

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Mark LAFFERTY

Support person present: No

1. My name is Mark George Lafferty and I prefer to be known as Max. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. My mum's name was [REDACTED] and my dad was called [REDACTED] I'm not sure if his real name was [REDACTED] He died when I was aged nine or ten. [REDACTED]

Then my parents got together and [REDACTED] then I was born just over a year later, [REDACTED]

3. My early life was always alright. I don't know if my dad was working, but he provided for us. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Living at home with my mum and dad was me, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I remember we lived in a house that was a two roomed converted shop in Maryhill. There was the Salvation Army round the corner. We got food and my dad provided what we needed. I went to a primary school every day because I had to

have a good reason not to go to school. The school was called Shakespeare, and it was next to some army barracks in Maryhill.

4. There was no social work involvement with the family in the early days. In Glasgow, the tenements were pulled down and moved people to the outskirts. We moved from the converted shop in Maryhill to a new house in Easterhouse. I remember it because it had an inside toilet. Before that we had an outside toilet that we shared with the next door neighbours. I think I was aged seven or eight when we moved. My dad was alive when we moved.
5. I went to Rogerfield School in Easterhouse. I did all my homework and all my school work. I wasn't the greatest student, but I did my work. My first teacher was a lady called Miss Munn. I started to dodge school and my dad would hit me across the backside with his hand. I told him I'd go to school. He knew I wasn't going to school because the school board came to the door. [REDACTED] grassed me up. Every day at school I hated primary school. I never got to go to secondary school. [REDACTED] was the best fighter in the school so no-one picked on me.
6. One morning in 1973 I woke up and my mum was crying. My dad was lying dead on the living room floor. I was nine or ten. After he'd died I told myself I didn't need to do anything I didn't want to do. My mum couldn't discipline me in the same way and I had no fear of my dad. I just never went back to school. I had an argument with my mum about it. There was no support from social work or from any services after my dad died. I stopped going to school after that and I just went to assembly if my mum took me and handed me over to a teacher. As soon as the teacher turned their back I'd run away.
7. Sometime after my dad died, I went to a residential support office in Easterhouse. I was the only kid in the building apart from the guy that ran it. He told me to do what I wanted. I remember he had a counter that I pressed to count from one, two, three through to sixty. When I got to sixty I had to bang on the class room door for the man. It was called occupational therapy sessions. He seemed an old guy and he had grey hair. I asked him why I was there because I was bored sitting there and I had nothing

to do. He told me I was there to express my feelings. I didn't know what he was talking about.

8. He used to give me a stencil of different shapes and a notepad and coloured pens. I'd play around with them in classroom and he told me it was a good session. He was an occupational therapist. At that time I refused to go back to primary school. I don't know who organised it. I don't remember seeing any social workers. I went to several occupational therapy classes for the whole day and every day instead of going to school.
9. I was bored in these sessions, sitting there all day and doing nothing. My mum said I needed to go to them or I'd get put away in a home. I had no concept of what that meant. Then I got a social worker because I refused to go back and she never spoke to me and only to my mum. Then one day my mum shouted me to go through to the living room and told me I might need to go away for a couple of weeks with this woman. I didn't know her and I asked who she was. Then my mum told me she was a social worker and she was there because I wasn't going to school. I wasn't taken away there and then.
10. I was charged with taking blocks of wood off windows and setting fires for bonfire night. I'd done that a couple of times and the police came and I got charged. The wood belonged to Glasgow Housing Association. They were the boards in the front of houses and we didn't go inside. It was probably part of why I went to Balrossie, but I don't remember going to any children's panels.

Balrossie, List D school, Kilmacolm

11. The social worker came for me one Monday and my mum said I had to go with her. My mum was crying. She told me to take a change of clothes and I packed a bag. She took me to Kilmacolm and it was the first time I'd been in a car and in the front seat. I don't know the name of the social worker. We went to a big building and I thought it

was a castle, but it was actually a home. She told me I needed to stay there for a few weeks. I thought it was a holiday and there would be activities.

12. It turned out I was at Balrossie and it was a List D school. I didn't know that at the time and I thought it was a place I went to at the weekend or a week at a time. I was telling myself it would be great for a week at a time instead of school and then I'd go home. Maybe one week in Balrossie and one week at home. I wasn't upset as I thought I'd be having adventures.
13. Balrossie looked like a castle and I thought it would be great for a week. There were grounds outside and a tower that had a sign on it saying it was out of bounds to us. Downstairs there was an office, a gym and some dormitories. There was a dining room and showers and they were mainly for after you'd come back from leave, although I can't remember taking a shower. Upstairs was more dormitories. The first dorm you came to up the stairs was the one I was in and that was the biggest one.
14. I don't know who ran the school. **SNR** when I was first at Balrossie was called Mr **GKF**. He retired not long after I arrived and a man called **LWH** **██████████**. There were just boys at Balrossie and maybe eighty to one hundred boys. I think the oldest boys were fourteen or fifteen years old. The place was full up. I was aged about eleven and there were older boys than me. The school had a building that had rabbits in it and somebody went in and killed them all.
15. I can remember a man on staff called Mr **GBR** or Mr **GBR**. He had the same sort of name as **SNR** **██████████** at Balgowan where I went to later on and I get the names mixed up in my memory. Everybody used to say he was a pervert and I didn't know what that word meant. I don't remember the names of any other members of staff.
16. A lot of people were in the home for 'cp' or care and protection' and then there were other boys like myself who were there for breaking the law and stealing things and for us that meant not going to school. Mr **GBR** **██████████** used to take these boys home at the weekend. Then on a Monday morning these boys never spoke for days at a time.

Even then we knew something was happening. I never had a heart to heart conversation with these boys so I didn't know what was going on.

17. There were two brothers called [REDACTED]. I don't know their first names. They were there because their mum couldn't cope. They were aged about nine and ten or ten and eleven. They were taken away every weekend by Mr ^{GBR} [REDACTED]
18. My two best pals in the place were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. That's what I called him. They asked me if I knew how to drive cars. I didn't as I'd never sat in one and didn't know how to open one. This place was an academy of crime. I started to learn how to steal cars in there, but more so in Balgowan later on.

Routine at Balrossie

First day

19. The social worker took me in her car with my mum and auntie [REDACTED] sat on the back seat. She took me to see ^{SNR} [REDACTED], Mr ^{GKF} [REDACTED]. He told me I'd be there for a wee while. My mum and my auntie had left by then and I was insisting that I was only there for a week and then I'd get back home. I hadn't even made it to secondary school by this time. They all conned me into going in the home. Then he told me it was going to be two years. I felt totally betrayed and everyone had lied to me. I just wanted to get back home. My priority then was to run away.
20. On the first day I was shown where I was going to be sleeping. I was shown round the classrooms and I told them I wasn't going to school as I was only there for a week. They insisted I was going to be there for longer.

Mornings and bedtime

21. My first dormitory had about twenty beds in it. I can't remember if it was locked. There were five or six dorms, upstairs and downstairs, so they were on two levels. I had a

bed, a locker with a drawer. We wore pyjamas in bed and I'd never worn pyjamas before.

22. You'd get woken up in the morning by the staff and they'd ring a bell. When you got up in the morning you'd take your pyjamas off and fold them in a certain way and put them into the bottom of the locker. We changed into day clothes that they'd given us. When it started to get dark you got put into your dorm, but they kept the dorm door opened. There used to be a night watchman who came round with a torch to shine on you and make sure you're in your bed and asleep. I used to kid on I was asleep.

Mealtimes / Food

23. The food at that time to me as a child was disgusting. If you didn't like the food you didn't get anything else. I wouldn't eat the vegetables as I wasn't used to them at home. If there was stew to eat I'd pick my way through it and I was told to eat it all and a staff member slapped me on the back of the head. I can't remember who did that, but it happened a lot. It happened at every meal by different staff members. It was a standard thing.

Washing / bathing

24. I don't remember having to brush my teeth and I had a shower once a week or after coming back from home leave. We had to use nit shampoo in our hair. They looked through your hair for lice. That was whoever was on duty at the time.

Clothing / uniform

25. Our days clothes was a uniform. I was given them on my first day. My own clothes got put in a big room. If you were granted a weekend leave you went into that room and told them your name and they got the clothes from a rack that had your name on it. You could put them on for a weekend from Friday to Sunday.

26. I don't know if my clothes were taken away and washed or if they had my name written in them. It was just a pair of trousers and a jersey. In the winter, on the first of October, you got a t-shirt to put underneath your jersey. That's how I knew winter was coming.

School

27. I went to the school classes and I told the staff I wasn't going to do them. I was in there for not going to school and I didn't see why I should work at school in Balrossie. I was only a youngster. I was thinking if I didn't do anything in class they'd need to give me back to my mum and I'd be alright. I sat in the class and I did nothing.

28. I couldn't say what the lessons were about. The school was only in the morning. I didn't even go to school all day in Balrossie so what was the point? Why did I get put in there for not going to school to go into Balrossie to go to school for half a day? In the afternoon you used to just wander about the grounds on your own. There was a big ash football pitch at the back of the school and a swimming pool to the left of it. I heard that three people drowned in it and they had to fill it in.

Visits / Inspections

29. Weekend home leave was granted from Friday to Sunday. I had about three of them. I went to Central Station in Glasgow. They picked me up in the van after and other boys too. The staff waited in the van for twenty minutes for you to come back from leave. If you were twenty-one minutes late you were treated as an absconder.

30. I remember the first time I got home to see my mum I said to her 'you told me lies. You told me I was only there for a week'. She told me what can I do? [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

31. My mum used to come up to see me every couple of weeks. The staff used to put us in a room. She used to bring a couple of bags of boiled sweets. There was always a member of staff in the room. The staff would tell me I had a visit that day and I would stand at the window for the car coming up. The social worker brought my mum as she was never able to drive.
32. I didn't see the social worker at the visit. I didn't want to see her as she was a liar who told me I was only going to be in for one week. I used to tell my mum that I was getting slapped all the time and she just told me to do what the staff told me to do. She wouldn't believe the place was as bad as I was telling her it was.
33. I wasn't aware of any inspections taking place.

Healthcare

34. I don't remember having a medical when I arrived. I assume there was a nurse who put a plaster on a cut or a scrape, but I don't remember it.

Running away

35. Balrossie wasn't secure. The front door was locked but the windows were open so there were places you could get out. I absconded numerous times once I realised where I was. I worked out the places I needed to go to get back to Glasgow.
36. I was only eleven or twelve years old travelling by myself on a train. I didn't pay for a ticket and the inspector used to come round. I pretended my mum had it and she was in the toilet. I was learning how to lie at a young age. I used to make it to Glasgow Central and I couldn't get off the platform until the ticket staff went away. When all the passengers had gone the ticket staff disappeared and I could just walk out. I learned that after two or three escapes and that's what I used to do. That was me with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were my closest pals in Balrossie.

37. If you ran away, they'd take you back and lock you in a room. There was a big window and you could smash the glass to get out if you wanted, but that thought didn't occur to me. My mum and auntie [REDACTED] used to come to see me and tell me to settle down. I complained that I was meant to have been there for a week and I'd been there for months. SNR [REDACTED] was still telling me I was going to be there for two years and I refused to stay.
38. I used to run away and I don't know how many times I did it. I used to sleep in hedges, empty houses, really bad places rather than go back to this place. I was running away from the confinement. Nobody told me what was happening to me in there. I can't remember a social worker or a key worker. Nobody sat me down to explain why I was there.
39. I was running away any time I could when staff turned their back. I kept on running away from Balrossie even with my pyjamas on. I had to sneak out in my pyjamas and we were on the bus the next morning so people were getting suspicious. It was a bus from Kilmacolm. I was either by myself or both of my friends or just with one of them. I just wanted to get back home and I got there a couple of times. My mum would tell me I couldn't stay as the police would be looking for me. I resented that as it was my home. A couple of times she phoned the police herself. I learned not to go back to my own house.
40. Then we used to stay under the floor boards of an old empty house. It was one of the old tenement houses. We used to go in there and lift the floorboards up and sleep under the floor. The longest I was away at that time was about eight weeks. I was getting food by breaking into shops as there wasn't anywhere else to go.
41. I went to the salvation army place one night with one of my pals and they grassed us up. The police turned up. We were staying for a while in an empty flat above a shop and made a hole in the floor so we could climb down into the shop and take chocolate bars.

42. Generally it was the police who caught us and took us to the police station and we used to call it clearing the books and we didn't care. I went to a few children's panels because of the crimes when I was at Balrossie. There was one panel in Ingram Street Glasgow and one at the top of the town that I ran away from. My mum was at the panels and I suppose the social worker was too, but I don't know. The panel used to just remand me back to Balrossie.

Bed wetting

43. Occasionally it happened with me. They called the boys enuretics or a name like that. They used to call people who wet the bed names like 'piss the bed' and made the boys stand in the corner for an hour and not move and I thought that was outrageous. I thought that at the time and not just now from an adult point of view.
44. They were basically shaming people to stop them wetting the bed. I think it was all the staff who would do that and everybody knew if a boy had wet the bed and you gave them flack for it. I couldn't say if the staff went round telling other boys from other dorms about it.
45. I used to refuse to stand in the corner when they told me to and it started a big argument and I got a couple of slaps. They used to lock me in a room with a big window and told me I could come out when I admitted I'd wet the bed, but I wasn't denying the fact I did it and I wasn't going to stand in a corner staring at two walls. They used to let me out. That was it and they didn't do anymore to me. I don't know who took the wet sheets from the bed.

Discipline

46. The staff used corporal punishment. As far as I know, I was one of the few boys who got belted in Balrossie. SNR [REDACTED] did it. After the first week I was in, I expected to go home in the morning and I got my stuff all sorted out. I was told I wasn't going home for two years and I said I didn't care and I was going home anyway. I said I'd walk out anyway. The staff were watching me all that day. As soon as they weren't

watching I was off. When I was taken back I was belted by Mr **GKF** for running away. I got either six or twelve strokes depending on how long I'd been away.

47. It happened to me a few times. If you didn't make your bed properly you'd get cuffed across the head. I recall being punched and kicked when I was in Balrossie, but I don't remember who did it as it was just which ever staff was there at the time. I saw other boys being treated the same way. I was never injured so that I needed medical attention, but there must have been nurses in these places to deal with that sort of thing.

Abuse at Balrossie

48. I wasn't getting to go home and I was being slapped all the time at mealtimes. Some older boys at fourteen and fifteen bullied the younger ones and I wouldn't accept that. It never happened to me.
49. The staff used to lock me in a room that I called a cell with a window that I could have smashed to get out. The room had just a bed in it. There was only one room that I got put in. I don't know what the staff did with my pals **█** and **█**. I had to bang on the door to get to use the toilet. I got food that they brought in to me on a tray. The staff didn't try to talk to me about how I was behaving. I was put in there for running away and let out if I promised not to run away again. After three or four days in this room I'd promise and I was lying. Then I'd be off again. In my mind I thought if I kept running away they'd let me go home.

Leaving Balrossie

50. I wasn't in Balrossie for two years in the end and my best guess is that I was in there for about one year. I assume that I ran away that much that they decided I should be placed further away from Glasgow that I wouldn't run away, but it made me even more determined to run away. I was placed in the room where I got locked in after I ran away

and the staff, I think it was SNR [REDACTED] called LWH [REDACTED] opened the door one morning and told me I was going to Balgowan. I didn't know where that was until they told me it was in Dundee. I didn't know where that was. It happened out of the blue.

51. There was car for me and I was put in the back to travel to Dundee straightaway. They even put handcuffs on me because I was known for running away. I didn't get chance to get any of my belongings to take with me. I always remember the car was a Talbot Sunbeam. There was a guy behind the wheel who told me he was my new SNR [REDACTED]. His name was Mr GHA [REDACTED].

Balgowan, List D school, Dundee

52. Balgowan was a dark place for me. I hated everything about it. I believe it was a List D school. I don't know what organisation ran it. Mr GHA [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] as the SNR [REDACTED]. That's the only name I can remember. Balgowan was just for boys. The boys went from my age to sixteen. There were a lot of boys there, maybe a hundred and fifty of them. At first I was put into a dormitory that was quite big and there could have been twenty boys in there. I don't know if the other dorms were that size.
53. Balgowan was in one big house. There were two levels. I was on the top level of the house and there were more boys beneath. I assumed that they put me on the top level so I wouldn't be able to get out to run away, but I still ran away a lot. I knew it was a long way back to Glasgow and in my mind I needed to find somebody who could drive. I ended up being pals with a guy from Edinburgh called [REDACTED]. He had a brother and I think his name was [REDACTED], but he was placed somewhere else. [REDACTED] could drive and he was going to show me. I learned how to drive when I was twelve. I learned how to steal cars too.

Routine at Balgowan

First day

54. I think I was twelve years old when I went to Balgowan. I was handcuffed to two members of staff and as soon as they took the handcuffs off me I tried to run away out of the front door and I was caught straightaway. They had hold of me. One had hold of the back of my shirt and the other one was at my front.
55. I got belted right away by Mr GHA and two other staff were holding me down. I don't know their names. They were telling me I wasn't in Balrossie anymore and I was in the big league now. I was belted on my bare backside three times and in SNR office. In his office there was a big long table with lots of chairs in a boardroom style.

Mornings and bedtimes

56. We'd be woken up in the morning and go downstairs for breakfast at big long tables. It was Weetabix. After that it time for school.
57. After the evening meal they put you back in the dorm and shut the door and that was you in the dorm. There was no TV or games. We'd just sit about.
58. Bedwetting wasn't an issue at Balgowan as far as I can remember.

Washing and bathing

59. We were left to our own devices to have a shower or bath. I can't remember ever getting a shower or a bath, but obviously I did.

Food/mealtimes

60. I got out of the TV room for my lunch in the middle of the day. After that was the evening meal in the dining hall but I don't remember much about it. I can't remember

what the food was like. If you didn't eat the food you'd get told to eat it and if you didn't there wouldn't be any pudding. If I didn't like it I didn't eat it. I can't remember being hit if I didn't eat the food.

Clothing

61. They gave us clothes to wear that was a uniform. A brown jersey with a red stripe round the top. If you ran away when you got caught you'd get belted across the backside and they used to put you in red shorts and a yellow t-shirt so you stood out.

Visits/inspections

62. I didn't get any visitors apart from one time when my grandad came on a coach. When he was leaving I went to the back of the coach and shut the door and I went back home. When the coach got back to Glasgow my granddad was raging. I told him I wasn't going back and that I had to fight other boys and he said that didn't happen. He didn't believe me. I didn't tell anyone else at that time. I wasn't having any contact with my mum at this time as she'd phoned the police when I ran away to her house when I was in Balrossie.
63. I don't know if I got a social worker. There was never a time when staff came to talk to me about how long I was going to be in Balgowan or what I had to do to get out.

School

64. There were classrooms but I can't remember ever being in one. You drove up to the school along a big driveway and on the right hand side was the main building and on the left were buildings like portakabins, but they were more permanent than that. They were the classrooms. I can't remember a time when I was in one of them.
65. I didn't go to school so I did nothing in the daytime. They put me back up to the dorm and sit me in there or lock me in the room with the TV in it. I'd be on my own in there.

Everybody else conformed as nobody else was ever locked in there, apart from [REDACTED] sometimes and that's how we became friends.

Leisure time

66. I got locked back up again in the afternoon. In the front of the building they had a big grassed park with a trampoline on the same level as the ground that had a pit underneath it. Sometimes I was allowed to use that to do that physical activity. In my mind I had to build myself up physically for fighting. The staff soon learned if I was left to my own devices I'd be off.
67. There were no trips out or holidays from Balgowan.

Running away

68. Every opportunity I had I ran away. Most of the time [REDACTED] went with me and we stole cars to get back to Glasgow. We got caught and charged a lot of times. The police used to clear their books with me.
69. There must have been an army training ground around Dundee or Arbroath as we got caught running away through it. It was army guys who got us. They took us into a building and I told them if I get sent back to Balgowan they'll belt me across the arse. They said that doesn't happen. I showed them some of my bruises and they thought I'd done that to myself.

Birthdays/Christmas

70. I didn't get to celebrate my birthday in Balgowan. I didn't get to go home at Christmas time. I can't remember any celebration of Christmas. I never got a weekend leave from there. They used to tell me whenever you run away it takes two months to build up enough points to get out on leave. I never went two months without running away.

Work/chores

71. We had to clean the dorms and things like that but I refused to do it.

Abuse

72. When I was belted there used to be two staff members and depending on how much I struggled, there would sometimes be four of them. I made it into a point of pride that there had to be four of them. Two of them would 'do the job' and two of them would hold my arms and hold my legs between their two legs. They used to pull me out of my underwear and one of them would use the strap across my backside. He was hitting me with a belt that looked like a school belt from those days. It was a two string belt. Three strings wouldn't be so bad, but two strings was more serious and that was a secondary school punishment.
73. I got belted by SNR [REDACTED] Mr GHA at least ten times at Balgowan and there was a different number of strokes each time, at least six to eight depending on how long I'd been away for. The very maximum of strokes was twelve. The belting never made me change how I behaved, apart from making me more determined to do wrong. In my mind, if he belted me and I did what he told me then his belting was working. I was determined the belting wasn't ever going to work. It was always Mr GHA who belted me. I couldn't say how old he was but he seemed old to me at the time. He had no hair on the top of his head. He only had hair on the sides of his head.
74. On the second day in Balgowan I was taken in to see SNR [REDACTED] Mr GHA. I had to stand as I wasn't allowed to sit down. He was giving me a lecture. He was telling me they would break me and I wouldn't be running away and they would make me into the man I needed to be. I was telling myself there was no way that was going to happen. I told him there was no way they would make me into whatever they wanted to make me. Inside I was terrified, I was only a boy, but there was no way that man was going to bend me to his will.

75. I got put out of the room and taken back up the stairs and they put me into a room that had a big black and white telly in it. I got locked in there. I was watching whatever was on TV and I was in there for a couple of hours. Then they came back and I was being sent to my dorm. I was also told I was going to be fighting so-and-so tomorrow. I didn't have a clue what that meant.
76. The staff used to put us in the toilets and it was like a gladiator kind of thing. The toilets were down the stairs on the ground floor. There were maybe ten or fifteen sinks and showers and at the end of the room was the toilets. You had to fight these other boys of fifteen. I was just a twelve year old boy. All the staff made you fight. Fights happened nearly every day and I might have had to fight once a week. There were no boxing gloves and it was a bare knuckle fight.
77. The staff used to stand at the back wall and they would decide who won and when the fight had ended. They would break it up. There was usually about three staff members. I had cuts around my eyes and black eyes. I got no medical treatment for my injuries. The staff just looked at you to check you weren't going to die from injuries and that was it. I knew even at that young age they were trying to break me down and I wasn't going to let it happen. In Balrossie I'd been in a few fights with boys of my age, but in Balgowan the staff decided who you would fight and often they were bigger boys.

Reporting abuse when at Balgowan

78. I told my mum when I was in Balgowan and I showed her the bruises on my backside and she phoned the police. I told her this is what happens when you run away from these places and they catch you. My mum was shocked as she'd never seen it. She told the police where I was and they said it could be self-inflicted. She phoned them initially because I was there in her house and the police were going there most days for some reason.

Leaving Balgowan

79. The staff told me I was fighting a boy called [REDACTED] the next day. He was in the dorm with me. He was a big lad for his age and he was the boy to beat. The staff used to use a weight to hold the door open to come in the dorm at night to make sure we were in our beds. I decided if I was fighting him the next day I was going to give it to him that night. I used a pillow and the weight and I think I broke his shoulder. I kept beating him. I had do something as I was a wee guy. He couldn't get up the next day. That's when they moved me out. I was called into Mr GHA [REDACTED] office the next day for him to ask me what I'd done. He then told me I was being moved out of Balgowan. I'm sure I went to Cardross the next day from Balgowan.

Cardross Remand Centre, Cardross

80. I knew by this stage that being at a remand centre meant I'd be there for a short period of time. That meant I'd be going somewhere else after that and I wouldn't be getting out yet. Cardross was alright. It was good in comparison with Balgowan. Cardross ended up opening the door to me and saying if you want to run away you can do it. So I did it. I wasn't in there for long. Maybe four or five weeks and six at the maximum.

Running away

81. I'd run away from Cardross and got caught by the police. As soon as they let me go I was off. They never opened any external doors so I couldn't get outside, but as soon as I could I did. They ended up telling me if I wanted to runaway I could go and I was off. I suppose I was a disruptive influence.
82. I only ran away the one time from Cardross. I was away for eight or nine weeks. We used to sleep in a guy's house who I knew. He was in a previous approved school. I used to sleep under the floorboards that we lifted up and under them was a mattress with bed covers. He give me dinner and at night we used to go out and break into places.

83. I'm sure we got caught just walking along the road one day and the police went by and asked us why we weren't in school. The next thing I knew I was being locked up in Larchgrove. Cardross wanted nothing to do with me and that was alright with me.

Discipline

84. They used to lock you in the cloakroom, there was a door at one end and a door at the other end. They used to lock both doors and turn the light off and it was pitch black. It was the dark room and that's what I called it. They used it to calm you down in there.

Larchgrove Remand Centre, Balarnock

85. The police took me to straight to Larchgrove. I didn't go to see social work or attend a children's panel. I didn't know how long I'd was going to be at Larchgrove. It was another remand centre. It was a secure place. I don't know who ran it but I didn't like him. I don't know his name.
86. Larchgrove was in Balarnock where my family stays. I could look out of the window at Larchgrove and see where I stayed. It was ok for me in there as it was close to where I stayed. I could see my brothers and sisters at night and that was a comfort to me. I was delighted to be there.
87. There were only boys at Larchgrove, aged between twelve and fifteen or sixteen. There was Arran wing with two or three dorms where I was, with six to eight boys in each dorm. Jackson wing had about the same as did Bute wing. The boys were in there for breaking the law and there wasn't anyone in there because their mum and dad couldn't cope.

Routine at Larchgrove

Mornings and bedtimes

88. We used to get up in the morning in Larchgrove and fold our pyjamas and put them at the side of the bed. I don't remember if I had a locker. We'd put our day clothes on and go to school. I don't remember bedwetting being an issue at Larchgrove.

Food/mealtimes

89. The food was just standard approved school stuff. Everybody got the same food. If you didn't like it you didn't eat it. In the afternoons I used to sit in the snooker room and play. The other boys were at school and I was just left there because I didn't want to go to class. I was left alone. By this stage I had a reputation for not conforming. In the evenings we got put in the dorms or we sat in the TV room depending on whether you'd broken the rules. At that age you could smoke in the TV room.

School

90. I said I wasn't going to school, but there were classes in there. I went occasionally and they used to give me a stencil thing with half-moon shapes and full-moon shapes and crosses and we just sat there and do stencils. I just sat and did colouring in all day. If I didn't go to a school class I went to the TV room and watched the telly.

Birthdays

91. I was twelve years old when I first went there. I turned thirteen and said to [REDACTED] to bring me a birthday cake saying happy fourteenth birthday on it. We weren't allowed to smoke until we were fourteen. He brought a cake up with twenty fags to Larchgrove. It worked and I got to smoke. They used to keep your fags for you with your name on the packet.

Visits

92. My mum used to come up with fags for me. It wasn't far to come. She used to come to visit me. There was always staff walking up and down the room when I saw her. [REDACTED] used to come and [REDACTED] used to come up to the window to talk to me.

Leisure time

93. At weekends we sat in the TV room all day. Arran wing didn't have a room to play snooker in so we didn't get to play it in the evenings.

Running away

94. I ran away three or four times. I ran away for so long they designated me another wing and put me into Jackson wing. Across from the TV room there was a snooker room and we could play in there.

Discipline

95. I was belted two or three times across the hands and about six strokes. I think I was the only boy to get belted in Larchgrove. SNR [REDACTED] belted me for running away. He used a split tawse belt.

Abuse

96. A few times when I kicked off I got put in the dark room. It was at the front of the building on the right hand side where all the offices were. After three or four office doors there was an in-shot thing and it looked like it was two offices, but if you opened one of them it was a room with the window bricked up. There was nothing in there and no mattress. Just carpet tiles on the floor and it was freezing. They'd put me in there and shut the door and turned the light off. That's how it was called the dark room and the only light you could see was from under the door. It wasn't a big room.

97. I had to bang on the door to use the toilet and they'd put a bucket in or let me out. I was in there for four days one time and I was in it once or twice before or after that. I got put in there for running away and one time getting my pals in and letting everyone run away by bending the metal bars on a window. I can't even remember getting my meals in there and I can't say I was starved in there, I just can't remember getting fed.
98. It was used in extreme circumstances. I assume SNR [REDACTED] had given the order as he was always standing there when I was put in. A guy called HPD [REDACTED] was there and he was in charge of my wing and he may have given the order.

Leaving Larchgrove

99. I was in Larchgrove twice. The first time was for about one year and the second time was eight months to a year. The second time I was nearly fourteen. In between times I was in The Kibble. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] They told me I was being sent to The Kibble so he could make me behave.

The Kibble List D school, Paisley

100. The Kibble is in Paisley. The Kibble was cool for me. I liked it there and [REDACTED] was there. I would have been thirteen when I went to The Kibble. I was in there for maybe a year the first time and I think I went back there later on. There wasn't a great deal of rules there. We were left alone to get on with things as there wasn't much the staff could do for the boys.
101. They left us in the gym during the day and we kicked a ball off the walls. At the side of the gym there was a corridor with benches and that's where you went for a smoke. I was happy with that. I was running away and getting different charges and they wanted to remand me and Kibble wasn't secure enough.

Longriggend Young Offenders Institution, Greengairs

102. It's a prison for young offenders and it's run by prison staff. I'm not sure if I went there from the Kibble or if I went there from the police station. I was there about eight or nine months. I was in the school boys wing and I was expected to go to school. I got expelled from the school and it was point of pride for me. Miss McCusker was the teacher's name. Nobody told me how long I was going to be there for or where I was going next.
103. I got caught trying to escape from Longriggend with the guy in my cell call [REDACTED]. We made holes in the ceiling to try and get into the roof space above and we made a barricade across the door of our cell. Prison officers knew it was me who made him do it and the staff kicked both of us and they had batons. It was prison officers who did that but I don't know their names. It felt like there was about ten of them. I didn't get any medical attention after that beating. They put us in the cell block in separate cells after that away from the school boy wing. We were in there for fourteen days each.
104. We got half an hour of exercise each day in Longriggend and we had to walk round in pairs but we couldn't talk to each other. We just walked round a big square. We got out of our cells for meals when we went to a dining hall. Over sixteens were on one side of the room and the school boys on another. We weren't allowed to smoke so there'd be guys throwing tobacco over the fence. It was alright if the screws didn't see it, but if they did you got put on report and you got three days in your cell with no mattress and just a blanket to lie on and no recreation.
105. Longriggend was a hellhole to me, being kept in a segregation cell for punishment. It was outside and it was freezing. There was frost down the walls. If you got loss of your mattress as part of the punishment, you got an extra blanket instead.
106. I think I was in Longriggend twice. I went to St Mary's Kenmure from there after the first time. That was to stop me running away and getting into more trouble. I'd been

running away from Larchgrove so often and they were looking for a secure unit to take me and there's only so many places suitable and with space. I'm sure I went from Longriggend to St Mary's.

St Mary's Kenmure, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow

107. It's a secure unit with locked doors and it's for people like myself who keep escaping from other establishments and those that have serious criminal charges against them. We didn't talk to those people. I think I was nearly fifteen when I went here. It was all boys at that time. There were about six to eight boys in each unit. They were teenagers, maybe aged thirteen to sixteen and there was one boy in my unit of eighteen. I was in the yellow unit and there was a blue unit and a green unit.
108. There was a headmaster and I can't remember the name of the first one but someone called Duffy took over. There was someone on staff we called Twiggy who was a big guy. He was the deputy head. I can't remember the name of anyone else, but we all had nicknames for them all.
109. We were all in separate cells and locked in at night and it was like a prison. There was a nightwatchman who wasn't allowed to open doors unless there was another member of staff with him. If you needed the toilet they let you out to use it by yourself which I thought was crazy. If he wanted to open the cell for a discipline issue he had to have two members of staff with him.
110. The cells were opened in the morning at about seven-thirty or eight o' clock. Then you went down the stairs to get dressed and get ready for the day. I don't know about getting washed. Then it was breakfast. There was a kitchen area and there was some soft seats with the kitchen behind it. All the food for the week was sent down from the main building in St Mary's and we were Kenmure St Mary's which was a big difference and it was the secure part. We were separate from the main building but we shared the gymnasium in the middle of the two buildings. We never saw anyone in there. There were bars on the windows. I wasn't interested in running away any by the end.

111. For breakfast we sat in the dining hall. After that it was school time. One of the teachers was an Indian guy called Pardoman Singh Kohli and he taught the English class. I never went to school. I was in these places for not going to school so they're not making me go to school in these places. The school was in the secure unit. I did nothing when they were in school and I just sat down. The staff used to try and engage with me but I wasn't interested in talking to anyone. I was a bit angry that I'd been put in there but I couldn't get out.

Discipline

112. If you got caught swearing they'd put you in the MPU. I assume that was Multi-Purpose Unit. It was two cells and you got put in there until you signed a contract saying you wouldn't swear again which I would sign just to get out of there. The headmaster put me in the MPU. Whoever was head of the unit had to report your swearing to the head or to Twiggy to get that done. I didn't go in front of the headmaster, I just got told I was going the MPU to calm down. I'm not sure of the name of the head of my unit but I think he was called John Hart and his wife worked with him as a unit manager.

113. I was sitting about all day basically. If I'd sworn during the day I got my meals in the MPU and didn't get taken out for my meals. The most I was in it was three days and I was in there about five or six times. It was the only way I could get a reaction out of them was by swearing. If I wasn't in the MPU and everyone was back from school we used to just watch the telly of an evening. There was nothing else to do. There was an area for playing snooker or pool, but we got it for just half an hour as it was shared with other units. I'm not sure what time we were back in our rooms at night but it was probably about seven or eight o'clock.

114. A lot of things happened there, but this is all I want to say. There was an incident in there but I don't want to go into any detail. The police came to meet me when my mum was still alive and just cold-called me one day. They wanted to ask me about abuse in St Mary's. I told them I wasn't abused and to leave me alone. I didn't want to tell my

mum anything that happened to me in there. She blamed herself for me being put into these places and I didn't want to put an extra burden on her.

Leaving St Mary's Kenmure

115. I think I was in St Mary's Kenmure about a year and that was a guess. They came up to me one day to say the Kibble would take me back [REDACTED]
That was good enough for me.

Second stay at The Kibble, Remand Centre, Paisley

116. I went back to the Kibble and I was ok with that. I can't remember how long I was back there for but maybe eight or nine months and everything was fine for me in the Kibble. They treated me the best in there out of all the places I've been in. They treated us in an age appropriate way and there were no punishments.
117. I was on home leave from the Kibble for the weekend and there was an incident and I didn't return from weekend leave. I was offered another spell in St Mary's and I refused. I said I'd rather go to Larchgrove and I was there for another short period. I think this involved one of my first appearances at the sheriff court and was sentenced to two years supervision.

Second stay at Larchgrove, Balarnock, Glasgow

118. My second time was similar to the one before and I spent time in the dark room again. I was put in the dark room maybe twice.
119. We weren't allowed to talk to each other after lights out. There was a guy who used to kid on he was a sergeant major in the army and if he caught us talking in the dorm he used to put us into the square where all the wings intersected. He made us stand there

in pyjamas for hours at a time and just stare at the wall until we were tired. Sometimes I'd be out there by myself and sometimes with someone else. I can't remember what his name was and we just called him the sergeant major.

Second stay at Longriggend YOI

120. There was an incident and I got moved to Longriggend for the second time. I didn't go to court and was just moved straight to Longriggend. I don't think I was there for long. I was well known amongst the prisoners by then and nobody got in my face and left me alone. We were put in one of the three punishment cells for segregation as they called it. These cells were by themselves down a corridor and they were always cold.

Glenochil YOI, Alloa

121. I was offered a place at St Mary's Kenmure for a second time and I didn't want to go there and I said I would rather go to a Young Offenders instead. I didn't want to go back to one of the homes. I was offered Glenochil as it's a Young Offenders Institution.

122. I was one of the youngest there. I was a CYP and I think that means convicted young prisoner. I was meant to be in there for two years and that would have been my longest sentence, but I might have been there for just sixteen months. I was there until I was seventeen. I had my own cell in there.

123. At Glenochil I was in my cell for twenty-three hours a day. It was rare that I was out on recreation. We didn't get exercise in the young offenders. We were out of the cell for meals and that was it for me. I didn't get much recreation because of the punishments I was on.

Abuse

124. Glenochil was bad. I didn't know what I'd let myself in for, but I'd rather go through that than be at St Mary's Kenmure and not allowed to swear. The staff at Glenochil used to beat you on a regular basis. It was pure casual violence. I remember one of them. If you broke discipline you'd be on one report and if you broke discipline twice it was a double report and you had to go to segregation. It happened to me every day. I had the most reports in Glenochil and I got fourteen days without a mattress and just an extra blanket to lie on.
125. I was on punishment and I got left in my own cell and they take your mattress away at half-seven in the morning. The staff used to give you a big sack of clothes pegs with a jig thing with two spikes on it. They'd tell you they'd take ten days wages off you and ten days recreation. I asked what am I working for then? They said you'd be doing that work anyway. I used to throw all my pegs out of the window.
126. This male staff member called **GHC** came in one day and said where's all your work gone? I told him I wasn't going to work if I'm not getting paid. He slapped me. As he turned to leave my cell I hurt him with my chair. I don't know where I hurt him but he was knocked out. I pushed him under my bed and went off to recreation as he was the screw in charge of my section. I went off to watch TV.
127. Then about ten screws came to the rec room door asking for me. They got me in the corridor and it was the closest I've ever felt to going to die. They were all kicking me because of this. The governors name at the time was Neve. He was a good guy who was the fairest governor I met. He put me on report for assault on a member of staff and I argued that I got assaulted. When he asked me for proof I showed him a big boot print on my chest and bruises up my side. I asked to move as the screws stood either side of you with a stick in case you attack the governor. They don't do it now.
128. I pointed out I didn't put the boot print on myself and it was from the Principal Officer, in charge of the hall. His name was **GHB** and he jumped off some steps and right on my chest. He wanted me charged with assault and I wanted him charged with

assault and all the other officers. They put me out of the orderly room and then I got shouted back in. Governor Neve then told me all charges against me were dropped and I was going back to the hall and I was back on recreation. I see now that was just to keep me quiet.

Leaving Glenochil

129. I was at Glenochil until I was seventeen. When I got released. I went back to my mother's house.

Life after being in care

130. When I was seventeen I was released from Glenochil and went back to my mother's house. I continued with a life of crime and I've been in and out of various prisons. The longest I've been out was over fifteen years. I was out in 2001 after I'd done six years. Then from 2001 to 2016 I wasn't in trouble. It was the longest in my life.

131. I have three children. A daughter of thirty-five, a son of thirty-seven and a son of fifteen. I've never been married. In the fifteen years I kept out of trouble I got work as a fork-lift truck driver and I did that for seven years before I got made redundant as they moved somewhere else. I'm currently serving a twelve year sentence.

Impact

132. I've gone on to commit crimes of violence because of the violence that was done to me in care. I know what's done to you, you do to other people. I also think at the end of the day I'm in prison for me and not because of any one what anybody did to me.

133. My time in care made me. I'm not saying that as an excuse, but you meet violence with violence. I think the violence within me was because it's how I was treated. I used to think it was about the area you were brought up in, but all my family work and have

never been in trouble, apart from me.

134. I don't think the lack of education had had an impact. I think I'm alright and I'm quite able to hold a conversation and I can read and write and count. I was in care for not going to school so why would I want to go to school when I was in the homes? They should have left me outside and left me to go to school or left me alone.

135.

I feel as if I can't have a bond with people and I don't know if it's anything to do with being in care. I don't have many friends. The more you tell people the more they can use it against you. That's my philosophy.

136. I started taking drugs at about fifteen years old and taking drugs continued to the present day. Opiates is what I was into and it was better than drinking. I used to see people drinking and they'd be in some state. Drinking was never an issue for me.

Reporting of Abuse

137. I've never reported any of the abuse in the homes or in prison to the police. I would never go to the police unless it was about a member of my family. I wouldn't go to them for anything because you don't get any justice in this world off them. I think that because of my time in care.

Records

138. I've seen some of my records through the prison service under data protection and they only went back to 2002. These were records for my time in prison. I've not applied for social work records and I didn't know that I could.

Lessons to be Learned

139. I'm a product of the environment I was brought up in. My environment was all these homes and look at me, I'm doing twelve years and I did six years before that. Before that I did nine years and before that it was four years. Being in care didn't stop me doing anything wrong and actually it made me worse and escalate it.

Hopes for the Inquiry

140. There would need to be an independent overseer to look to complaints. Just now they all back up each other. A member of staff wouldn't report another member of staff because they'd be ostracised. The authorities moved me from Balrossie to Balgowan a long way from Glasgow and from my family. It was the mid-1970s. My mum used to visit me in Balrossie and I got one visit from my granddad in Balgowan. After that I had to learn to steal cars to get home. I had no contact with my family. If I'd had more I might have turned out differently.

Other information

141. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed. _____

Dated. 16TH MARCH 2022