

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GXB

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GXB. My date of birth is 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in my nana and papa's house in Hamilton. My parents, both now deceased, were and I have three older siblings and along with two younger siblings and. She was born from mum's first boyfriend and had the surname. She was brought up by my nana and papa. Myself, and were from her marriage to. was from mum's next marriage to and she has his name and she stayed with him as we grew up. My youngest sister was born during mum's marriage to.
3. My natural father had been in the army and was a heavy drinker. There were issues of arguments between my parents and bouts of domestic violence.
4. When my mum married we moved into a house at in Motherwell. We moved around a lot and my mother remarried and we moved in with my stepfather, I was about three years old when we moved into the house at Motherwell. I stayed there until I was about six when I went into care. During our time with we felt we were not welcome at his house. That is different now as we get on alright today. was treating my sister

differently from the rest of us. Sometimes we would be asking for some juice and he would refuse us. [REDACTED] would ask and it was not a problem for her to have it.

5. At the time we were placed in care my brothers [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I were attending St Bernadette's Primary School. While we were there we never enjoyed school and were forever taking days off and doing what we wanted. Sometimes I would walk all the way from Motherwell to my gran's house in Hamilton. I was doing this from the age of four. I think it had to have been the school that reported this to the social work. They visited the house but I don't know the names of the social workers at that time.
6. We were sent to the Children's Panel along with my mum and step dad. When we attended the panel there were the three panel members and Mr Henry, the social worker. Mr Henry worked from the social work offices in Motherwell. Me and my brothers were asked to sit outside while the panel came to their decision. After a short time mum came out and she was crying. She told me that my brothers and I were being taken into care. We were not spoken to at any time by the panel.
7. The next problem was that we were all to be separated. [REDACTED] was being sent to St Andrews List D and [REDACTED] to Belvidere Hospital before he moved to St Charles in Lanark. I was being sent to St Ninian's at Gartmore in Stirlingshire. When we were told we were to be separated I was crying and screaming and had to be dragged out of the hearings to St Ninian's. There was no reason for us being separated as we all got on well together.

### **St Ninian's, Gartmore, Stirlingshire**

8. When I was at St Ninian's I was kicking off because I was wanting to see my brother [REDACTED]. The staff arranged that I could go to see him for a short time and be with him. Although I did stay at the hospital to be with him he was with adults and he was the only child there. At night I was kept in a different dormitory and allowed to be together during the day. I was so scared at night I hid under the bed. Everyone in the dormitories were grown-ups with different mental health issues.

9. When I stayed with him I was really scared and was glad when it was time for me to go back to St Ninian's. I was with him for about a week and he was there for two months. Somehow [REDACTED] and I managed to run away because it was so bad in there. When we were caught I went back to St Ninian's. [REDACTED] did not go back to Belvidere, he was sent to St Charles.
10. [REDACTED] was never allowed home when he was placed in care, where [REDACTED] and I were given weekend leave to stay with our mum.

### **Routine at St Ninian's. Gartmore, Stirlingshire**

#### *First day*

11. Mr Henry drove me from the Panel to St Ninian's at Gartmore. I presume other social workers took my brothers to their placements. When I arrived there I saw it was a big sandstone building with a long drive. As you approached the front of the house there was a school building to the right.
12. As we went in the large front doors I was introduced to Brother <sup>MJJ</sup>[REDACTED]. He would have been in his sixties and was <sup>SNR</sup>[REDACTED] there. He told me I was sent to St Ninian's because I would not do as my parents told me. He said that when I was there I would do as I was told.
13. I cannot remember all the staff, but there was Brother <sup>MJO</sup>[REDACTED] who sometimes took us horse riding and was responsible for some of the abuse at St Ninian's. The Brother's had sleeping accommodation above our dormitories and that was where Brother <sup>MJO</sup>[REDACTED] stayed.
14. At the school there were some civilian teachers and they were assisted by some of the Brother's, one of which taught music. There was a married couple who taught at the school, the husband taught kids to play the guitar. The home had accommodation

above the school block for the live in teachers. Mr <sup>GXC</sup> [REDACTED] was one of those teachers. Another teacher who taught woodwork was Charles McKenna, another abuser, also lived there. He was the teacher who supervised us at St George's House in the evenings and sometimes overnight. He was in his sixties, grey haired, unshaven, scruffy and he wore a Tweed jacket, glasses and smoked a pipe.

15. There were four different house groups within St Ninian's and they had their own allocated colours for the clothes. I can remember three of them as being St Andrew's who wore blue, St Patrick wore green and St George where I was, who wore red. There was another group who wore yellow but I cannot remember at this time the name.
16. One of the boys I later became friendly with was [REDACTED]. He was in St Patrick's hall and we always picked the same activity at night. We later met up at St Mary's as well and when we were about sixteen, separately, we ended up in Longriggend on remand and we ended up being put in the same cell.
17. In the home there were about two hundred boys in total. I think the age ranged from about six through to twelve. St George's Room had between sixty and seventy boys, and the other rooms had a similar number. There were dormitories on three levels. The dormitories within each group also had different names, my dormitory was called White Lady.
18. In the large room within St George's was a table tennis table and a full sized snooker table. There was a partitioned room where the television was and the other side was a room used for craft making. The other houses had similar rooms but they did not have the same sized room as St Georges and they had a smaller sized snooker table.
19. There were ten boys with me and were all different ages. We had our bed and a small cupboard. In that cupboard we stored our clothes and we all had a bible in there as well. Any used clothes were taken away by the cleaning staff to the laundry.

*Mornings and bedtime*

20. We were woken about seven o'clock each morning. We would get washed and our teeth brushed. Staff would supervise us to make sure we were washed properly. We were then back to the dormitory and made our beds. After making our beds we had to go to Mass for eight o'clock. After Mass it was back to the dining room for breakfast and then onto school.

*Mealtimes/Food*

21. The meals were really good while I was at St Ninian's. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were held in the dining room. For supper there was some tea and toast. The cook there was really nice and she made some really nice meals. Breakfast was cereal, toast and egg, either scrambled or boiled. On Fridays they made us fish and chips. When we ate in the dining room it was the whole building who was fed. The staff took it in turns to supervise us. I cannot remember what they ate or if they ate at the same time as us.
22. The only thing I did not like was tapioca. Any of the other food that I did not really fancy or like you would ask the boy next to you and always found someone who would eat it.

*Washing/bathing*

23. The shower area was in the basement of our building. To get to the shower room you had to go through the room used for storing the tackle for horse riding. This was where Brother MJO took you for his punishment. Other than taking us horse riding I cannot recall what subject he taught.

*Clothing/uniform*

24. We were all issued with clothes to match what house we were in. They included my red top, grey shorts, a t-shirt and plastic sandals. Your own clothes that you would

wear to go home were removed when you returned to the home and put into a locker near the entrance hall. They remained in the locker until the following weekend when you were going home.

*Leisure time*

25. There were different competitions between the various houses. The activities which were outside would take place when the weather was nice. When it was rain or snow there was a large barn type building. The difference was this was an inflatable building. There was an air pump used to inflate it when required.
26. I would volunteer for any of the activities in the evening which did not involve being with Mr McKenna. It did not matter what the other teachers were offering I was happy. The teachers would just ask who wanted to take part in the football, basketball, cricket, walks in the woods or whatever. The walks in the woods were also educational teaching about some of the wildlife and some to do with what may be growing there. Sometimes if there was no activity available for me I would hide in the chapel, anything to get away from Mr McKenna.
27. We were given pocket money each week which we were allowed to spend in the tuck shop. You had to hide your sweets because there was some bullying from the older boys and some of them might steal your sweets.

*Trips and holidays*

28. Each year we would be taken to stay in a church in Ayr for a three week holiday. It was the whole school that went and we were taken there on private buses. While there we all slept on the church floor. If anyone had misbehaved they had to stay behind at the home. While we were there we got to go to the beach and paid a visit to Burns Cottage. Apart from Mr McKenna being there it was always a good trip.
29. Being there did not stop the abuse as Mr McKenna would find a room to take us to where he could be alone with me. He would always find somewhere to abuse me.

There was a cupboard through the hall and at the end of the kitchen in the church that he used to take me to. That was the usual place in the church.

### *School*

30. We did have teachers in the school both lay persons and Brothers. The teachers were there for maths, English and wood work. We were allowed out of some of those classes to attend music lessons, which is where I learnt to play the recorder.
31. Mr McKenna was the wood work teacher and any time you did not do the craft work in there properly he would hit you over the head with any piece of wood he could lay his hands on. Not only did he hit me but he also hit many of the other boys in the class.
32. I did not do well with my schooling at the home. I could not take in what was being taught because I was always either worried about what abuse Mr McKenna was about to do or he had already abused me. It was on my mind all the time.

### *Healthcare*

33. There was a matron in the home who dealt with minor injuries and health injections. She would conduct regular check-ups, mainly for lice or any infections. There was also a dentist who came in to carry out checks on the boys.

### *Religious instruction*

34. We would have to say prayers at the side of the bed in the mornings and in the evenings. One of the Brothers would be present to ensure any prayers were said properly. If you did not say them properly or were caught talking during the night then the Brother who was on duty would give you a slap. I am not sure of all the Brothers names except Brother **MJO** and Mr McKenna.

35. We would have to attend Mass every day. I chose to be an altar boy and when I was there I was able to use the recorder which I had been learning at music classes, during the service. Being an altar kept me away from Mr McKenna.

*Work*

36. When I was at St Ninian's I did have some chores. There was a garden where we grew our own vegetables. I also had to collect honey from the bees we kept. Some of the other work we carried out was sweeping and mopping the floors and helping out with the laundry. The place was always spotless. Each of the chores was rotated monthly between the four houses and they were all done after school or after activities. They were done then so that the place was clean and ready for the next day.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

37. My birthday is [REDACTED] and I was always home for the Christmas period, back with my nana and papa. The home did not give us anything for Christmas and I do not remember any of the boys birthdays being celebrated.

*Visits/Inspections*

38. While I was at St Ninian's I did see Maureen Brankin or Mr Henry on a fairly regular basis. I can remember when I was with Maureen it was always just the two of us. I kept saying that I wanted to see my two brothers. She told me I was not going to be able to see [REDACTED] as he was having mental health problems, but I was never told what was wrong with him. Even when he was eventually released from the hospital I never saw anything wrong with him.
39. When speaking with her I never told her about any of the abuse. I was too scared as I was not sure what she would have done and if it would have meant even more trouble for me. I was also scared she would not believe me. She did try to find what was upsetting me when I was going through some anger management issues.



*Sibling*

40. I never saw my sister [REDACTED] until a couple of years ago as she was put out for adoption and I was not allowed to know where she moved to. We were allowed to write letters to the rest of the family if I wanted and I cannot remember there ever being any vetting taking place. There may have been vetting at the other end but I am not aware of that.
41. Sometimes when I was home for the weekend, although not allowed to stay with her, mum sometimes took me on the bus to see my brother [REDACTED]. He was the only sibling I saw while I was in care.

*Family contact*

42. I was not allowed to go to mum's for any of my weekend visits as this was part of the instructions from the Children's Panel. When I had weekend leave I spent it at my nana and papas.
43. The only time I saw my mum was during the six weeks when I was banned from going home for running away. She came to see me at the weekend. I think she did try to see me brothers by taking buses to see them.
44. When I was due to go home at weekends to see my nana and papa I would be taken to Buchanan Street bus station where I got a number sixty two to her house. I could not see my brother [REDACTED] as he was staying with mum and I was not allowed to visit there. For the return journey home I would be at the bus station about four thirty in the morning for the bus to the local station near the home. Staff would pick me up and take me back there.

*Running away*

45. There was only one time that I ran away and I would have been about eight years old, I had taken enough of the sexual abuse and wanted away from the home. I went through the fields and got as far as the main road. Mr <sup>GXC</sup> [REDACTED] and McKenna came

looking for me and caught me. The main punishment for me running away was my privilege of getting home at weekends were stopped for six weeks.

46. For the six weekends not being able to get home and most others away from the home meant Mr McKenna had the freedom to carry out whatever sexual acts he wished with no one seeing this taking place. At that time it was always away from the sight or hearing of any of the Brothers. Sometimes he even used the TV room as it was partitioned off from other rooms. There were no other staff supervising if it was just me.

#### *Discipline*

47. They used the belt in school to discipline the boys. The teachers would give you the school belt over the hands, sometimes it went up the wrists. The most you got was six strokes, but if you moved your hand away you got more. There were many of the teachers that issued this punishment but I cannot remember all their names. There was no other punishment used at the school.

#### *Bed Wetting*

48. I had an issue with bed wetting for the first couple of years at St Ninian's. You were made to remove your night clothes and stand naked in front of everyone. You were then made to show the wet sheets to the boys within the dormitory and any staff present. Sometimes if they were in a particularly bad mood the staff member would slap you on the back of the head. You would then take the sheets to the laundry and they would be washed separately from the routine washing. This would have been carried out by any of the staff that was on duty.
49. On the evening of any bed wetting you were not allowed to take part in any of the evening activities. When it became a regular issue I was issued with a plastic sheet to cover the mattress.

### **Abuse at St Ninian's, Gartmore, Stirlingshire**

50. Brother MJO was particularly nasty. When you were having a shower and he considered that you had done something wrong in his eyes he would punish you. He would use a belt to hit you on the bare skin, legs, arms, face, just wherever he could reach. You were then made to have a cold shower and afterwards and before you could get dressed he would use the belt to hit you again on the bare skin. There were always red marks from him hitting me.
  
51. There were other times when perhaps I had an argument. In front of other staff who were in the large room and some of the other kids he would drag us out of the room and take us to the shower area and he would hit us again with the belt.
  
52. One of the other ways I was punished was Mr McKenna would lock me in a cupboard. The cupboard was really narrow only a few inches deep and with shelves in the cupboard I could not move around. With the shape of the cupboard I had to stand in it facing inwards. There was no light and I was kept in the dark in there with the door locked. This happened a couple of times by him and I would be locked in there overnight. I saw him doing it to some of the other boys as well. Some of the older boys knew this was happening and the other Brothers saw him doing this and they did nothing.
  
53. If there were any small issues maybe arguments between boys then they were put in the cupboard. If they refused to do anything he wanted they were again put into the cupboard.
  
54. In the evening I would be sitting in the TV room. Mr McKenna was always sitting at the back of the room watching us. He would call one of us over. When it came to me he would then put his hands up my shorts and touch my privates. Some of the older boys knew what was happening and they stayed out of his way. I am not sure if it happened to them but the way they went about things, something must have happened to some of them. This progressed where he would take you out of there and take you to the woodwork class room where he again carried out many sex acts on me.

55. At the end of the wood work class Mr McKenna would make sure that I stayed back when everyone else left the school. He would threaten to lock me in the cupboard if I did not do as he asked. He then forced my head down onto the table and had me bent over. He then removed my shorts and raped me. When he was finished I was bleeding heavily. He refused to allow me to be able to see nurse for medical assistance. This was a regular assault several times each week and for most of the six years I stayed at St Ninian's.
56. The day I ran away from the home and was brought back, I was sent to the dining room to sit with the other kids. Mr **GXC**, one of the teachers, came in and hit me over the face with a hot kettle in front of all the other kids and the kitchen ladies. He told me that I was never going to do that again while he was on shift. This was the only time he ever hit me. I had redness to the face but did not need to see anyone for medical assistance.

### **Reporting of abuse**

57. There was no one you could tell about any of the abuse because not only was it being committed by Mr McKenna and Brother **MJO** but other staff members knew that myself and others were being locked in the cupboard. They could not avoid knowing what other abuse was being carried out but just ignored it. There was no one to speak to. On one occasion I did approach Brother **MJJ** to report that I had been assaulted by Brother **MJO** but he just told me to go away and did nothing.

### **Leaving St Ninian's, Gartmore, Stirlingshire**

58. When I was about eleven and a half my nana and papa were spoken to by the social workers. They agreed that they would adopt me but part of the agreement was I was not allowed to be with my mother. I was delighted because it meant I would be able to get out of St Ninian's. It took a few months for that to take place. When I was leaving

Maureen Brankin, my social worker, came to collect me. She told me to get my own clothes and hand back the clothes issued by St Ninian's. She then drove me to my nana and papas.

59. I stayed with my nana and papa for about six months and whilst I was staying there I went to St Cuthbert's Primary School. When I was at that school I had regular appointments to go and see Maureen Brankin at the social work offices. These were checks to make sure I was still getting on alright. She did try to push me to tell her what was making me so angry. I was tempted to tell her but was still too scared.
60. One day when I was at school I was asked by some of the other kids where I came from as I was not from their area. When they found out I stayed in a List D school I was challenged to fight. I gave one boy a black eye. St Cuthbert's contacted the social work that day and I was immediately taken into care and sent to Calder House. Maureen Brankin called at the school and took me in her car to Calder House.

### **Calder House, Blantyre**

61. At Calder House it was all civilian staff and there wasn't religious teachings. It was run by Blantyre Council. I was to stay there for the three week assessment until a space could be found in other units.
62. Calder House was split into two separate wings. One was for the boys, about forty of them and the other for girls between twenty and thirty there.
63. My time at Calder House was alright and I was treated well by all the staff there. I was well fed and clothed. When I was in the unit there were some teachers who carried out some schooling. There was never any physical punishment as they always tried to talk you through any issues. There was no religious education while I stayed there.
64. Everybody did their own chores which would include cleaning and tidying the dormitory. You each took turns in cleaning the corridors as well. One bad punishment

that some were made to do was to clean the corridor with a toothbrush. You had to be really bad for that to happen, but it did not happen to me.

65. There was plenty to do when I was there. At night we had different activities we all took part in. During the day there was a sports building where we could play football, netball and volleyball.
66. I was quite hysterical at times there as I was always scared that the abuse that I suffered at St Ninian's was to be repeated but that was never the case. The three weeks there were good.
67. My mum was able to visit me and came to Calder House on a Sunday. We could sit together without staff listening in.
68. Near the end of the three weeks there I thought I might have a chance of getting home. Maureen Brankin told me that would not be happening as I would be transferring to St Mary's in Bishopbriggs. I did not know where Bishopbriggs was and never knew anything about St Mary's. Maureen me told it was a List D school.
69. I was scared that the abuse might start again there and I started throwing chairs about the place. There was a single cell within the unit and I spent the rest of the day in there as I was out of control. I was only locked in the cell until I was calm again, it was not overnight.

### **St Marys, Bishopbriggs**

70. On the day I arrived at St Marys, in Bishopbriggs I was spoken to by Mr Shields who was in charge of the place. I found out he was an ex police officer. I didn't see him much as he was always in his office.

71. There was a closed block in St Marys which housed young people who had been in serious trouble with the courts, some for murder. I was told that if I carried on then that was where I would be put.
72. I think there must have been about a hundred boys in care there separated into three buildings. The boys in St Mary's were all aged between twelve and sixteen. There was a separate bungalow with seven or eight rooms in there. They were people who were only in day care there, allowed home at night and they cooked their own meals. Staff did stay there as well, still supervising them. Eventually when I did manage to get into this bungalow I was able to go home at night. That was when I knew that Bill Franks could not get at me.
73. The other staff were to be called by their first names, but I do not remember many of them, except Bill Franks and one other was <sup>KHE</sup> [REDACTED]. Another of the staff was nicknamed "Chick", I cannot remember his full name. He was one of the staff we all wanted to be with for activities. He would take us down to the woods and we would sit around listening to him playing his guitar.
74. There were no other members of staff that were involved in abusing me or other boys apart from Bill Franks. Apart from what he did to us the atmosphere there was much more relaxed. My friend [REDACTED] from St Ninian's was later transferred to St Marys and we saw a lot of each other.
75. The sleeping area was a dormitory with all the individual bed areas separated by partitions. There was a gap at the top of the partitions where we could throw things back and forward to our pals.
76. We were woken by the staff coming in about seven o'clock. We then got washed, teeth brushed and dressed. There were also shower facilities available and the individual showers were all within their own cubicle. After washing we still went to Mass before breakfast.

77. Mass was held within the chapel in the grounds of St Mary's. Apart from Mass each day there were prayers at the side of the bed in the morning and at night. If you were not able to go home at the weekend you were then at Mass on Sundays. A priest would come into the school to carry out Mass as required.
78. We did carry out some chores and they included cleaning, sweeping of the floors, hoovering, laundry and making your beds. Each week we were issued with fresh clean sheets. You were paid pocket money for doing each of the chores and there was a tuck shop where you could buy sweets and juice.
79. For some of the leisure time the boys that were in the secure building would be allowed out and we would sometimes play football or other activities with them. The only thing about that was that we were so scared of them. Whatever the sport was we always let them win.
80. At St Mary's there was a full gymnasium and they taught boxing. I took part in that and I even learned enough to take part in some bouts that took place in the Palace of Arts in Glasgow. The training was good and you could take out any aggression on the bags. There were other activities that we were able to take part in. There was still table tennis and snooker available as well.
81. I had been at St Mary's for a few months and that knew that Bill Franks was the chef. He offered to help by teaching me how to cook. He was the only person at that time working in the kitchen. I thought it would be a good idea me being there as I would be able to make bread and cakes. I would be in the kitchen for most of the day as I was helping out with the preparation and cooking of the meals. There were certain times of the day when there were other boys helping out, mainly at meal times when we cooked for the whole building. I had the option of being in the kitchen or going to school classes and thought this would be better.
82. There was a nurse and dentist available and they did carry out regular checks on us. I had been in St Marys for a few months when I fell from a ladder and broke my collar bone. Because the way the bone was broken there was a chance that if I bumped into



anyone it could have pierced through my skin. I was allowed to go back to my nana and papa's for six weeks while I recovered. Maureen Brankin again picked me up from St Marys and took me to my nana and papa's. This was the first I had seen them since the day I left the house and had the fight at St Cuthbert's school.

83. Sometimes I was allowed to go to the football matches. On some of those occasions I would get somebody, a stranger, to buy me some wine. I would drink that and get back to the home completely drunk. I would just make my way to my bed and go to sleep. Nobody ever questioned it. This was the start of me having issues with alcohol.

### **Abuse at St Marys, Bishopbriggs**

84. In the kitchens we had three or four store rooms and one afternoon I was in the store room getting some things ready for the next meal. I heard Bill Franks coming into the store room but did not realise he had closed the door. On this occasion he did not rape me but he did everything else to me and tried to make me do things to him.
85. This became a regular thing. I did not know at that time but found out later he could lock the door from the inside so he would not be disturbed. I was just too scared that if I said no that it would like St Ninian's and locked back into a cupboard. This happened on an almost daily basis. You knew if he sent you to the storeroom something was going to happen.
86. By the time I was almost ready to leave, there were eight different boys working in the kitchen. He would separate one of us by sending all the others out to carry out tasks like setting up tables in the dining room.
87. There were other occasions during the night when Bill Franks would come to my room. He would come to my bed, waken me and carry out many sex acts on me and make me do things to him. The older boys were always warning us to be careful. They must have known some of the things that were happening. People must have heard what was happening over the gaps in the partitions, but nobody did anything to stop it.

88. There were other times if he had managed to get you alone in the television room that he would again abuse you.
89. I had one target while I stayed there and that was to survive until I was old enough to get moved to the cottage of older boys.

### **Leaving St Mary's Bishopbriggs**

90. When I was about fifteen and a half there was a meeting with Mr Shields and the head of the social work and Maureen Brankin. I was told by Maureen that as I had been doing so well at St Mary's that I was being allowed to return home.

### **Life after being in care**

91. When I went home to stay with my nana and papa, I went to John Ogilvie High School. I tried to catch up on my main stream education and a teacher gave me four years' worth of jotters that was the workload of the history classes. I was able to read them take in so much that I was able to pass my history prelims. Although I passed them I did not attend to sit the actual exams themselves.
92. I left school and moved out of my nana and papa's and went back to Motherwell to live with my parents. When I was there [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were also there. The problem I had at that time I was so damaged that I turned to drink. From then, when I was about sixteen years old, and for the next few years I was an alcoholic. At that time I was given an opportunity by the court to go to the Shield Centre in Wishaw for treatment for my alcohol addiction. I went for a while but went back to drinking.
93. When I was nineteen I gave up drinking alcohol because I did not want to see my kids see me in that state. I am very protective towards my kids and my grandchildren.

94. I began working as a window cleaner and then started working in Ravenscraig until that shut down. I then worked with Network Rail for about twenty five years including fifteen years as a [REDACTED]. That ended when I was made redundant from them. I am now working with ScotRail working in a ticket office.
95. From my first marriage I have two daughters and a step son from my second marriage to [REDACTED]. I also have nine grandchildren.
96. While I was being treated at the hospital for my psoriasis I met my second wife, [REDACTED], and we have been together since. She is the only person I have completely disclosed all that happened to me in care. I told her a couple of years after we started seeing each other and she started seeing me having the night terrors. I could not tell my first wife all that happened but found [REDACTED] so easy to talk to.
97. [REDACTED] was the one that persuaded me to get help to deal with the trauma of the abuse I received in care. I started going to see my GP and then I was sent to a psychiatrist.
98. I was working eight until twelve by this time and I was due to see her in the morning. I was not able to go and had to change it to an afternoon appointment. She was not happy with me and when I attended three weeks later for the appointment she gave me a row for changing the time. Her way of treating me was to give me some medication, but she also sent a letter to my employers at the time, ScotRail. I was just waiting to get a medical with them and the letter was saying I was having issues with anger and aggression and that I should not be allowed to work with the public. [REDACTED] and I had to visit with a doctor with ScotRail to persuade him that this was not the case and that I was alright. I have been with them for the last seven years. I never went back to that psychiatrist. I was put off by her action, she could have lost me the job I have had for the last few years.

## Impact

99. When I was back with my brothers, some of things we talked about was we were all friends with similar families who were going through much the same things as we did. So why did it happen to my family and none of the other large families we knew?
100. I consider that part of the impact from my time in care was from being locked in that narrow cupboard. I cannot use elevators and wherever I am I will use the stairs. I am also scared to be in some of the modern bathrooms in case I am locked in. A couple of years ago I was with [REDACTED] and we got stuck in a lift for over two hours. I was kicking at the doors and pushing all the buttons, all to try and get me out. I never use them I always walk up the stairs. Even in I used to stay in a block of flats I stayed on the eleventh and used the stairs, never the lift.
101. My education was definitely affected due to my time in care. I was only given basic education and there was no structure to it. I know my life could have been different. I know from reading the history jotters that I was a quick learner. If I had a full education I would have had a better quality of life. If the authorities had shown me a better way of disciplining myself and given me the education I should have had, who knows what I could have made of my life.
102. If things go wrong with anything in my family environment then I blame myself even though I know I may have had no control about what happened. I am very protective of my children and grandchildren. I will do anything to stop them going into the care system. Even when they are going through some anger issues I get suspicious about something happening to them.
103. I have one health issue that I believe is as a result of my time in care. From the age of about sixteen I suffered from psoriasis which my doctors say is caused by traumatic stress. I have had to spend weeks at a time in hospital and sometimes I was admitted on a stretcher. Despite the doctor saying it was caused by some sort of traumatic event I could not bring myself to tell him about the abuse I suffered in care. I still have this to this day. For ten to fifteen years I was on medication which really helped but that

stopped and the medication was changed to injections. They do not help as much and it has come back quite badly.

104. I also take anti-depressants which [REDACTED] is able to monitor for me. I have taken an overdose a couple of times and that is why she monitors my medication. Even when I was in the hospital for overdosing I was not able to disclose to those doctors what was causing my problems. I was too embarrassed and wanted to hide it from them.
105. [REDACTED] is able to tell when I am feeling down with my mental health and is allowed to administer an extra tablet at night until things settle down once more. One of the signs is that I suffer from night terrors. That is one of the signs that she knows that I am getting down again. I also withdraw into myself, get angry with myself and stop looking after myself. She knows most of the triggers that set me off.
106. Sometimes when memories of the sexual abuse come back I will just get up and go to my bed without saying anything to anybody. That can happen even when there are people in the house.
107. If I see anything about child abuse on the television it brings back the memories. My step father is eighty two now and he saw a programme about St Ninian's on television and he asked if I had seen the news about the abuse there. I still could not tell him what happened to me and he is now too old for me to tell him as this would hurt him too much. Sometimes when I had him out for drinks he would apologise for letting me go into care. He felt he could have done more for us and realised how difficult it was to be a step dad. My two brothers blame him but I blame myself for being in care.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

108. When I first told [REDACTED] about my experiences, not only did she persuade me to go to the doctors but she also persuaded me to tell the police. Around 2001 the police at East Kilbride were taking a statement but they were only interested in Charles McKenna and brushed aside anything I tried to tell about Mr <sup>GXC</sup> [REDACTED] hitting me with

the hot kettle on the face. I never took this anything further as they were only interested in Mr McKenna. He was not in the slightest bit interested in listening about Mr GXC. I have never given anyone reports about Bill Franks.

109. Charles McKenna stood trial at Stirling Sheriff Court but I was too afraid to go into the court and give my evidence. The other witnesses were able to tell their stories and I believe he was sentenced to two years imprisonment reduced on appeal to six months.

### **Records**

110. I would like to see my records to read what the Panel took into consideration before placing me in care. I would also like to know why they came to the decision about separating me from my brothers. This might be something that the Inquiry could help people with. I have been visited by the police in the last couple of weeks and they told me all the records have been destroyed.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

111. One of the things I think the authorities should learn is that they should have spoken to us and found out why we were not going to school. As brothers we should never have been separated and sent to different homes. If we were not allowed to stay with our mum we should have been sent to the same home, there was no reason to keep us apart.
112. More checks need to be done on people looking after kids in care. The current checks on Disclosure Scotland only show convictions they do not show people who have not been caught or reported.
113. When in care kids need to have someone they can go to and talk to in safety. Perhaps while seeing nurses or doctors who visit the schools the kids would have an avenue to safely disclose what is happening. There needs to be an independent outlet

available for them. If they do report anything they should make sure the child is put somewhere safe, while they tell their experiences and after so they are protected from retribution.

- 114. Siblings being placed in care should not be separated. If I had been in care with my brothers I know we would have been able to look after each other and grow up as brothers. If anything had happened to any of us we would have someone safe to tell it to and perhaps been able to get something done about it.

**Other information**

- 115. I saw an advert on television about the Child Abuse Inquiry and decided I needed to tell my story. I hope by coming forward to the Inquiry that they acknowledge something has happened to me and someone believes it happened to me. I hope they can put things in place to help kids in the future being placed in care.

- 116. 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..... 07 August 2020 .....