto Australia. I was mid-way through my time in Australia when I was made aware that my mother was having treatment for cancer. I came home but mum died a few days thereafter. After her passing I travelled back to Australia.
228. I decided I needed to come home to Scotland and I was intending going to University to study for my degree course in Education and Social Services and managed to pass with a distinction. The problem was that I had been accepted into University but had nowhere to stay. I got in touch from Australia with [REDACTED] and without hesitation she allowed me to stay with her as long as I needed. I ended up being with [REDACTED] for about the first year.
229. I was back working with Who Cares Scotland [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



- 230. Last year as a result of my work in Child Care I was given an Honorary Doctorate from Queen Margaret University for services to the public.

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- 231. I met my wife prior to me going to Australia but the relationship did not progress until I came back from Australia and after living with [REDACTED]. We are still together and have a step daughter, who I just call my daughter. Four years ago we had our own daughter together. During my relationship my wife has had to learn to cope with my mental health issues. This was really hard for her. She was aware that I had been in care as I grew up but not what happened to me. There was a period I could not go into the kitchen without my wife being there and lay in the foetal position in bed at night.
- 232. For the first couple of years I had horrendous nightmares. I was seeing people through the National Health Service to provide support. Last year I began suffering from flash backs, before that I was suppressing memories and using therapy to try to cope. But part of the problem was that I was also being exposed to things through my work, which would set my memories off, but the core was the issues from my time in care and abuse I experienced.
- 233. I was feeling suicidal and needing help. One day I was in my car and had been drinking. I was arrested and ended up spending a month in an adult mental health hospital. This was such a tough time trying to contain everything. The doctors would tell me this was as a result from suffering from complex PTSD and an emotional personality disorder. My time in care impacted badly on my personality and will need managed for the rest of my life.

234. Last year I left my job and will work in a much broader area. I have worked out arrangements with my employer and am thankful for getting the help at the hospital. I am fully aware, personally, how bad things could have turned out.
235. My own experiences have taught me how to be a better dad and I will not let my daughter to suffer anything like I suffered in my family.
236. For the last five years I have been receiving mental health support. To protect myself I have reverted to using poor coping strategies and meditation which I used to previously survive. I am now able to understand the memories and the trauma. After what happened last year I did think I would be ill for the rest of my life.
237. I have made some disclosures to my Community Psychiatric Nurse. The first full disclosure I have made is when I came to the Child Abuse Inquiry. I thought about coming forward a couple of years ago but I was only able to come forward when I was stronger mentally and after a complete breakdown, being riddled with guilt and shame. My interactions with the police have not been positive and I am aware of the support that comes with approaching the Inquiry and felt that it was better for my health to disclose what happened to the team.
238. I do know that there is no quick fix but I am in a better place to cope with my issues. I have had career successes, but now I am only interested in being successful with my family. My overall realisation is that anything that has happened to me after care, is that I am responsible for working things out and making good decisions. It is difficult because the causes were not of my doing. I know that if I didn't take this attitude I could end up in a different life, possibly in jail and possibly an addict or dead. .

Records

239. I was able to recover some of my records before I went to Australia. I had submitted a Freedom Of Information request to the council. I had to go to a meeting with them. They were quite inquisitive as to why I wanted them. When the social work had recovered them I went to their office. A female social worker gave me my records and

left me with the folders. I read some of the records but there was not much in them and what was there was heavily redacted.

240. I was unhappy with the amount of redaction and said there must have been more records than what they provided. I asked for them to be put onto a disc or a USB, so that I could read them better. Before I went to Australia they gave me them on CD's. When I was able to read them, again there was so much material that had been redacted.
241. When I came back I wrote an email saying there was too much redaction and there were many details missing. I also made request for access to some of my brother's records who passed away. They had not received such a request and I was told that I would need to provide death certificates for [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and my mother, before any further request could be progressed.
242. It must have been because someone had carried out research on me and my working life that I was later contacted by John Traynor, a senior with the social work. It was about nine months to a year when he contacted me saying that they had not carried out the proper procedures and that I had not been supported properly. He offered to help me go through them. I declined his offer but he did provide me with nine ring binders of my more of my records.
243. Prior to coming to the Inquiry I was bookmarking significant dates and found that some of the records were still missing. Some of those records relate to the daily logs for many of the placements.
244. Also within my files they supplied files that were nothing to do with me or my family. Those files, name and provide the addresses of other children in care. They also provide detail of their particular mother's addiction issues. There are other documents relating to taxi journeys while I was in care, along with sixteen other children's details, parents details and addresses. There are many other files, photos and videos of me which are also missing. The records are much less redacted and I can understand a lot of my journey through care.

245. When it comes to records I think there should be an involvement with an independent therapist to help people cope with what they are about to read. You should always be in a good place, mentally, when reading the files. I think there is a potential of it being dangerous for some people to read their records.

Lessons to be learned

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

246.

247.

248.

249.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

250. As far as dentistry is concerned I only now go through a necessity, all because of my phobia. There needs to be better information in this area as it is quite common for children in care to have dental issues. Even after being in care there also needs to be help provided as it is so costly.
251. Through my working life I have discovered many reasons why people end up turning to drug and alcohol addiction.
252. There needs to be more choice for kids going into care. Children's Rights were ratified in 1991 but there were little changes made to give the child the understanding of having a choice in what happens to them or where they are placed in care.
253. As far as Children's Hearings are concerned I don't know why they existed at that time. Not one person who were making decisions about me asked me for any information. I did fill in a form, but it was so basic with questions like "Did I like the food". One of the main things that was consistent was I kept asking to see my sister, but they deemed it inappropriate as she was now adopted. It felt like the system was just filling in a tick box every six or twelve months. Most of the Hearings took place during school hours which meant I was missing out on lessons. I did ask for a change of times but they were designed for adults and not the children they were making decisions on.

Other information

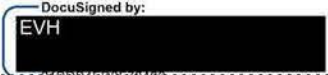
254. I think there should be a public apology made by the Council and the State. That would help a lot of people. There is a healing element involved in an apology. There needs to be an easy access route between the Inquiry and Redress Scotland so that we do not have to go through lengthy or unnecessary processes again to obtain this. This could relate to information sharing and peoples statements being made available to make it easier for survivors.

255. The Promise Group with Fiona Duncan, who were working with The Independent Care Review, previously ignored that child abuse exists or has happened. If you look at their published material they are recommending changes for the Care Industry but they make no mention of child abuse as part of their recommendations. This area needs to be acknowledged and covered by them. I hope there will be discussion between Lady Smith and those building the new care system. I would like to see a joint statement and plan to address this from both organisations to ensure we go forward properly.
256. There must be an independent space to look after the rights of the children and a safe place for the children to go to in a confidential forum and make commitments to stand up for them and promote their rights. Today it is too patchy. Any recommendations from Lady Smith need to be tangible, deliverable and measurable and need to be different and innovative to ensure it is not the same system. If not, then in ten years we will be having another Inquiry looking into the same issues.
257. I would like to see a recommendation made that residential care does not work. There is an Institution involved, but an Institution cannot provide a childhood. The UN have already said something of a similar nature.
258. I made some disclosures in the past, where people did not act on those disclosures. Where disclosure is not treated with respect and investigated independently, there should be consequences in the form of termination of employment or prosecution. It causes me concern to see on the SSSC website the number of rights abuses that happen today in 2021 and that outcome is the worker should write a reflective account. Whilst the child or young person is emotionally, psychologically or physically impacted for life. This needs to change and the balance of power, culture and consequence be unrecognisable, compared to 'historical abuse' and the abuse going on today.
259. The independent investigation of these matters should not be undertaken by any existing body, such as the Care Inspectorate. It is clear to me that existing organisations have failed to protect children. I think that something more radical. Independent and established through legislative powers is needed. An organisation

that always does what's best for those in care and is not controlled financially, structurally or culturally by the care industry.

260. The changes recommended must ensure changes in the systems, like the Children's Hearing System which was constructed fifty years ago and needs to be updated.

261. 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..........
215584P19979166

Dated..... 21 June 2021