

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GIM

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GIM. My date of birth is 1953. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Rottenrow Hospital, Glasgow. I lived in the Milton area of Glasgow with my parents, and . I had five siblings , , , and . Sadly along with my parents, my sisters , and have all passed away.
3. Although we stayed with my parents most of the time, there were some occasions we stayed with my maternal grandparents in the Gorbals area and my paternal grandparents in the Milton area, both Glasgow. Our own house was in , in the Ibrox area.
4. When I stayed with my parents I had mixed feelings. My father was a bit of a brute, but I did not know anything different. My dad was a big guy with a forty two inch chest and he was also a bare knuckle fighter. As I grew up I was just a small guy. Sometimes if my dad was not happy with us, we would be frog marched to different relatives. I can remember sometimes that would include my mother's sisters, and . I usually went to my aunt .
5. I knew of at least two occasions when this happened and my mother was injured with black eyes. There was an occasion when my mum was leaning out of the upper

window of the house and was shouting on one of the kids. Dad came from behind her and tipped her out the window. Her fall was broken by the rose bush below, but she was still injured.

6. I did have some good memories of playing outside in the street with some friends. There were also times I was with my friend [REDACTED]. His father sometimes took me to the football at the weekend.
7. When we were in the house my dad made us sit on the couch with our arms folded. We were not allowed to move or to talk. Although I was too young to realise, as an adult I can see that he was a tyrant.
8. If there were nights after we had been playing outside and we came home late and dirty, dad would put us into a cold bath and would use a scrubbing brush on us. It wasn't just me he did it to, he also did it to my brother [REDACTED].
9. There were some days we had to wait outside the [REDACTED] pub to try and get money from dad, so we could buy some food. Usually any money mum got, he wanted it so he could buy drink. If she refused he would hit her. I would go for messages for people, carry food up their stairs, anything to try to get some money, which I always gave to my mum.
10. Sometimes when I came home my dad would take the money I earned, before I could give it to mum. I then started digging holes outside to bury the money, anything to hide it from my dad.
11. Later when I was older and at school my sisters and I would only have a pair of plastic sandals to wear, even in the winter. Some of the money I gave to mum she would spend on getting us proper shoes. She would see who needed the shoes first and bought them before others could be bought.

12. The only time I remember my dad working was when he was at the [REDACTED] Hotel. It was a great atmosphere when he was away, unlike when he was at home, where we lived in fear.
13. My mum worked at the [REDACTED] Hotel, [REDACTED] Glasgow. She helped to prepare and cook the food for functions, set tables there. Sometimes my sister [REDACTED] would help her out. The lady who owned the hotel would let her take home the excess food so she could feed us. The lady, who was from Skye, was a really good woman. There was a street at the back of the hotel. This was a dead end street. As I grew up I had the thoughts a dead end street for a dead end kid.
14. That street was also a good place for me as it was just at the back of Ibrox stadium. When I was about ten years old, on a Saturday my mum would give me a pail of water and I would wash some of the cars while the owners would be watching the match. When they came out they would give me a couple of shillings, which I gave to mum.
15. When I got to about eleven or twelve some kids were doing a milk run. I was doing two. I was up about three thirty maybe four in the morning to do this, before going to school. In the evenings I was also selling newspapers and would not get home until very late at night. This meant that I would only get a few hours' sleep.
16. I did these things until I was nearly fifteen. I felt that if I could get some money it would all help my mum.
17. My mum tried her best, she always showed us lots of love and affection. She did this even when she was being mistreated by my father. Despite her being treated like this by my dad, she still loved him.
18. I think there were complications after the birth of [REDACTED] and rather than us being left at the house with my father, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were sent to Quarrier's. I think that was arranged between my mother and the local authority.

Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir

19. I was about two and a half when we were sent to Quarrier's at Bridge of Weir. I have a letter showing that it was [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I that were placed there. We were taken to the home by a woman from the local authority. I am not certain about the exact length of time I was there but perhaps nine months, but I am sure it was less than a year.

Routine at Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir

First day

20. When we arrived we were handed over at the door to a man and woman. They were in charge of the home.
21. The woman took my sisters away. [REDACTED] was crying and wanting us to be together. The man took hold of my hand and led me away. Within five minutes of us arriving he took me to a cupboard under the staircase. He threw me into the cupboard, switched the light off and locked me inside. I was screaming the place down and crying. I could hear a commotion outside with my sisters crying and screaming. Then it all went quiet. I was left in there for a long time and eventually I fell asleep in the cupboard.
22. I am not sure how much later it was when the light went on and the man pulled me out. I was telling him I wanted to be with my sisters. He dragged me from the hall, out the back door and into the wash house. When I went in I saw [REDACTED] was there and she was holding [REDACTED] up in her arms. The man threw me into the wash room and then once more locked me in, along with my sisters. While in the room I saw lots of rats running around. My sisters were screaming because they were so scared. Very much later, possibly the next day, the man came back and told us if we were naughty again this was where we would be put. We then lived in daily fear of being sent back there.

23. We were then taken to our dormitories. The boys were in a separate building from the girls and we were never allowed to mix. I am not sure how many were resident at Quarrier's when I was there. I was one of the youngest and I would think the ages would have been between three and ten years old. There were many nights I would cry myself to sleep.
24. There were other males and females that worked there and along with the two in charge, they would also slap us if they thought we were misbehaving.

Mornings and bedtime

25. At night when I was in the dormitory some of the older boys would be bullying the younger ones. They would punch and slap the younger boys just to show they were in charge. If you had something they wanted they would threaten you and if you did not hand it over you would be beaten until you did hand it over.

Washing/bathing

26. When it came to bath time, there were two or three of us being bathed at the same time and in the same bath. The man and woman would take turns in washing us. When they were washing us there some days they were taking their time in washing our privates. That made me feel really uncomfortable. I was very young and at that time and did not know what sex was. I did know that the way they were washing us was not the same as what my mother did.

Sibling contact

27. On a Sunday we all had to attend church and during that time I was able to see my sisters. I could not talk to them but at least I saw them. On some days all the residents would have a meal together and at that time I was also able to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Running away

28. Maybe a week or two weeks after arriving in the boys' unit I saw a chance to run out of the building. Later that day I was found in a large field. I felt totally helpless. When I was taken back into the house I was leathered by the male member of staff. He slapped me about the back of head, my face and kicked me on the legs for running away.

Discipline

29. One form of punishment that many of the staff adopted was that if they deemed we had misbehaved we were thrown out into the back yard. We would be left out there in the cold for hours. Again when we were allowed back inside they would threaten that would happen again if we misbehaved.

Bed Wetting

30. Because of the daily abuse I was receiving I began to suffer from nightmares and then bed wetting. In the morning if the man found that I had wet the bed he would drag me out of the bed and slap me. He made me strip the sheets off the bed and take them to the wash room.
31. It wasn't just wetting the bed that I had an issue with but there were some times during the day that I was so scared I would wet myself during the day, even in the school classroom.
32. My problems with bed wetting continued for a few years until I was but six or seven.

Abuse at Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir

33. After the incident on the first day with the cupboard under the stairs, I can remember the man would lock me in there on average at least twice a week.

34. There were times I was telling the staff I wanted to go home as I was missing my mum. They took this as me misbehaving and I would be slapped on the head or kicked in the legs. The man kept telling me I was never going to go home again. We were bullied on a daily basis by the people running Quarrier's.
35. Another method the man would use to hurt us was he would punch us in the arm or the upper thigh. As an adult I could understand that he was hitting in a muscle area that would hurt for a long time.
36. There was also a woman who helped in the boys' unit. She too was quite handy when it came to hitting me and the other boys.

Reporting of abuse at Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir

37. I could not talk to anyone about what was happening to me as most, if not all the staff, were involved in some sort of abuse being carried out on me. When I was back home with my mum I would not talk to anyone. I had been threatened by different staff that if I ever told anyone I would be punished again. I felt this could happen even though I was with mum.

Leaving Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir

38. We were never given any notice that we were going home. One day, just like any other day, we were carrying out our normal routine, when the social work arrived and gathered us up and took us home. We were given no time to say anything to the people we were with, just picked up and delivered to mum.
39. When I left there I was like a zombie, brainwashed into their way of living. I wasn't the same wee cheeky boy who went into that home. I think my both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also changed after our time in Quarrier's.

40. After leaving Quarrier's I was back home with my mum. I could not understand how to read and write and I can only remember playing with toy bricks and plasticine.
41. When I was at the school they saw that I had problems with my reading and writing and was having mental health issues. I was given a placement at an after school unit at Copeland Road. I was sent there three times a week. This was to try and help bring on my reading and writing and trying to help with my needs.
42. The social work visits to our house started not long after we were back from Quarrier's, but they were not regular as my dad told them he did not want them in the house. I think they were more frequent when mum was absent from the house and we were with her at a relative's house.
43. At one point my grandfather tried to step in and help my mum. When he did he was told to back off and was threatened by my father. This was the same when my mum's brothers tried to help. He would beat them up if they tried to interfere. There was no one that could help us other than the social work.
44. Things in the house did not take long to go back to my previous experience where my mum was being subjected to abuse from my dad. I think because of this and mums health was not good were the main reasons for me being sent to the children's home in Rothesay. It may have been a period when mum was also not in the house and having left dad for a short time, or if she was placed in hospital for health issues. I don't know the name of the place we were sent to.

Unknown Children's home, Rothesay

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Unknown Children's home, Rothesay

51. I don't recall leaving the home or if we were sent back to mum from the home. I think I started going to St Saviour's Primary School but I was not doing well.
52. When I was back at the house it soon returned to the same atmosphere. Dad was hitting mum and we were being beaten with his fists and feet if we did anything wrong.
53. When it came to bath time again there were nights where dad made us have cold baths. Sometimes he would make my older sister [REDACTED] come in and use a scrubbing brush to clean us.

Unknown Foster care

54. I am not sure how long I was back home but I have some paperwork showing that around 1958 until possibly 1965 I was placed into care at several different foster families and residential schools on the outside of the Glasgow area. One of the placements was with a family who were marked as friends of my mother, Mrs [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. I can't remember anything about any of the placements and do not remember any of the names. I can say that I have no memory of ever being abused in any of those places. I think the reason for me being placed in all those homes was to give my mother some respite time and give me some time away from my father.
55. As well as moving from one home to another I was also being transferred to another school each time. That never helped my learning to read and write. I would only be in the new home for about a week and then run away. That would end the placement at that particular home and would cause me more trouble when dad found out. When I was taken home after having run away dad would beat me.

56. It was when I was about eleven years old and must have been in one of those homes that I began smoking.
57. When I was attending St Gerrard's High School because of the issues I had with reading and writing I was being bullied by the teachers. They would make me stand in the corner of the class and I had to wear a dunce's cap. I just felt they were treating me like the village idiot. This allowed the kids to begin to bully me, both in the classroom and in the playground.
58. I found out later in life that mum was always trying to get us out of care but my dad was just doing what he wanted.
59. During lockdown I learned from my sisters that they were being molested in the family home by my father. On the times when he felt the need to punish us he would use his belt to hit us on the backside. Other times it became more violent and he would kick us up and down the hallway.
60. My dad died in 1967 in his bed. When he passed there was some sorrow at his going, but muted as I knew that my mum was not getting hurt by him anymore. Mum took it bad and despite all that happened to her she still loved him. My mother died in 1968 in Southern General Hospital and I was with her at the end along with my sisters.
61. I would like to clarify that I think I have the following placements in the correct order but without having my records they might be in a slightly different order. What I am not in doubt about is what happened at each place.

HMP Longriggend Youth Offenders Institution

62. I had been getting into trouble with the police when I appeared from custody at the Juvenile Court at Govan. I was about thirteen and a half when I was sent to

Longriggend which was in Edinburgh Road and I was to be there for a three month assessment period.

Routine at HMP Longriggend Youth Offenders Institution

First day

63. When I arrived at Longriggend I saw that it was an old army barracks type building. I did have a look at the windows with a view to try and get out. Although the windows opened, they only opened slightly, enough to get air in but not enough for someone to crawl out of.
64. I do not know of any of the names of the staff looking after us. I am not sure any of us knew their names as we usually called them "Boss" or "Sir". They just addressed us as "Boy". Most of the staff in there were very domineering. The staff did not wear any uniforms at that time and were allowed to wear their civilian clothing.
65. When I first arrived I was in a single cell but later moved into a dormitory. Because I had ran away from many of the places I was in, I was kept locked up a lot longer than most.
66. I am not sure of the number of people in custody there but there were ten or twelve in my dormitory and there were several dormitories. In my dormitory the ages would be between eleven or twelve and sixteen years of age. Generally in each of the dormitories the older boys would bully the younger boys to do whatever they wanted.

Mornings and bedtime

67. We were woken between five thirty and six in the morning. The staff would come into the dormitory and shout for us to get up. Any of the inmates who did not get up when told would either have the sheets pulled off their bed or tip the boys out of the bed.

68. After getting out of bed it was into the bathrooms to get washed, back to the dormitory, tidy our bed area and make the beds in a military fashion. We then dressed and went along for breakfast.
69. We might be in classes until lunch or we would do chores. In the afternoon there might be some free time, before tea time.
70. When you were in your cell we still carried out slopping out at that time. When you were out with the cell there were proper toilets available. Initially as I was under lock and key I did not have access to those toilets.
71. At night around nine o'clock it was lights out for everyone at the same time.

Mealtimes/Food

72. For the first few weeks I ate my meals in my cell. The food was delivered by the parcel men. They were prisoners who had been in for a while and trusted.
73. In the dining hall there was a hierarchy which decided where we all sat. The staff never intervened with this arrangement.
74. Breakfast was usually porridge, lunchtime would be sandwiches. The main meal was at tea time and in the evening we would be given milk and biscuits, before bed time. The food was basic. There was no choice in what you ate, you either ate what was served or you did without. I always ate what we were given.

Washing/bathing

75. The showers offered no privacy. Although the staff may escort you to the shower area they did not stay to supervise, they usually just walked away. We were allowed to shower each day.

Clothing/uniform

76. We were all issued the same clothing when we arrived. It was a uniform of sorts which consisted of khaki shorts and a shirt.

Leisure time

77. There was an hour at night which they termed as leisure time. There were board games available, jigsaws and packs of cards. There is an open space in the middle of the grounds with the buildings surrounding this space.

Healthcare

78. When I first arrived at Longriggend I was examined by the local doctor. This was the same whenever I went to any of the other borstals. They were carrying out a medical to check your health on arrival. The local doctor came into the borstals maybe twice a week to check on new prisoners.
79. I did have to see him if I was suffering from blood shot eyes or if I had been involved in a fight and had black eyes. I would not say I was fighting just that I had fallen.

Chores

80. We were tasked with carrying out some chores while we were in custody. That would involve keeping the dormitory clean and there other cleaning duties for the main halls, toilets and shower areas.

Birthdays and Christmas

81. At Christmas we would have to attend chapel but there was no other celebration like you might expect if you were in your own house.

Bed Wetting

82. With all the abuse I was receiving I was living in a constant state of fear and this included most of the night. As a result I again had an issue with bedwetting. In the morning if the staff found out then I was beaten up. They made sure that I was humiliated in front of the others in the dormitory. I was allowed to have a shower and then I had to strip my bed and take it to the laundry. This was not just me that it happened to but there were others who also suffered from bed wetting. This treatment continued into my time at St John's.

Abuse at HMP Longriggend Youth Offenders Institution

83. Life in Longriggend was under a brutal regime. Each day the staff handed out slaps, punches and digs in the ribs on a daily basis to all the inmates.

Leaving HMP Longriggend Youth Offenders Institution

84. At the end of my three month detention period I was told the assessment was complete and I was being sent to St Johns residential home.

St John's Residential Home. Longriggend

85. I was sent to St John's and found the place was run by Brothers, but I can't remember what order they were from. I recall it was just across the road from Longriggend itself. I also think it was on the Edinburgh Road, Glasgow. When I arrived and spoke with the other boys I was made aware that some of the staff were involved in sexual abuse of the residents.

86. I then spent a few months at this placement. I know it was more than a few weeks as there were gaps between the episodes of abuse.
87. I later found that there were two or three Brother's in particular who were involved in the abuse. I don't remember any of their names but can only recall they wore a long smock outfit, down to their ankles. It was a dark colour.

Routine at St John's Residential Home, Longriggend

Mornings and bedtime

88. Again the morning routine in St John's was similar to Longriggend and then later St Mary's. We were woken by staff in the morning, usually very early and then washed, dressed and ready for breakfast.
89. We were then in classes until lunch and then again afterwards. We might have some free time after class work in the afternoon. We then had our tea, small time frame for leisure and then into bed.

School

90. There was no education while I was there. At no time did we ever get to sit down in a classroom and be taught anything. The whole existence there I liken to Oliver Twist that was how bad we lived in that place.

Work

91. There were some chores to be carried out. That could involve cleaning the dormitory, toilets and polishing the brass work.

Family contact

92. I did not have any contact with my sisters as they had no money to visit and my brother was in jail.

Discipline

93. The staff made you double march when moving us from different parts of the building. There were other times they would slap you, if you misbehaved in their eyes. Sometimes that would escalate to them kicking you or punching you in the ribs.

Abuse at St John's Residential Home. Longriggend

94. At least once a month I found that I was abused by the different Brothers. On the other nights I would be lying awake in terror of them coming to my bed. When they did not approach me I was so relieved, but also upset, as it meant they were picking on one of the other boys. That is how sick these people were.
95. Most of the abuse I received was when I was in bed at night. We all lived in total fear and at night you were scared to go to sleep. The Brother who was covering the night shift, would come into the dormitory and carry out the abuse in the person's bed. On other occasions they might waken one of the boys and take him to another room, where they would carry out the sex acts.
96. When they came to my bed the abuse ranged from them touching my privates, me having to touch them and worsening to oral sex and sometimes being raped. I knew I was there for a few months because of the frequency of the abuse and the gaps between when others were abused.

Reporting of abuse at St John's Residential Home. Longriggend

97. I did tell the person in charge of the home but his attitude was that I was telling lies. When I got back to my dormitory I was beaten by one of the Brothers, who had been

involved in some of the abuse. He was telling me I was being punished for speaking out against him. No member of staff had any action taken against them and no one was moved from the home. As I had spoken out I was punished, not only with the beating but also being made to do more chores.

Leaving St John's Residential Home. Longriggend

98. I can't remember if I was told I was leaving or how it came that I was allowed out of St John's. I was back to Mary's house for a while.

St Mary's residential home, Glasgow

99. Prior to being sent to St Mary's I had been couch surfing with some friends. I got into trouble with the Children's Panel for some petty theft and the decision was made to send me to St Mary's. I never felt that the petty crime I was involved merited having to be placed into care.

Routine at St Mary's residential home, Glasgow

100. For the first few days I was at St Mary's and being the new boy there was some attempts at bullying from the older boys but that soon stopped.

Mornings and bedtime

101. We were woken between five thirty and six in the morning. The staff would come into the dormitory and used a hand held bell for us to get up. After being washed and dressed we had breakfast. After that the mornings were filled with carrying out chores in the home until lunchtime.

Clothing/uniform

102. The person in charge at St Mary's was quite good when we were needing any new clothes. He would arrange for me to be given a token and to be taken to Wolfson's in the town. We were then able to get clothes from that shop to the value of the token.

Work

103. I started to get some work in the bake house at the home. I learned how to make the rolls and bread for our mornings. I thoroughly enjoyed that training.
104. Later when I was at St Marys and as part of my training for release I was able to get a part time job at the local car wash. One of the boys at the home had a compulsion for stealing cars. He would often come back to the home driving different cars. He also got a job at the car wash, which was obviously not the best place for him. One day when he came back to the car wash he picked me up in one of the cars and was giving me a lift back to St Mary's. When we were out and about that was when we were stopped by the police.

Abuse at St Mary's residential home, Glasgow

105. The abuse from the staff was very similar to other placements where if we did anything wrong, we might be given a slap. They might be pushing us along corridors if they wanted us to be quicker moving from one place to another. Again if you did not move fast enough they might give you kick to move you along.
106. There was an issue during my early time there where one of the older boys was threatening me if I did not carry out sex acts on him then he was going to beat me up. I started fighting back and he left me alone, but I think he might have gone on to pick on one of other weak boys.

107. Other than what I have mentioned I actually found St Mary's to be a positive experience.

Leaving St Marys residential home, Glasgow

108. In 1969, and after having been caught as a passenger in the stolen car, I appeared at Juvenile Court. My female defence agent, I don't know her name, recommended to the court that the best place for me to be sent was a borstal, as the other places I had been sent to, I always managed to abscond.

Unknown home, West end of Glasgow

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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HMP Polmont Youth Offenders Institution, Brighton's, Falkirk

120. I was sent to Polmont on a three month assessment period. At the end of that period they would decide where I was to be sent to serve the remainder of my time in custody. That could be any of the borstals or an open or closed prison. Between my time at Polmont and later Castle Huntly it spanned about two and a half years.

Routine at HMP Polmont Youth Offenders Institution, Brighton's, Falkirk

First day

121. When I arrived at Polmont I was initially placed in the allocation unit. This was where the staff assessed you for a couple of days before moving you into the main units. In the main hall they had some single cells. At the end of the corridor there were four dormitories with eight beds in each. I think there were many hundreds of inmates at Polmont. I think the age ranged from around thirteen up to sixteen. People in Polmont were in for many different reasons, from minor crimes like a breach of the peace, right up to serious assaults or murder.
122. Whenever we had to move from one part of the prison to another we had to line up in three columns and march double time. I think this came from a lot of the staff being ex-military. Of all the staff it was three or four of them who carried out acts of brutality. Some of the others were okay and you could approach them.

Mornings and bedtime

123. The daily routine here was a repeat of the other places I was in. After being woken you got washed and dressed and in for breakfast. A lot of the morning was taken up

with cleaning duties. That might take you up to lunch time. In the afternoon you might have a couple of hours in the classroom.

Clothing/uniform

124. On the day I arrived I was issued with the prison uniform for Polmont which consisted of a striped shirt, trousers and training shoes.

Leisure time

125. The prison operated a token system. These tokens were issued, so long as you had not been trouble, and you could spend them at the tuck shop once a week. In the allocation unit you were not allowed to smoke, but in the main hall, you could get a quarter ounce of tobacco. If you wanted to smoke you would have the cigarette in your cell and blow the smoke out of the window. Sometimes if you were in allocation one of the inmates in the main wings would pass you a cigarette when they passed you.

School

126. I did go to the classes for lessons in the afternoons, but because I had issues with my reading and writing again I was often verbally abused by the teachers, because I could not complete their tasks. The education in Polmont was centred around a fitness regime. Most of the time was concentrated on the gym, boxing and swimming with very little on helping with general education, like reading and writing. I was never able to read a book until I was about twenty. There were no classes to show any trades like electrics or mechanics.

Healthcare

127. I never had any occasion to have to visit the matron or doctor. As far as my mental health was concerned I was just like a frightened rabbit. No one recognised those of us who were suffering like that, or if they did notice, then they ignored it.

Religious instruction

128. We did have to go to church on a Sunday. I can't remember the names of the people who sexually abused me, described later in my statement. I did see them again when we were at the church services. They would be making gestures that they were going to get me again, but they never did.

Chores

129. We did have some chores to carry out when we were at Polmont. The first thing was we had to make our beds in the block fashion. Along with that we would need to keep the cell clean as well. For a lot of the morning perhaps with four other inmates we might be tasked with cleaning and polishing the rest of the floors on your hands and knees or using a mop and pail. There was no choice in anything we did with our life at Polmont. If you were tasked with doing a chore it was complete it or suffer abuse from the staff.

Sibling contact

130. At the time I was sent to Polmont my brother [REDACTED] had been sentenced to life in prison and was serving his time at Peterhead. While we were in jail we would send letters to each other. I was still needing someone to help with my letters.
131. The prison supplied paper and pens but the staff never helped me with writing my letters. I was able to get one of the other boys to help me. He went on to help to start to teach me some basic writing, beginning with small words and being able to put other words together. We became good friends and we ended up at Castle Huntly as well.
132. The letters we sent and received were all vetted by the staff. As a result of this I had to be careful what I included in the letters and definitely not mention any of the abuse.

Family contact

133. By the time I was in Polmont both my parents had passed away. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had no money to visit me and my sister [REDACTED] was now living in Liverpool. She believed that as I was in the Borstal I was being looked after.

Discipline

134. The culture from most of the staff in Polmont was brutal, but there were three or four who did not cause any issues and were quite good officers. You were able to have conversations with those three or four and they treated you as human beings. The brutality from the others was not hidden but no one ever intervened. This meant they had no fear when inflicting pain on us.

Abuse at HMP Polmont Youth Offenders Institution, Brighton's, Falkirk

135. On my second night in Polmont I was moved into a dormitory with another two or three inmates. One of them, the main bully in that dormitory, forced me to carry out sex acts on him. I was so scared and horrified what was happening. The next night he and his friends attempted to do hold me down to have intercourse with me. I was struggling and trying to fight back. One of them put his penis into my mouth, but this time I was able to put up a bit of a fight. I had gone for the main guy who was attacking me. He was a big built boy and he was about sixteen years old. His friends were of a similar age and build. Officers must have heard the commotion and dragged us out and we were put into separate cells. During my time at Polmont I was never put into a dormitory again and remained in a single cell.
136. After this incident we were to appear in front of the Governor. While standing outside the door, some distance away from it, in the corridor, the prison officers grabbed me and threw me into the room. I was losing my balance and there was a rug on the floor

inside the room. As my feet hit the rug I slipped and skidded along the floor crashing my head into the radiator. When the Governor asked what had taken place I just said it was a fight. I was too scared of further repercussions if I told him what had actually happened. I was then taken to the floor above and given a single cell.

137. We had nicknames for some of the officers, Mr GIP, Mr GIO and Mr GIN. They would make you stand to attention and hit you with their full force into your solar plexus. The pain was excruciating and I was doubled over in agony. They made me stand up and threatened that if I did anything wrong again that was what would happen to me.
138. There was a P.E. teacher and every time he was carrying out any work with us he would be wearing his heavy Army boots with his tracksuit. Anyone deemed to have done anything wrong with him in the gym would be kicked by him. That could be for something minor, like not running as fast as he wanted.
139. This guy also taught boxing. One day I was in his class and he asked if anyone had done any boxing before. Some put their hands up. The first guy was told to get into the ring with the instructor, who then proceeded to beat up the prisoner. When it came to my turn I was much smaller and quicker than the first guy and avoided most of what was coming. I think the instructor was a bit embarrassed and when I was out of the ring he would kick me with his boots. He kicked me on the legs with his big boots and then proceeded to beat me by punching me to the head and body. This became a regular thing with him as there was always someone being punished by him. Everybody was on high alert with him and trying not to make any mistakes.
140. Another of the officers who caused some issues was one who taught swimming. He would ask if there was anyone who could not swim and then asked them to line up at the edge of the pool. He then walked along the line and pushed them in. I was okay as I had learned as a youngster to swim at a local pool and in the Clyde as a youngster.

Reporting of abuse at HMP Polmont Youth Offenders Institution, Brighton's, Falkirk

141. You could not make any complaints about any of the abuse because most of it was coming from the staff and if you reported it you would be too scared it would lead to more abuse. There was no one from the staff that could be trusted to help you.

Leaving HMP Polmont Youth Offenders Institution, Brighton's, Falkirk

142. At the end of my three month assessment period it was decided that I would be transferred to the open prison at HMP Castle Huntly. I was taken into the Governor's office and told the news. I was glad to be getting away from Polmont and also not going to a closed prison.

HMP Castle Huntly, Longforgan, Dundee

143. When I was sent to Castle Huntly I was nearly sixteen. I think it was the day after the Governor told me I was leaving that my transfer took place. If not the next day it was certainly within a couple of days. I was taken there by staff in one of the vans. There were a few of us who were transferred at the same time.
144. When I arrived I saw the castle building itself and I was taken up a winding stair case. I was then directed to my dormitory. There was a window at the back of my allocated bed. Also next to my bed was the access door to the toilet. My bed area was like a small alcove and was probably the best placed bed in the dormitory. I know there were other beds in the dormitory but I am not certain as to how many. Beside my bed I had a small locker where I could store my toiletries, paper and pencils. I was told by the member of staff to get myself settled and store whatever stuff I had stored away.

Routine at HMP Castle Huntly, Longforgan, Dundee

145. The inmates at Castle Huntly were between twelve or thirteen up to about eighteen. In each dormitory there were about twelve boys there and there were several dormitories. As it neared the end of my time at Castle Huntly I had the chance to move from the dormitory and into a cell by myself. I never left the dormitory as I enjoyed the camaraderie of the other boys.

Mornings and bedtime

146. Although the day to day routine was very similar to Polmont and Longriggend, I saw in Castle Huntly that if I learned to follow what rules were asked for, then my life was much more relaxed.

Mealtimes/Food

147. The meal times were all in the dining room. You tended to find that all the people with blue shirts sat together and the newer boys with red shirts sat in a different group. It wasn't a bullying thing or anything bad, it was just that as time went on you built a relationship with others and graduated to sitting beside them. It was just another sign of progression.

Clothing/uniform

148. When I arrived I had to remove the striped set of clothes I was wearing at Polmont and issued with the uniformed red shirt and a set of pyjamas. As your time in Castle Huntly progressed and you neared the end of your time that shirt was changed to a blue shirt.

Leisure time

149. There was a big football pitch at Castle Huntly and we were able to play quite regularly. We would just play against each other and most of the boys joined in. Everybody liked the limited freedom as you could run about.

School

150. There was an older teacher at Castle Huntly that was really good to me and tried to help with my writing. I was still having some issues and we thought that it may have been down to a form of Dyslexia. There were many other inmates, nearly half of them, who were in the same position as me and he would help them if he could.
151. This older guy had served during the Second World War and he would often fill his class time by telling us stories of his time during that period. They were much more interesting than some of the lessons we had.
152. Although I had problems with my reading and writing, I did find I was good at art. Apart from that during most of the other subjects I would just be staring out of the windows.

Healthcare

153. Matron was a really nice person. She would treat minor injuries and cuts. She was very attentive when you had to visit her.

Work

154. We did carry out some chores such as cleaning, but the atmosphere was much better and you did not have any issue with completing the task. The cleaning duties were part of the roles when you initially arrived, but as more and more new inmates arrived the chores no one liked transferred to them.

155. After about six or eight months I was asked if I wanted to help the local farmer out with picking potatoes. I was happy to do this and when I went there I was working with the big lad from the showers incident, explained later in my statement. We had become good friends and were from the same area. It was really back breaking work picking the potatoes. Initially there were ten of us on that first day.
156. After lunch most of the other boys were at matron's office with sore backs and scraped knees. As a result they were tasked with carrying out cleaning jobs and some other chores that others were unhappy with. The big guy and myself talked about it and went back, which also surprised the farmer.
157. The boys in the afternoon were a different crew from the morning, but the farmer recognised me and my mate. We did this for a few weeks and the farmer allowed me to drive the tractor. The big guy would be on the trailer setting the boxes.
158. I was given five pounds by Castle Huntly for working on the farm. The farmer also gave us five pounds but we did not tell Castle Huntly about that. When my sister [REDACTED] came to visit me, usually every three months, I gave her the money I had saved. That might have been as much as thirty or forty pounds, which was a lot in those days.
159. A few weeks into this job and I was issued with my blue shirt. I was aware that this meant I was coming to the end of my time at Castle Huntly. I felt this was a reward for doing the hard work.
160. The farmer recommended us for more work in the November when we were asked to help dig up turnips. It was really cold doing that, but better than being locked up and looking out of the windows. Working for that farmer made a difference to my work ethic as an adult. Despite being completely worn out after the first day, I knew I was going back the next day. I realised that if I worked hard I would be rewarded.

Visits/Inspections

161. During my time here and at Polmont or Longriggend there were never any official visits to check on me or how I was being treated.

Sibling contact

162. My sister [REDACTED] was writing to me by the time I was at Castle Huntly. She was encouraging me to keep my head down and behave and everything would be okay when I got out. She made an effort to visit me when she could.
163. My friend from Polmont was helping me with letters to my family. He was encouraging me to write a lot of it myself and would step in more when I was finding something difficult. I would write to my brother in Peterhead. It was just that all was okay with me.

Running away

164. I did have thoughts about running away but all around me were fields and open space and I had no idea where I was or what direction to run in.

Discipline

165. The general atmosphere at Castle Huntly was a lot more relaxed. There was no one hurrying you from one unit to another part of the building.
166. If there were any occasions when two boys got into a fight, then the staff would identify the aggressor and he would be placed into what we called the rubber cell. This was padded and they were placed there so they could not harm themselves and until they calmed down. I was never sent to that cell.

Abuse at HMP Castle Huntly, Longforgan, Dundee

167. The first night I was in Castle Huntly the oldest boy there was about six foot tall. He came to me in the evening and told me I was to swap beds as he wanted mine, which was in a better position. Where his bed was situated were some slats in the windows where staff could look in. During that day I had been warned by some of the other boys that this big guy had been making them do things they did not like, including taking their sweets, bullying them and making them do sex acts on him.
168. That night he came to my bed and threatened me if I did not swap beds he was going to beat me up. I was not going to be bullied anymore and when he came for me I went for him. Officers must have heard the commotion and came in and dragged him out. He was then put into another cell for the night.
169. The next day that boy was in the shower area when another boy, the one I later became friends with picking potatoes, who was equally as big as him fought with him. The abuser ended up with a bandage over his head. At the next meal time all the others were laughing at him and he could not take it. He was taken back up to his cell. We did not see him the next day and were told he was transferred back to Polmont. When he left the others in the dormitory were grateful I had stood up to him and went on to tell me some of the bad things he had done to them.
170. I was later aware that his bed could also be seen by the staff and he did not like that. I also learned later that he was bullying the younger boys to hand over their tuck. The worst thing was he was forcing the younger boys to carry out sex acts on him.

Leaving HMP Castle Huntly, Longforgan, Dundee

171. When I left Castle Huntly, near the end of 1971, I never went into prison or any other institution for the rest of my life. I put that down to the staff at Castle Huntly, particularly the older guy who was way passed his retirement age, helping me instead of bullying or abusing me.

172. I look back at my time at Castle Huntly as a positive time. I went in as a young boy but came out a man. I had been given a structure with some skills which would help me survive in the outside world. They did try to help with some form filling but with my writing ability that did not work as best as they had hoped.
173. As well as generally feeling safe at Castle Huntly, I think most of the boys felt the same. Some of the boys had no mothers or fathers and learned from the staff how to interact with people without getting into any kind of trouble.
174. The older school teacher spoke to me as a human being. He just wanted to help you and with his manner you wanted to learn more. Working on the farm gave me a sense of self-worth. I was proud of myself in how I had changed.

Life after being in care

175. When I left Castle Huntly I was issued with a suit by the staff and I moved in with my sister [REDACTED]. The staff had carried out a prior check at her house to confirm it was suitable accommodation. Within a week I managed to get myself a job. About that time the suit was in the pawn shop and I gave the money to [REDACTED]. Most of the jobs I got over the next few years was labouring work. I did not care as I just wanted to work and earn some money.
176. I later moved in with my sister, [REDACTED] at her house in Liverpool. Her husband, [REDACTED] tried to get me a job working in the restaurant where she worked. That did not last as I could not read the menu. They tried to get me a job just washing dishes but the only vacancy was waiting on tables.
177. When I was in my thirties I tried to visit my sister [REDACTED] again. When I arrived her husband, [REDACTED], told me she was in hospital. When I went to see her I found out the hospital was for patients with mental health issues. I learned that she had to live through more incidents with my father than we were ever aware of. She always felt

torn with moving away to start her own family or staying with my dad and helping to look after us. I remember her leaving did cause us some issues but as I grew older I understood the reasons.

178. When I was around twenty six I was working offshore and did that for around eight years. The last two years working for that company I was working for them in the South China Sea. That job helped me see more of the world.
179. I met my ex-wife, [REDACTED] in 1982 when she worked at [REDACTED] Carpet Factory. We went on to have two sons, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I always found it difficult to make proper relationships, whether as a partner or as a friend. I was still working off shore. While working on the rigs I was earning quite a bit of money, which my wife had access to. She used a lot of the money to buy drink. After a few years I began drinking more and more. When I was home I would be binge drinking. My wife was also drinking on an almost daily basis. These issues had a big impact on our relationship and we ended by breaking up.
180. I was about thirty three when I stopped working off shore, not long after the Piper Alpha disaster. I then bought myself a Transit van and started working as a carpet cleaner. I would also take on odd jobs to keep money coming in.
181. A couple of years later after [REDACTED] was born, my wife and I were drifting apart and I was in my forties when I moved out of the family home and into my own flat. The boys stayed with their mother. I still made sure I looked after all their needs and they never did without anything. My drinking was just as bad and I was smoking marijuana at that time.
182. I was about forty five and still in my flat when I came to the decision to stop the drinking and smoking pot. I took myself off the alcohol and locked myself in the flat for weeks to get over the effects. I had a pal who also stayed in the flat and he helped to make sure I was fed each day. There were others also staying in the flat who were heavy drinkers. I knew that to succeed in stopping the drink I needed to get out of that flat.

183. I later got my new flat at [REDACTED] and after eighteen months I was still recovering from the ill effects. At this time I was also suffering from nightmares with memories of my time in care. It took me a number of years to get everything properly under control.
184. I used to go to a local club where I would play some snooker and I would also be asked to clean their carpets. The owners, the [REDACTED] family, got me a job helping a woman needing her flat decorated. Her husband was suffering from dementia and she had MS. Helping that woman and her husband led me on to helping others and this really helped in my recovery process. I helped that couple for quite some time. The woman eventually died from cancer and I continued to visit her husband while he was in hospital, just to make sure he had some company. He passed away about two months after his wife.
185. When I was in my late fifties, maybe sixty I was working at [REDACTED]. It was around then the doctors found I had a shadow on my lung. I was suffering from emphysema. I also had to have my gall bladder removed around the same time.
186. I later came into money and as a result I support about ten people with some financial and emotional support. I now have a flat abroad and sometimes the people I help are allowed to use that flat in the sun to give them a break. I try to help anyone where I can. It is not always about money sometimes it is just being a friend to people.
187. I have also helped a couple of friends of my sons. One of them was having some issues. I managed to help get over those problems and get him a job. He is now married with his own family, has a mortgage and is making a success of his life. They both still come and see me when they are in the Glasgow area. My son [REDACTED] and one of the brothers have joined a band and play gigs around the Glasgow circuit. [REDACTED] also has a studio for his music. He is soon to go back to London to receive his Honour's degree in music.
188. My son [REDACTED] too had issues with addiction. I got him to stay with me for about nine months and we managed to get him back on line. He is now a qualified PT

Instructor and is now on level five. His recent qualification is to add dietary advice to clients.

189. [REDACTED] my niece, had organised and paid for a family headstone. This was around the time I was having my gall bladder operation. On that gravestone are listed the names and dates for my mum, my sisters [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was working as a care worker and the headstone cost her a lot of money. Later, after my windfall, I was able to pay [REDACTED] back the money she had laid out.
190. I had lost my three sisters all within a four year period. All had suffered from issues with drinking. They used the alcohol to hide their problems from the memories of being in care and with what my father was doing.
191. I have tried to use my experience in care to help my family and some of their friends to make sure they had the right frame of mind to better themselves and to ensure they have a positive life.
192. As a family group we never shared our mutual experiences of our time in care. Maybe if we had things might have been better and helped us to cope. I think the reasons my sisters did not talk about it was to help protect me.

Impact

193. My reading is not where it should be but it is now a bit better. I still have issues with writing but I can now use my phone to help with any spelling. I needed this during lockdown especially when texting my son.
194. When I was in my twenties the abuse I had suffered gave me doubts about my sexuality. I even took a job in a gay bar. I soon realised that was not what I was and that I was being influenced by those memories.

195. My life in care caused me major problems with my mental health. It was just not affecting me as it also affected my sisters. Despite working hard most of my life, a lot of my free time was taken up with burying those memories. The nightmares I was suffering from lasted for a number of years. Having now taken control of my life they have lessened. In the early years I would hide the problems but inside there was a child screaming for help. I still have things that trigger memories and I sometimes have some flash backs.
196. During my time in care or custody I never had any opportunity to see a psychiatrist. I later resorted to taking the drink and drugs to hide the pain from memories of abuse. Even if I was to seek help I always saw it as a stigma. I am sure if I did see a counsellor or psychiatrist I would not have been in a mental position to reveal all that happened to me. I just kept it all bottled in which probably caused me more damage.
197. When I was with the family I was able to speak Doctor David Gordon and later his son Jonathan Gordon our family GP's. They tried to help but it rarely helped. As an adult I have tried to manage those issues by myself and have not felt the need to visit a counsellor or psychiatrist.
198. I was nearly fifty before I fully understood that the abuse I suffered was not my fault. Before that I always felt I was to blame. I don't feel visiting the places would help as I think that would just bring those memories back.
199. During my life I have found that I have very little trust in people. Whenever I trusted an adult before, it was not long before they hurt or abused me. Even as an adult I find it difficult to trust people in my circle. I do have a few people who I do trust but that is because I know virtually everything about them.
200. I have difficulty in putting into words the number of incidents of abuse carried out on me by staff. What I have been able to tell the Inquiry is nowhere near the number as I have blocked most of the abuse out of my mind. The sheer brutality and the fear I lived in each day has affected me to this day.

Reporting of Abuse

201. I have not reported any of the abuse to the police or any other authority. I am not sure that is a path that I want to go down as I had tried previously and was not believed by the police or the social work. When I reported things to staff I was told that I was lying and ended up being beaten as a result.

Records

202. Being unable to obtain my records showing my time in care is very distressing and is still impacting on my life. I just want to know where I was and what was said about myself and my family. Glasgow Council are not helping me with any of the records. How would they feel if they could not tell where they were brought up and by whom for all of their childhood?
203. One of the numbers I was provided with when I approached the Inquiry was for In Care Survivors at Well Being Scotland. I am now getting some help through Sandra Toyer and her organisation. They are also helping me to get hold of my records. I am looking for them to fill in some of the blanks in my memory of the places I was in care. I would also like to know what they have recorded in relation to the issues they were aware of within my family house.
204. I have received a short report from the social work, unfortunately when I read that it gave a negative side of my mother, which bore no resemblance to her. I believe my father may have assisted the social work with that report. He would have assisted them and then be able to have control of all the money coming into the house. That meant he would have money to go to the pub every day. The report shows nothing of any of the abuse he inflicted on my mother and my sisters. This was common knowledge among everyone of or neighbours and friends. How have they not taken

into account all the previous information about abuse or spoken to any of those people? It does mention in some reports I saw that I was easily led.

Lessons to be learned

205. One thing that should be in place is to ensure the no one person is left on their own to look after the children in care establishments. This would help stop the opportunity they may have to abuse children if they worked on their own. I am fully aware that this would still not prevent the unlikely scenario of two abusers working in the same place on the same team. In my case it was usually the person working on their own that committed most of the abuse.
206. There needs to be more vetting of people being employed in the care industry. That vetting needs to be very thorough. They must not accept that because you are looking after a family that you are suitable. There have to ongoing checks carried out.
207. I am not sure if any of the people looking after me in care were properly trained. Apart from being fully trained you must also have a caring and compassionate attitude to look after children. No one in any of the establishments I stayed at was trained to recognise trauma, which is a necessity, because you may have suffered abuse prior to arriving in their care.
208. If children report abuse then action must be listened to, believed and action taken. Despite me reporting matters to the police and social work, I was never asked by either organisation to provide a full account of what happened. I do not recall any action taken against any of the people and they were able to carry on for years, some decades, with no fear of being stopped. There was no independent adult that I could talk to or organisation looking after my rights.
209. I also feel that people from a poorer background have less protection than others from a secure financial footing. It is easier to abuse the children who have no back up.

Other information

- 210. I think the Inquiry should have taken place a long time ago, about forty years ago when it was happening and relevant.

- 211. Kids in the future need to be looked after better than we were. Paedophilia is a human trait and I am not sure it can be eradicated by the Inquiry, but I hope that things can be put in place, to prevent it in children's homes. Cameras and a more open environment would all help the children. If they can install cameras then they should be recording twenty four hours a day and be unable to be tampered with by staff. I know we have to have privacy for kids but a balance needs to be found.

- 212. I do have a family solicitor but at this time I have not instructed any proceedings against any organisation. I am aware of the redress scheme and have received the advance payment of £10,000. I shared this between both my sons. All these things will take time as I have the Inquiry to deal with and make sure my family are all okay.

- 213. I came forward to the Inquiry not just for me, but to speak for my mum, who has been wronged in reports, and for my sisters who have passed away and not had a voice to speak for them.

- 214. 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.

GIM


Signed.....

Dated..... 9-12-21