

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

LZA

Support person present: No

1. My name is LZA although my birth surname was LZA. My date of birth is the 1980. I am 36 years old. My contact details are known to the inquiry.

**Background**

2. I was born and brought up in Drumchapel in Glasgow. My mother's name was or I have two younger brothers called and and a younger sister called My surname used to be LZA but when I was nineteen I changed it to my mother's maiden name which is LZA.
3. I have to advise you that I have very poor recollection for dates, times and names. I want to tell you about what happened to me in care when I was a child. I was in care at four or five different institutions and on the whole had no problems until I went to Kerlaw Residential School and Secure Unit. I was in Kerlaw between 1992 and 1997.
4. I was living with my family in Drumchapel and I went with them to Easterhouse in Glasgow for the weekend. We never went back to Drumchapel and started living in Easterhouse. I was about twelve years of age when I stopped going to school. I had just started secondary school in Easterhouse. The local boys from that school got hold of me and held me down while threatening me with an open razor. I was from Drumchapel and was now living in Easterhouse. The boys from these estates were sworn enemies. I decided I was not going back to that school.

**Life before being put into care including foster care.**

5. When I was a lot younger I was put into foster care with a [REDACTED]. I remember small things about that time but have very limited memory of being there. I learned in later life that the reason I was in foster care was because my mother needed some "time out". She had just had another baby and was not coping. There was also something about my brother and I being abused but I have no recollection. We were to go back to the [REDACTED] family for foster care on several other occasions. As far as I am aware I was probably about two years old when I first went to the [REDACTED] family. I cannot remember anything bad happening to us when we were in foster care.
6. There was incident when I was older when I was staying with a friend. When we were getting ready for bed my friend's mother saw that there were a lot of bruises on my back. I told her that my mother had beaten me with a brush. She had broken the brush over my back and had to send my brother to buy another one to continue the beating. My friend's mother then took me to the police station where the incident was reported. I was taken from Easterhouse Police Station to Baird Street Police Station and at one point I tried to walk out and withdraw my complaint but the police wouldn't let me. I couldn't undo what had been said and the perceived risk that brought to me. I was again put into respite foster care but ended up running away and going back home.
7. There was involvement by the Children's Panel and the Social Work Department at this stage. I do remember being at meetings with my mother. I can't remember what was said. My mother told me in later life that she was fighting the authorities to get me back although I do not believe that.
8. I was actually getting on well with my mother until one day I jumped off the veranda at my house and took off to meet up with my friends. I was also missing school and the authorities were involved I was sent to Wallacewell Children's Home so that an assessment could be carried out on me.

**Institutions****Wallacewell Children's Home, Balornock, Glasgow**

9. The first children's home I was sent to was Wallacewell in Balornock, Glasgow. I was about eleven or twelve years of age. I think I was taken there by my social worker Josephine MacDonald. I didn't get on with my social worker as she didn't listen to me and just did what she wanted. I must have been there for a few months. I didn't have any problems there and have no real memories.
10. I was in two other institutions round about the same time. I was at Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone near Glasgow and at St Mary's Children's Home in Bishopbriggs, Glasgow. I was only there for assessment until the correct institution could be found for me.

**St Mary's Children's Home, Bishopbriggs**

11. St Mary's was like a wee cottage and only held about three people. There were three or four bedrooms. I remember I was there with a boy from Easterhouse called [REDACTED]. I was pretty much allowed to do what I wanted as I was refusing to go to school. I played a lot of football in the grounds.
12. I remember that there was a lady who came to cook for us but I can't recall much else about the staff or the routine there. The food was very good and you could choose what you wanted.
13. At one stage there was another boy who came to the home. He was into "buzzing" nail varnish and anything else he could get his hands on. I also started sniffing glue and nail varnish. We used to abuse all sorts of fluids. We had a special place we could go to where we wouldn't be disturbed. I remember they stopped using "typex" correction fluid as we were stealing it to "buzz". My mother didn't come to visit me. I later learned that she had been charged by the police with child cruelty although

there was never a court case. I think she was angry with me because of my complaint I had made to the police.

14. I didn't have much more contact with Josephine MacDonald unless I was at a review and she was obliged to attend. I do remember being at a Children's Hearing as they needed to enforce a Residential Order on me to attend at Kerlaw Residential School. I remember that my mother was at that meeting and it was the first time I had seen her in ages.
15. From St Mary's School I was sent to Newfield Assessment Centre in Johnstone, near Glasgow.

#### **Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone**

16. I don't remember much about Newfield but I assume that I had no problems there as there is nothing particular that sticks in my mind. I was only there for an assessment as I was refusing to go to school.
17. It was a huge big house with separate units in it. There was a school on the ground floor and I stayed in a dormitory on the upper floors. I think I shared with two or three other boys. I was told I would only be there for a few days for assessment but as usual I was there for longer than the authorities had said.
18. I don't remember much about Newfield. I don't know how many boys were there at any one time. I was in a unit of eight boys and we were kept together and kept away from the other boys. My best memory was that I was not allowed to smoke as I was too young. I used to have to sit and watch the other boys smoking. You needed to be thirteen with home permission to smoke whilst at Newfield. I was only twelve but I was a smoker.
19. I was made to attend school but that was just a joke as I just mucked about and didn't do any real school work. I didn't listen to what I was being told. I was just being assessed for my school abilities which were not good as I hadn't been going to

school. I don't remember any of the staff. I was starting to settle in to Newfield when the Residential Order was invoked and I was sent to Kerlaw. I was disappointed to leave Newfield and I was not consulted as I would have liked to stay there.

### **Kerlaw Residential School and Secure Unit, Stevenson**

20. My social worker Josephine MacDonald and her boss took me on a day visit to Kerlaw and my first impression was that it was full of older boys which worried me that I be subjected to bullying. I had just got used to Newfield. I also remember how nice the staff were being to us and the good impression they were making on my social workers.
21. I was taken in for lunch and was invited to play pool. The staff were great and then the rest of the boys came back from school. I was comfortable until the boys came back from school and then I changed my mind and I didn't want to attend this institution.

### **First day at Kerelaw Residential School**

22. Soon after that day visit I was taken to Kerelaw by Josephine MacDonald. I was left in the care of the unit manager **KBU** and my key worker **KBC** to begin my time there. I spent my first day being shown round the premises. I was sitting about a lot that day. I was playing pool with myself most of the day. The boys came back for lunch but I didn't talk to anyone. They went back to school after lunch. I was a lot younger than the other boys who were fifteen and sixteen.
23. My first room had two beds but I was the only occupant. It was on the first floor opposite the television room. Josephine MacDonald my social worker put all my personal belongings into the room. There was no one else about and during the course of the afternoon the staff all changed over shifts and the place felt empty.

24. That night some of the boys were allowed to go out as there was sufficient staff to look after them. There was a rule that new boys were not allowed leave till you had been resident for a set period of time.
25. I remember being unable to sleep the first night as I knew I had no choice the next day but to attend the school in the institution. I was put into the Fleming unit. There was another unit called Millerstone. There was also a secure unit which I had little or no contact with. There was a girls unit which mirrored the boys unit. I don't know how you were selected to be in a unit as the boys were all different ages. There was a kitchen between the two separate units.
26. I did not like being in the unit I was assigned to. While you were at the school classrooms you were away from the older boys and the bullying but when you were back at your unit you were subjected to all the bullies and the hitting. They would take the pool cue off you and throw you off the table. They would come to the television room and annoy you. It was only as I got older that I realised that the staff at the home were orchestrating the bullies.

### **Routine**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

27. You would be woken up quite early in the morning to get your shower before breakfast. Once you had breakfast you would get ready to go to school. I was too young to smoke at the school and for the first year I was not able to although there was ways of managing to get a cigarette.
28. It was then off to school which was a classroom within the grounds of the home run by the staff at the home. There was a rota posted on the wall, to tell you which classroom to go to. The staff would check that you turned up where you were supposed to be. My class had only about six other boys in it.

29. For the boys that did smoke you were allowed seven cigarettes a day. These were given to you by the staff as you weren't allowed to carry cigarettes on you. You were able to smoke in the smoking room which was run by the staff. If you went outside on visits you could take your allocation with you and you could keep one back to have after you were supposed to be in bed. I used to lie about being allowed to smoke and for a while I got away with it. I was to pay later on for trying to con the staff to get cigarettes when I was not entitled to smoke.
30. You earned the right to be able to watch television and if you had been punished during the day for something you would have to go to bed at nine o'clock. On a normal day you could watch television till ten and then go to bed. The late television was not a good place to go to as you were left to your own devices and the staff were not present because the shifts were changing over to the night shift. There was a lot of bullying going on in the "late television room". I didn't go there for the first week as I didn't fancy it.
31. I woke up one night and there was a boy sleeping in my room. I think that he had been brought in by the social work through the night. I spent some time speaking to him and felt more confident. His name was [REDACTED] he was about sixteen and a lot older than me.
32. The staff used to make you play games which I am sure were for their amusement. When you didn't have any money and couldn't go out at night they would take you up to the moors. They pretended that the van had broken down and you had to get out to push it. The van would then drive off and you would have to run in front of or behind the van to keep up and not be left behind. It was called "running man".
33. They would put you into a laundry basket and then kick the basket when you were in it. They would also split you into two teams and make you run the gauntlet of boys who would hit out at you. These often resulted in injuries and boys being taken for hospital treatment. I was taken to hospital on a few occasions. You always told the hospital staff the same story that you had been fighting with one of the other boys. You knew better than to say anything else.

34. You had football matches against the likes of the secure unit but it all depended on whether there was enough staff to supervise. I often turned out for the staff pub football teams as the staff liked to play but it was a way of being able to supervise the boys. There were also games of rugby for you to take part in.

*Food*

35. The food was okay and I didn't really have any complaints about it. You were not forced to eat or anything like that. At the weekends the girls would come to your dining room and we would all eat together although we would stick to our units.

*School*

36. The schooling was done within the home by staff employed at the home. My first teacher was called <sup>IWN</sup> [REDACTED]. He was alright. He was an older man with long hair. He had a sound system in his classroom. He didn't do much teaching as we were always asked if we wanted to work. If we said no we would go on the computer or play cards. We had no interest in learning school work. The school classes were mixed with boys and girls.
37. The art class had a pool table and arcade games which we played on instead of doing any school things. It suited me and the other boys fine as we didn't want to be at school.
38. We had PE classes which were compulsory and you had no choice about attending class or not as we were all required to do PE.
39. They were constantly changing the boys in the class because we were always running away. I was with boys of my own age at this time and it was not an unpleasant experience



40. What I didn't realise till later on was that there were also day boys who were not resident at the school who would attend the classes.

*Running away*

41. My class at school was known as the "A Team" as we were always running away. We didn't get very far as you had to cross fields and by the time you got to the train station you would be filthy and covered in mud. The staff were always chasing us across the fields. We usually ran away as a group.
42. You would be punished by having some of your clothes taken away or your right to watch television removed. The staff would also blame you in front the other boys for them losing other privileges. They would then leave the room and the other boys would attack you. They used the other boys to punish you it was all planned out by the staff but I didn't spot this till I was older and was looking back on the incidents.
43. On some occasions when I ran away I would get to Butlins Holiday Camp near Ayr. As I continued to run away I would learn how to get further and further away. You didn't dare run away on the night shift as the staff had warned us of the consequences.

*Holidays*

44. I didn't want to go on home leave. I always wanted to take my leave at Kerlaw. I think that the social worker tried to get me out of Kerelaw at the weekend and on one occasion I ended up being sent to a stranger's home. I just stayed in my room all weekend as I didn't know why I was there or who these people were.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

45. There were two occasions when I went home for Christmas and ended up falling out with my mother's boyfriend. On one occasion the boyfriend had his son staying and he was sleeping on a mattress. My younger brother had punched the son and

because my brother was too young the boyfriend set about me when I was sleeping. I was about sixteen at the time and he was only about 23. I retaliated and ended up going back to the home for Christmas. I stopped going home for visits after this incident.

### *Staff*

46. There were staff on duty at the home twenty four hours a day. The night shift staff were called Tam, **KGH** and **KGN**. They were scary people and you didn't want to fall out with them. They came to you and explained that they would not be happy if you ran away on their shift as they had to fill in lots of paperwork. The Unit manager was called **KBU**. My key worker at Kerelaw was called **KBC**. **KGI** and **KGJ** were also members of staff and I went on a cycling holiday with them. Matt George was the art teacher and he was okay with me but may have received a jail sentence for child abuse.
47. Some of the other members of staff I can remember are **LEJ**, **FSR** was a **[REDACTED]** teacher. **KBS** who worked in one of the other units, he was a boxer. **KBE** was a unit manager and I heard that he might still be working at **[REDACTED]**. **FRB** was a woodwork teacher who definitely was not right in the head. I think that he came from the secure unit. John Muldoon was a duty officer in my unit he was known as "Mouldy".
48. The staff would on occasion have to restrain you by pinning you to the floor. They were all big rugby players. On one occasion I ended up with carpet burns on my face and the member of staff told me not to go to school. I think that he realised that he had gone over the top. There was no trained moves when you were restrained they used whatever fighting technique came to them at the time. I felt that you were restrained till the staff member calmed down and not the other way round. It was painful but I never suffered any serious injury.
49. You would always need to read the mood that a staff member was in to decide how you would address them or interact with them. A lot of the violence was dictated by

what sort of mood the staff were in. Other members of staff would not interfere if there were conflicts. Some of the staff were nice and treated you fairly.

*Visits/Inspections/Reviews*

50. There was an annual review done on my time at Kerlaw. It was basically always the same outcome stating that I was doing well at the home. I do not recall ever going back in front of the Children's Panel until just before leaving and getting the Residential Orders revoked. I didn't want to go back to my mother's house.
51. The social work did visit the home on occasion but you were never left alone with your social worker. There was always someone about when you were being seen. When the social worker left, the staff would all have a good laugh about them and "put their fingers up to them". There was no respect for the social workers from the staff.
52. I do not recall an official inspection of the facilities at Kerlaw in the five years that I was there.

*Pocket money*

53. You did get an allowance. If you kept your room tidy and you got a member of staff to inspect it you would get an extra two pounds. You could also earn extra money for working in the kitchens over the weekend.

*Medical care*

54. There was no real medical care on site at Kerlaw but we had full access to hospitals, doctors and dentists.

**Abuse at Kerelaw.**

55. I remember on one occasion being in a room with a lot of other boys. I watched a member of staff speak to one of the boys and then all the staff left the room. I could see what was going to happen. About thirteen boys then set about attacking one of the boys. There is no doubt in my mind that the staff had ordered the other boys to assault this individual. A lot of the bullying was done in front of the staff so you knew that there was no one to report it to and you weren't going to get help.
56. I must have been there for three weeks when I went home to my mother's on weekend leave. My mother noted that there were a lot of bruises on my back. She asked me what had happened and I told her that one of the night shift staff called KGN [REDACTED] had attacked me with a chair for calling him KGN [REDACTED]. It turned out that it was a nickname he had been given by the boys and he did not like it. He would be doing his rounds at night checking the doors. The boys knew this and used to put things on the door handles. To avoid this KGN [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He did not like the nickname but I didn't know that and thought it was his surname.
57. My mother reported this to the authorities. She felt that she had been charged for something similar and why should the school staff get away with it. It resulted in my social worker stopping me from going back to the home that weekend and then accompanying me and mother up to the home to lodge an official complaint.
58. I was returned to the home. The investigation of the complaint went on for some time and I don't think anything happened to KGN [REDACTED] as he continued to work. KGN [REDACTED] KGN [REDACTED] didn't speak to me. I was approached by KGN [REDACTED]'s colleagues called Tam and KGH [REDACTED]. They told in no uncertain terms that making complaints and telling tales was not a sensible thing to do. They also told me that running away was not allowed as they didn't like doing paperwork. These were scary guys. They told me that it was not because of the complaint I had made they said that everyone in the home got a talking to from them.

59. They finally got me, my mother and my social worker Josephine MacDonald into the office to say that the complaint had been investigated but it was his word against mine and no further action was to be taken. KGN started speaking to me again and he still gave me the odd dig.
60. I was being constantly bullied at the home by the other boys who were much older. When I was home on leave one of my mother's friends told me to fight back and attack the biggest of the boys. Once the bullies realised that I was going to fight back they laid off me and targeted someone else. They still had the odd go at me.
61. The staff were constantly playing boys against boys. They encouraged the bullies to work for them to keep discipline in the home. It was only when I was older that I realised I had watched it happen on many occasions. I had also had it done to me.
62. There was an occasion when I was living in a flat I had decorated in the unit. Me and some of the other boys had run out of fags. It was night time so we decided that we would go to the garage to get some more. I knew that the night shift staff were on duty. When we were out one of the other boys met some of his mates and they had some alcohol. We stayed and drank with them. The police came and we ran. We ducked into a door and hid but the police found us.
63. We were taken back to the home and Tam and KGH met with the police. Tam and KGH were as nice as could be and put us back to our rooms. A short while later Tam came to my room and set about me with a torch. As it happened the door that we had gone in was an old folks home and Tam had a mother in an old folks home. He thought that we were breaking in to steal. Tam went over the top and came back to apologise to me as he had not realised that we were not breaking in. I was battered and bruised and the day shift staff must have seen it but nothing was said. I think that they knew what had happened. Tam used to be a polis. I was moved out of the flat into another room.
64. There was another occasion when I was back in the unit. I was standing on the stairs when KGH came up behind me. He grabbed me by the testacles and pulled me to

the railings. I was only being prevented from falling by KGH holding on to my testicles. KGH had to get another member of staff to help get me down as he was struggling to hold on to me. I would have fallen a good distance into the hallway below. It was very painful and unnecessary.

65. The night staff would waken you up at two in the morning to go out and play football on the pitches in the grounds. They would let you have a cigarette but you had to complete challenges like running to the burn in your night clothes and getting some water. They would make you play football when it was raining. They sometimes took you to the gym but that stopped when they got CCTV installed there. If you didn't want to get up the other boys would come and tip you out of bed. It was all for their own personal amusement. They would make you do these tasks in nothing but your shorts in all kinds of weather.
66. One day KGH was on duty during the day. One of the boys I had been playing football with called ██████████ had jumped on my back and stabbed me a dozen times in the head with a pen. KGH took me to the unit and suggested to the other staff that they put ██████████ and I in a room and close the door to let us settle our differences. The other staff told him that was not how things happened now. KGH then pushed for a boxing ring to be built in the gym where differences could be settled but again he was told that it was not going to happen.
67. There was a boy who came to the home but I can't remember his name. He was old enough to smoke and used to sell cigarettes to the younger boys. He used to charge five pounds for a cigarette. A lot of the boys got into debt. The staff found out about this and they arranged for the boy to be sent to Geilsland School where the boys were much older. That boy was bullied for a full two weeks whilst he was at Geilsland School. He came back to the home and was a changed person. He was not pleased with the other boys. He felt that the staff had done this deliberately to give him some of his own medicine. The staff told us that he had been sent there to be bullied.

68. [KBU] came to me one day and asked me how I was getting on with the bullying. He took me up to the office block where the laundry was. We went into a small room which had a table and a chair. I thought I was there to sort out the socks. He asked me how I was coping with the bullies. He told me that he could be my friend and he could stop the bullies. He put his hand on my leg and started rubbing it. I jumped up from the chair. He then just took me back to the unit. A short time later I was shouted to go to the smoking room. The member of staff produced a packet of twenty Silk Cut cigarettes which had my name on them. That was the type that [KBU] smoked. I had never asked for them as I was too young to smoke and I can't be sure where they came from but I suspect it was him buying my silence. He tried to get me alone a couple of times but I told him to "fuck off" so he left me alone for a few years and wouldn't talk to me.
69. I went on a cycling holiday with [KGI] and [KGJ] who were staff members. At the last minute [KBU] decided to come too. I didn't want to go because he was coming. He was a much older man and couldn't cycle. He was dropped at the pub while we went cycling. At night the staff would have a drink round the camp fire. There was a lot of messing about and at one stage the staff dropped their trousers and were naked. They chased us round the camp fire. That was a bit of fun and I thought it was a laugh. They also let us have a few swigs of beer. That particular night we were supposed to be sleeping rough but it was so cold I came back to the camp fire on my own. I went to bed that night and woke up with [KBU] sitting on the end of my bed. He was very drunk. I freaked out and he left my room. The other boys appeared shortly after and I was glad to see them.
70. One day I was playing chess when [KBU] when [KBC] my keyworker came into the room. They asked to have a word with me. They asked me if I had ever been sexually assaulted while in Kerlaw. They also asked me if they knew anything about [ ] who was one of the boys, being sexually assaulted. I had shared a room with [ ]. I thought at the time it was strange that [KBU] should be looking into sexual assault allegations. This happened before I went on the cycling trip.

71. KBU was moved after that to the secure unit and I didn't see much of him. I don't know if someone said something about him or not.
72. I was fourteen or fifteen when I was washing one of the staff's car for some extra money. While I was washing the car I soaked the trainers of one of the girls from female unit. She went running off to tell the staff. LEJ who was one of the members of staff chased me till he caught me in the pool room. You didn't argue with LEJ. He offered me either the "fist of fury" or the "hand of friendship". I selected the hand of friendship and he told me that it came with a challenge. He produced a full kettle of water and told me that I was to drink it all quickly. I managed to do this and he punched me in the stomach causing me to vomit.
73. FSR was a PE teacher at Kerlaw. He used to make us play dodge ball while he yielded a golf driver and hit gold balls at you. There were holes in the wall of the gym caused by the golf balls. I saw him attack a boy who was sticking up for a new boy at the school. He swung this boy about but realised that he had gone too far with him. After that the boy who stuck up for the new boy was treated very well and used to get to go on all the good trips out.
74. I had been sent back to the home just after I had beaten up my mother's boyfriend. I hadn't got a Christmas present so they gave me a pool cue. I was about the only one in the home at this time. There was a thing we did at the time called "spamming" where you hit someone on the forehead. KBE was the unit manager and he told me to go and "spam" one of the other members of staff called KBS. It was a mistake on my behalf as KBS was a boxer. He chased me round the pool table with a pool cue. He hit me with it on a number of occasions until the cue broke. He went totally over the top. KBS came to apologise but I didn't want to communicate with him in any way. It was KBE's way of having fun.
75. KBE was the Unit manager at the home. He was the one who orchestrated a lot of the abuse. He had a bunch of about forty keys and he used to hit you with them. The reason I am telling you about him is because I heard that he



was [REDACTED] home called [REDACTED]. I don't know if it is still open or if he is still working there.

76. There was a woodwork teacher called FRB [REDACTED] who lived in the secure unit. I think that he had mental health problems and I would describe him as being nuts. He used to have a stick which had a smiley face and a happy face. He would twirl the stick in his hands and if it ended up on the smiley face you would be able to sit down. If it was the sad face you got hit with it. There was definitely something not right with him and I think that he got sacked.
77. John Muldoon who was known as "Mouldy" was a duty officer in the home. He watched all the abuse going on but did nothing to stop it and allowed the bullying to go on without preventing it.

### **Reporting of abuse**

78. I did report the abuse to my mother and my social worker Josephine MacDonald when I was assaulted by KGN [REDACTED]. They in turn reported it to the home. There was an investigation but nothing came of it as it was his word against mine.
79. I was in Glenochil prison in later life when I was told that I had to get changed and go to Kilmarnock Sheriff Court. I didn't know why I was going there as I hadn't been in Ayrshire for twenty years. I sat about all day at the court then the Procurator Fiscal came in to see me. He eventually spoke to me and he asked me about Kerlaw. Specifically he advised me that another ex-resident called [REDACTED] had made a complaint against Matt George who was an art teacher at Kerlaw. They wanted me to provide evidence as [REDACTED] thought I had been abused by Matt George and he had left a "footprint" on my chest which I assumed to mean a bruise. In all honesty I could only say that Matt George was one of the better teachers at Kerlaw and I had no problem with him. He used to take me to his house and on outings to the seaside. On reflection I don't think that was normal behaviour. I think that Matt George did get a prison sentence.

80. When I was in Glenochil I spoke to a social worker there who was a very nice woman. She was interested in my appearance at court in Kilmarnock. I opened up to her and I think she felt sorry for me. She arranged for a man called David from Doctor Barnardos to come and speak to me. I liked these visits as it added some normality to my life.
81. Two or three years ago I spoke to my doctor about what had happened to me while I was in care. He referred me on to another person who worked for the Council and that person felt that there was maybe a conflict of interest so I went and saw a number of psychiatrists and told them all my story. To be honest I was fed up speaking to them and nothing seemed to be happening.
82. I was assigned a drugs counsellor but I was not good with people in authority. All we did was "butt heads". Eventually I also told her part of my story and her attitude towards me changed dramatically. We got on a lot better. To be honest the best help I have had has come from my doctor who helped me to get a house.

### **Leaving the institution**

83. I didn't want to leave Kerlaw as I did not want to go back to my mothers. The home didn't want me to stay much longer as I had outgrown it. They already had a boy in the home who was too old and they didn't know what to do with him. They didn't want that to happen to me. I was nearly seventeen.

### **Life after the institution**

84. As I was approaching seventeen the authorities at Kerlaw realised that they had to find alternative accommodation for me. They suggested that I move in with another boy who was living in an Independent Living Unit in Springburn, Glasgow. I had to go back to the Children's Panel to arrange to get the Residential Care Orders revoked. On my seventeenth birthday I was taken in a van from Kerlaw to my new home in Springburn. I was supposed to be self-supporting and managing my money which I had never done before. The reality was I was free for the first time in five years and I

didn't know how to cope. I lasted about a week before I was arrested and put into Longriggend Prison.

85. I was persuaded to sit two exams at Kerlaw and so I left with two passes in maths and English. I only studied for them for two days prior to the exam and managed to pass. On leaving I was offered a job with North Ayrshire Council which I took despite the fact the staff at Kerlaw suggested that I do some more training with The Prince's Trust with an organisation called 'Who Cares'. I just needed to get away.
86. I went into Glasgow one day with a mate and we got drunk and arrested by the police. I lost the job I had. I was used to being surrounded by other boys and I was on my own apart from [REDACTED] who I shared the Independent Living Unit with. I got in with the wrong crowd and ended up in prison again. I spent most of my twenties in prison.
87. I moved into a flat in Govan, Glasgow with my brother and a mate of mine. I had time on my hands and went to visit my sister who was living with my mother in Tain. It was my sister's birthday. I stayed there for a while and when I came back to Glasgow the landlord had changed the locks and kicked us out the flat.
88. This is the time I left Glasgow and moved into the Highlands. I arrived at my mother's house and she told us that my brother could stay but that she had no room for me. I moved in with my aunt [REDACTED] who was also living in Tain. She was disgusted with my mother. None of my family knew that I was in care until I had been there for about four years. My mother had not told them. Some of the family came to visit me at Kerlaw very near the end of my time living there.
89. I moved back to Glasgow about three years ago in 2013 as there was no work in the Highlands. We would work at the markets in the highlands but it meant having a four in the morning start and there was not much money in it.

**Impact**

90. My life has not been very good but those were my choices. I spent a lot of time in prison up until the time I met my wife. I stopped drinking and taking drugs when I met my wife. Prison never really bothered my brother and I as from a very early age we would be sent round to my grandparents if we had been bad. We would be locked in a room for the weekend at my grandparents.
91. I had been texting and phoning the lady who became my wife. Unfortunately I got an eight year prison sentence a few days later. My future wife came to visit me every month when I was in Glenochil prison. We got married four years ago and since then I have managed to stay out of trouble and away from prison sentences. I have had the odd job since but nothing permanent.
92. I have been taking medication to help with my heroin addiction and anti-depressants to assist with sleeping. I have had flashbacks to my time in Kerlaw and there is no doubt that my time there has badly affected me and my life. I find it difficult to sleep. I had a year when I was very angry. I think that I suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder which my drug worker diagnosed for me.
93. My wife knows some of the things that happened to me in care. She is aware that I was coming to meet with the Inquiry. Normally she would come with me but this was something I needed to do myself. I will tell her all about it when I get home. I know she will be confused as to why she was not here today.
94. I do find it hard to trust people including my wife. I have difficulty in respecting people in authority.

**Records**

95. I have not really tried to access my records of being involved with the Social Work Department or being in care. I did mention it to a social worker a couple of years ago but all they said was that it could take up to two years to get a copy of the records so

I never applied. I think that my lawyer is now dealing with this and is requesting my records.

**Lessons to be learned**

There should be a different system set up for looking after children. The staff should be properly trained and not just selected because they have someone in the know to offer them a job. It was all friends of friends who lived locally.

**Other information**

- 96. This is the first time that I have disclosed a lot of this information to anyone apart from my Doctor. My Doctor does not know all the details that I have told you today. I now have a lawyer who is preparing a case dependant on a legal ruling about time scales.
- 97. I would be happy to provide oral evidence to the Inquiry as I hope there is no one still working with children who would be in a position to harm children.
- 98. 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..... LZA [Redacted Signature] .....

Dated..... 28.3.17 .....