

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ETV [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is ETV [REDACTED]. I have always been known by that name. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mum's name is [REDACTED] and my dad's Name is [REDACTED]. I have three siblings. I have an older sister called [REDACTED]. She is two years older than me. My brother [REDACTED] is four years older than me and my brother [REDACTED] is six years older than me. I remember my mum telling me that she also had twins who were still born. I don't know how true that is.
3. I was born in the maternity annex in Baillieston and we lived in Bargeddie at that time. From what I can remember life at home wasn't very good at all. My dad worked as a lorry driver and was away from home a lot. I don't have any memory of my mum working. My mum and my dad were both drinkers. We were poor and we never had enough food. We used to steal or blag food from our neighbours when we could because we were always hungry. I have now seen some of my Social Work Records and there are references to my siblings and I being malnourished.
4. One of my earliest memories was during my time in the house in Bargeddie. My mum was drunk and fell asleep smoking. She set her bed on fire and I had to scream to the downstairs neighbour for help. The neighbour came and put the fire out. I can't

remember if my mum was injured. I must have been around two years old when that happened.

5. I know there was Social Work involvement with my family from very early on. I don't remember exactly when that started, but it must have been before I turned two. I do remember that our Social Worker was called zQBP [REDACTED] because we had a nickname for him. We used to call him zQBP [REDACTED]. He was our Social Worker for quite a few years.
6. At some point during my very early childhood we were evicted from our house in Bargeddie. My mum and dad weren't paying the rent. That's when we started moving in and out of homeless units and children's homes. The first children's home I remember was Hamilton Children's home. That was followed by Dunavon Children's Home and Coatshill House in Blantyre. We were in all of these places within the space of a year or two.
7. Sometime after Coatshill House, my mum got a house in Newmains. I think I was about four years old when she got the house because I was living there when I started going primary school for the first time. I went to Newmains Primary.
8. I have no memory of my mum talking to us about going to Hamilton Children's home or of being taken there. I just remember being there and the day we left.

Hamilton Children's Home

9. Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Dunavon Children's Home, Strathaven

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Coatshill House, Blantyre

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Family Home, Newmains, North Lanarkshire

26. My memories of family life in Newmains are not good. My mum was still drinking. In fact, her drinking was getting worse. She would disappear for three or four days at a time and leave my brothers, sister and I on our own. My eldest brother, [REDACTED] would have to look after us. He was a bit of a rogue though and by the time he was eleven years old he was breaking into houses.

Food

27. There was never enough food in the house and we were always hungry. I remember one time eating raw brussels sprouts with blue mould on them because there was nothing else for us to eat.

Washing/bathing

28. Life at home was pretty dire. We had no facilities to wash our clothes. No hot water as all we had to heat it was a geyser water heater and that was always broken. We had an outdoor toilet and that was it. We must have been going to school hungry and filthy.

Schooling

29. [REDACTED] and I started going to Newmains Primary School after we moved in to the Newmains house and my big brother's went to Wishaw High School. I remember my mum wrote out a list of school uniform that my brother's needed and she had [REDACTED] [REDACTED]'s sister steal their full school uniform from the shops. The one good thing about going to school was getting school dinners.

Visitors

30. I do remember ^{zQBP} [REDACTED] the Social Worker, coming to visit us while we lived there. He would read my mum the riot act. Telling her to keep us clean and fed. She wouldn't listen and things would just carry on as they had been.

Attack by unknown male

31. When I was around six years old I was attacked by a man I didn't know. My mum had taken my sister and I to the swing park. She then left to go and get more drink so [REDACTED] and I decided to go and play in the grounds of a nearby school. We were

playing on the coal heap. I told [REDACTED] that I wanted to go home. She didn't, so I left the school by myself.

32. While I was walking home I saw a pair of wheels lying beside a fence. I wanted to get them to make a bogie cart for my brothers. I went over to get the wheels and a man appeared. I didn't know him. As I was picking up the wheels he told me to come back out through the field. There were fields on my right and my left. I remember thinking to myself that what he was saying was silly and I ignored him. He came closer to me and I took a couple of steps back and he grabbed me. He pushed me through a barbed wire fence. Then I just remember him punching me in the face and he hit me over the head with something. I think it was a piece of wood. I must have passed out and when I woke up the man wasn't there. I didn't know if he was hiding somewhere nearby so I waited for a while and then I saw him going round the corner at the top of the road. I got up and started walking home. Between where I was and my house, there was a gypsy encampment. When I walked passed it one of the guys there came out to see if I was ok because I was covered in blood. I thought he was going to hurt me like the other guy so I started to run away from him. Then his sister came out and lifted me up and they took me home.
33. My mum must have called the police as I remember them coming in a police van. They took us out in the van to see if I could see the guy who had attacked me. The police drove us to pick [REDACTED] up and then they drove us to the hospital. I don't know how long I was in hospital, but I remember getting a lolly pop when I left. I'd never had any problems with my eyes before the attack, but afterwards, I had a turn in my left eye which had to be corrected by surgery when I was twelve years old. I had the surgery at Stonehouse Hospital, Lanarkshire.
34. I was told afterwards by either the police or my mum that the man who attacked me had raped me while I was unconscious. The police told my mum that the only reason I was still alive is because the guy must have thought I was dead. To this day, I don't know who the man was. He looked a bit like Peter Tobin the convicted murderer and he reminded me of my dad with his suit jacket on.

Leaving Family Home, Newmains, North Lanarkshire

35. Eventually, when the Social Worker realised things weren't going to change [REDACTED] and I were put into foster care in Lanark. That was with the GEA-SPO [REDACTED]. I was seven years old. [REDACTED] went to stay with my gran and [REDACTED] was put into Dale House in Lanark. That was the first time we had been away from my mum and the first time we had been split up.

Foster care with Mr and Mrs GEA-SPO [REDACTED] Lanark

36. My mum told [REDACTED] and I that we were going to stay with Mr and Mrs GEA-SPO [REDACTED] in Lanark for a week. She made it sound like it was a wee holiday and told us that she would pick us up at the end of the week. I don't remember being upset about going. She never did come to get us.
37. I don't think we met the GEA-SPO [REDACTED] before we were taken there to stay and I don't remember too much about my time with them as we were only there for a few months. The social Worker, Sandy Aitken, picked us up from my mum's house and drove us to Lanark in his car. The GEA-SPO [REDACTED] were pensioners and their house was nice. [REDACTED] and I shared a bedroom. They didn't have any other foster children and their own children were grown up and out of the house. We called Mrs GEA [REDACTED] Nan. I can't remember what we called Mr [REDACTED]

Routine

Mealtimes/Food

38. The food at Mr and Mrs GEA-SPO [REDACTED] was good and we were well fed. Mrs GEA [REDACTED] used to squeeze oranges for us in the morning because we were malnourished.

Healthcare

39. I remember going to lots of doctor appointments when we stayed with Mr and Mrs [GEO-SPO]. I think it was Mrs [GEO] who took [REDACTED] and I to the doctors. The doctor gave me something which I had to wear over my chest and back at night to keep the heat in body. I think that was due to me being so malnourished. [REDACTED] and I were also given vitamin tablets that we took in the morning.

Chores / Pocket money

40. We did get pocket money while we were staying with the [GEO-SPO]. I can't remember how much they gave us. [REDACTED] and I each had a piggy bank that we would put our pocket money in.

Schooling/uniform

41. I don't remember starting school straight away. That may have been because we weren't well enough to go right away. At some point we did start going to Lanark Primary school. Mr and Mrs [GEO-SPO] bought [REDACTED] and I our school uniforms. I don't really remember anything about that school.

Leisure time / books/ games

42. We had toys to play with and we were allowed to play in the vestibule by the front door. They had a decent sized garden and we often played out there.

Trips/holidays/outings

43. I don't remember going on any real trips or holidays with the [GEO-SPO] but we weren't there very long. Mr [REDACTED] had a car and he would take us out on a Saturday. The first stop was always the whiskey shop and he would get loaded up with bottles of whiskey. Then he would take us to visit his daughter who stayed in a high rise. We were never

made to feel very welcome. Sometimes Mrs GEA would come too, but most of time it was just us and Mr [REDACTED]

44. The only other place I remember going was to church on a Sunday. Mr and Mrs GEA-SPO wouldn't go, but the sent [REDACTED] and I. I can't remember the name of the church. It was on the same street as the court in Lanark.

Family Contact

45. My mum came to visit us once when we lived with the GEA-SPO. I don't think she was supposed to, but she was allowed to come in when she turned up. She didn't stay very long. I remember her telling me to ask Mrs GEA to check our heads for nits. I did and I remember leaning over sink in the bathroom while Mrs GEA ran through my hair with a bone combe. The whole sink ended up black with nits. I really don't know how Mrs GEA didn't notice it before then. [REDACTED] and I realised after my mum's visit that she had stolen all of our pocket money out of our piggy banks.

Relationship with foster parents / other children

46. We were well looked after by the GEA-SPO while we were living there. There wasn't really any warmth or affection shown to us, but at the same time they looked after our health and kept us fed. I often say, 'they didn't hug you, but they didn't batter you either'. They certainly didn't treat us like we were their own kids. They used to say "it's your own stupidity" if we hurt ourselves. There was never any physical chastisement, but they were quick to give you a telling off.

Bed Wetting

47. [REDACTED] suffered from bed wetting. Mrs GEA would come in during the night and check to see in my sister's bed was wet. If it was, she would strip the sheets and [REDACTED] night clothes and leave her to sleep naked without sheets. That was difficult to see and I remember thinking that [REDACTED] must have been freezing. [REDACTED] wasn't allowed to drink anything after 6:00 pm.

Leaving Foster care - Mr and Mrs ^{GEA-SPO}

48. I didn't want to stay with the ^{GEA-SPO} I wanted [REDACTED] and I to be with my big brother [REDACTED] in Dale House. I spoke to the Social Worker, ^{zQBP} [REDACTED] about it and he told me that there was a new children's home being built in Carluke and that [REDACTED] was going to move there from Dale House when it was finished. I think Dale House was getting closed down so all the kids were moving to Carluke Children's home. ^{zQBP} [REDACTED] arranged for [REDACTED] and I to move to Dale House temporarily before we went to Carluke.
49. Mrs ^{GEA} [REDACTED] wasn't happy when she found out we were leaving. She had started knitting [REDACTED] and I ponchos. When she found out we had asked to go to Dale House, she got a hold of the ponchos and pulled out all the stiches right in front of us. She wasn't happy, but we secretly thought it was because the ponchos were ugly.

Dale House, Lanark

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Carluk Children's Home

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Foster Care Placements while at Carluke Children's Home

82. When I was ten years old and living in Carluke Children's Home there was a foster care campaign. Me, [REDACTED] and another wee boy from the home were picked to be in the [REDACTED] magazine. I remember going to the [REDACTED] offices in Edinburgh for a tour. They let us pick some pictures out of the archive for us to keep. I picked three Elvis pictures and put them up in my room. When I came back from school one day they were missing from my room. I later found out that they had been stolen by one of the girl's boyfriends, [REDACTED]. It was because of the foster care campaign that [REDACTED] and I ended up going into foster care with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Wishaw, but that only lasted about six months.
83. The second foster care placement I went to from Carluke was with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Paisley. I was twelve years old when I went to live with them and I had my thirteenth birthday while I was there. It was the first time [REDACTED] and I had been spit up. I don't think there were many foster carers who wanted to take two kids and I think Social Work thought that because the last placement had worked with [REDACTED] and I, they would try spitting us up. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] were really nice people, but I didn't want to stay there and after four months I asked to be moved back to Carluke.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Foster care with [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] Wishaw

90. I was ten years old when I went to live with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]. I remember meeting them before [REDACTED] and I went to live with them. I think we met them a couple of times when they visited us in Carluke Children's Home. The day we were taken to live with them was the first day we had been in their house. They had two children of their own, who were also called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were a couple of years younger than me. There were no other foster children in the house.
91. Life at the [REDACTED] was quite strict. Mr [REDACTED] worked as a teacher in a list D school and he treated [REDACTED] and I like I suspect he treated his pupils. He was always getting on at me for something even if I hadn't done anything wrong. There was never any physical abuse, but a lot of verbal chastisement. We were treated very differently from their own kids. Mrs [REDACTED] didn't work. She stayed at home and looked after the kids. Their house was decent and I shared a bedroom with [REDACTED].
92. [REDACTED] and I did start going to school when we lived there. I remember Mrs [REDACTED] getting us up and ready for school in the morning. I didn't enjoy school there. I remember one teacher called Mr Smith used to tell me that if I was a boy he'd belt me.
93. I remember being badly bitten on the arm by a dog when I was outside playing. When I told Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] what had happened, they just told me to go and speak to the dog owner. I don't even remember them checking my arm to see if it was ok. I did go to speak to the woman who owned the dog and she looked at my arm and said I needed to go to hospital. When I told Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] they did take me to hospital that night. I don't remember any other hospital visits or doctors' appointments while I lived there.

Visits/Family Contact

94. The only person I remember visiting us while we lived with the [REDACTED] was Lydia our social worker. I didn't see my brothers or my mum. The only specific social work visit I remember is when Lydia came the night we were going back to Carluke Children's Home. [REDACTED] wasn't happy at having to go back, but I was. I felt most comfortable at Carluke because it was what I knew.

Leaving foster care - Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]

95. It wasn't my choice to leave the [REDACTED], but I was happy to be going back to Carluke Children's Home. Mrs [REDACTED] told the Social Work Department that [REDACTED] and I couldn't live with them any longer because her own children resented us. I think it was just an excuse. The week we left, Mrs [REDACTED] had been asked by social work to look after a baby as an emergency for one night. Mrs [REDACTED] wanted to keep the baby, but Social Work wouldn't let her. They picked the baby up on the Tuesday and [REDACTED] and I were back in the home by Friday. She obviously decided she didn't want to foster older kids. I was still ten years old when I went back to Carluke Children's Home and I didn't leave again until I was twelve years old. That's when I went to live with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Paisley.

Foster care with Mr [REDACTED] and Mrs [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Paisley

96. Mrs Brown, the matron at Carluke Children's Home, took me into her house one night and asked how I'd feel about living in Paisley with foster parents. This was the point where [REDACTED] and I were split up for the first time. She went to live with a couple called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]
97. I had some weekend visits to Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] house before I went to live there. Mr [REDACTED] would pick me up on a Friday when he finished work and drive me back on a

Sunday. Mr [REDACTED] was an architect and Mrs [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]. He drove from Paisley to Carluke, after a day's work, to pick me up. I thought that was really nice of him.

98. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] had four children of their own. Three girls called [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The boy, [REDACTED] was adopted. They were all really nice and welcoming when I arrived. I shared a bedroom with [REDACTED]. I had a box of my things from Carluke Children's Home, including my Elvis posters. [REDACTED] was really into horses, but she moved some of her posters so I could put up my Elvis ones.

99. The weekend that I arrived, we all went on holiday for a week to Lake Windermere. I felt like a fish out of water. None of them smoked. I managed to get a packet of cigarettes when we were on holiday and their daughters were gobsmacked that I smoked. I was gobsmacked that they didn't because all the kids in the home did.

100. They were really nice people and treated me really well. They gave me pocket money which I swapped for riding lessons. I loved going riding and they gave me a riding hat for my thirteenth birthday. They also took me out for a meal and let me choose where I wanted to eat.

101. I just wasn't used to people being so nice to me and I had decided before I even went there that it wasn't going to work. My foster mum, Mrs [REDACTED], tried to give me a cuddle on the couch one night and I jumped off the couch because it wasn't something I was used to. I was totally institutionalised. I felt like I was never going to be anything more than a foster kid. I felt different to their kids. The family were quite posh and had money and I felt like I didn't fit in.

Leaving foster care – Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]

102. I lived with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] for four months then I told my social worker, Lydia, that I wanted to go back to Carluke Children's Home. I couldn't cope in a family house. I remember them being really upset that I was leaving. I ended up being put in

Downcraig House in Castlemilk for three of four months before I went back to Carluke Children's Home. I kept in touch with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and I'm still in touch with them to this day.

Downcraig House, Castlemilk

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Life after being in care/support

107. I managed to get myself out of care at Carluke Children's Home when I got the live in kennel job. I was only sixteen years old, but I wasn't given any support after I left. I've only seen the Social Worker, Ron Harris, twice since I left and one of those times was when I bumped into him in Asda when I was an adult.
108. After a few months of working at the kennels, they started mucking me around and not paying my wages. They thought they could get away with it because they knew I had nowhere else to go. I had to leave that job and I was effectively homeless. I went to the Social Work office to see Ron Harris. I was waiting for him when he arrived at work and I remember he was more concerned about not having had his morning coffee yet than the fact I was homeless. He managed to get me a flat in Motherwell. I was seventeen years old when I moved into the flat and it was the first time I had ever lived on my own.
109. It was great when I first got my flat as all I had ever wanted was my own place. After a while I found that I was really lonely. That's when my mental health started going downhill and I started self-harming when I was eighteen. After about 5 years of being that way and it getting worse and worse I had to go and get psychological help. I knew that if I didn't get help I was probably going to end up killing myself. I went to my doctor in my early twenties and he put me in touch with a psychologist in Glasgow called Dr

Gearity. I saw him every Monday for a while. It helped just to talk to someone about everything that happened to me. I wasn't prescribed medication.


110. I actually met my husband, [REDACTED] when I was 16. He lived with his parents and I lived on my own in the flat for about nine years before we moved in together. I then got a job as a zoo keeper at Calderpark Zoo in Baillieston and I did that job right up until I had my kids. I got married when I was twenty-five and I've now been married twenty-five years. I have two kids. They are eighteen and twenty-four.
111. I'm currently working as a gardener, but I've got a bad shoulder and a bad leg. The doctors think my shoulder injury is from a car crash a few years back. I believe the leg pain I get is a result of the physical abuse by [REDACTED] when he kicked me on the leg.

Impact

112. I think the biggest lasting impact of my time in care is my complete lack of self-esteem. I quickly realised that all the people I had been involved with during my time in care, the staff, other kids and various social workers, just weren't interested after I left. It was really lonely and for a long time I felt like I had no one.
113. I suffered from flashbacks as an adult due to the physical and sexual abuse I went through. Specific places or smells would bring back memories from my childhood. I still won't go out for a walk on my own. Even with my eight dogs, I will only go out if there is another adult with me. It took me a while to trust people and get to grips with my relationship with my husband. He was kind to me and never violent towards me. I just wasn't used to that.
114. Speaking to the psychologist really made me see that I couldn't let my abusers win. I was going to get on with my life and that's what I've done. After I had my eldest child I had this great feeling inside of me and I kept waiting for it to go away, but it never has. I've never had any difficulty showing my kids the affection I was never shown.

115. Despite all the things that happened to me in care, I still think I would have had a worse life if I had been left where I was with my mum.

Reporting of Abuse

116. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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Records

117. I got a hold of my Social Work records a few years ago. I don't think what I have are all of my records as there is nothing in them about the man attacking me and raping me in the field while I lived with my mum. The earliest note in my records refers to the time my parents were evicted from the house in Bargeddie. That's was before I was attacked in the field so I don't understand why they is no mention of it. The reason I wanted to get my records is because I was told by a friend that if I can prove that the attack was reported to police, I can claim criminal injuries compensation. I haven't claimed anything because there is just no mention of it. I also wrote to my doctor to get a copy of my medical records, but they only go back to when I was eight years old. I don't have any other documents or photographs from my childhood.

Lessons to be Learned

- 118. I think that children who are in care are the ones who need to be looked after the most. Particularly when they leave care. No one can explain to you how lonely and scary it is when your whole life all your decisions have been made for you and then you're on your own. There needs to be support put in place for care leavers and that support should continue until it's not needed anymore, not when someone decides you're too old to receive it.

- 119. 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.

ETV


Signed.....

Dated..... 10 FEB 22