

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IGU

Support person present: No

1. My name is IGU My date of birth is 1978. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was brought up in a housing estate in Carfin, Motherwell. My mum was called and she has passed away. My dad is called and he's still here. They were married. I have three brothers. is a year older than me, then there's me, is three years younger than me and is four years younger than me.
3. We were a normal family but then we moved to . The two estates used to fight with each other. I was young at that time but the ones in did know me. I knew I would be in trouble when I moved to that estate and that's when a lot of my trouble started. I was thirteen years old.
4. I was always the class clown, getting up to mischief in school. I went to Our Lady and St Francis Primary School in Carfin and Taylor High School in New Stevenson, for the first year. I was staying in by then and getting up to no good. I was going about with the older ones and they were using me to break into things. I

thought jumping about with the older ones was good and it kept the people in my age group at bay. The older ones told them to stay away from me.

5. I was staying out late and my dad would give me a couple of slaps. I knew if I was out after 10:00 pm then I'd get leathered, so I didn't go back home. That led to everything else. I was breaking into shops, houses, and cars. My mum brought me into the social work when I was running away from home. I said to her I wanted to go to a children's home because my pals were in them. Their mums were alcoholics and they could go in and out of the homes when they liked. My pals said you got a tenner pocket money. I never got pocket money and I thought I'd go for it. It sounded great but it's not.
6. From the age of thirteen, I appeared at the Children's Panel in Bellshill. My social worker was Ian Beattie from Motherwell. He was alright. It was me that was trying to get into care and the children's panel couldn't see a reason to put me in. I got sent to Kirknowe Assessment Centre because of the trouble I got into at school and dogging school. I was ditching that as well and, after two weeks, they sent me to a place called the IT Centre.
7. They called the IT Centre the 'dogger school'. You did an hour's work and then they took you bowling, ice skating, or you played pool. It was run by social workie type of people. I remember Sheena and Drew. They were okay. A taxi picked me up and I went every day, five days a week. I went on and off, for about a year but I was still getting into trouble. I was in school with rowdy people who were in children's homes. I went along with them and thought it was great but it wasn't.
8. I was running away from home and I was set about by older ones. My nose got broken and I had concussion. I was in Law Hospital for a few days. When I got lifted for that by the police, I said it was my father. It was a blatant lie because I was scared to go home and wanted to go to a children's home.
9. A wee English guy who was staff from Carluke took me from the hospital to Carluke Children's Home. I was taken to Carluke because I was absconding and running

away from home. I thought going to Carluke was good and I would run away the first chance I got. When I was in the home, I told the police I made it up about my father to go in there. I told my social worker I was running away from home to stay out later. I didn't let on about my dad slapping me about now and then because I didn't want to get him into trouble. My mum and dad didn't know what to do and agreed to put me into care.

Carluk Children's Home, Carluk, Lanarkshire

10. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

11.

12.

13.



Leaving Carluke Children's Home

14. I went to the panel and they decided I could go home, on a year's supervision. My mother, my social worker, and three panel members were there. I don't remember being asked anything.

Living back at home

15. I was back at home for about a year. Mainstream education was not taking me back and I carried on at the IT centre. I was still committing crimes. I was on supervision and so Ian would pick me up and take me to McDonalds or I'd meet him at Motherwell Social Work and we'd go bowling. I saw Ian every week for an hour. He'd ask about my family life and what I'd been up to. I was kind of honest with him. I wouldn't have spoken to Ian about my dad. I'd said that at the hospital and so, if I brought it up again, would I be believed?
16. My mum and dad tried to meet me halfway and let me stay out until 10:30 pm or 11:00 pm. I still breached it and it was take, take, take. My brothers were normal. My older brother was working and my younger brothers were at school. I was the black sheep of the family.

17. My mum and dad were at their wit's end because I was being cheeky and running about with the older ones. They were using me to break into places. I didn't get as much money as them and I knew I was getting used. I thought it was worth it to run about with the older ones. My mum and dad didn't have much and they never gave me nearly the amount of money I got through stealing. I was lifted by the police a few times and they took me back to my mum and dad's. Ian knew about it so my mum and dad must have had an open line to him. He would ask me what happened and say it wasn't fair on my mum and dad. I wasn't listening to anybody back then.

18. I was running away and getting lifted all the time. There was an emergency panel at Hamilton Sheriff Court instead of a hearing in the judge's chambers. I was in the Sheriff Court cells and that was my first time there. I ended up in Bellshill Home. They didn't say how long I was going for.

Bellshill Children's Home, Bellshill, Lanarkshire

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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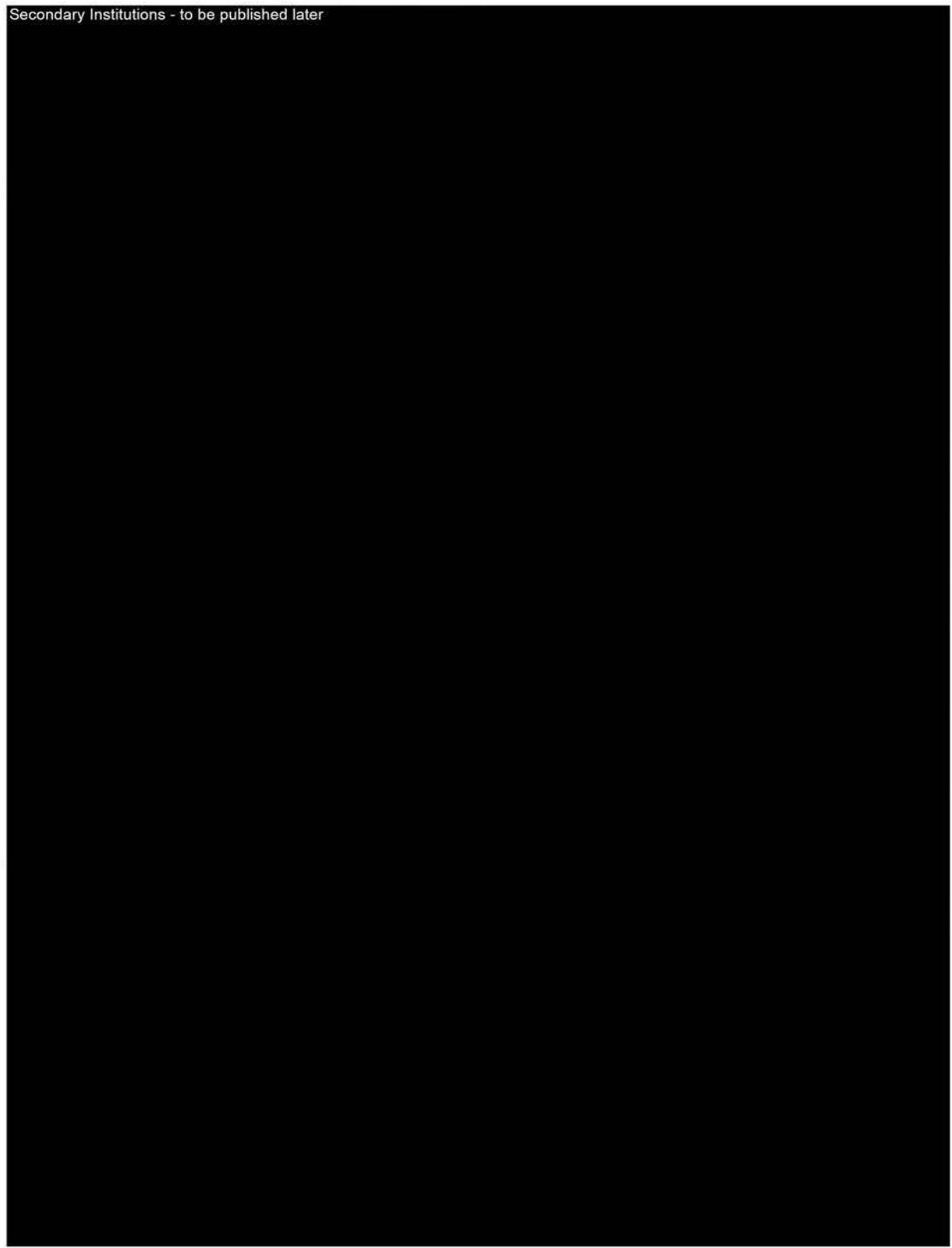
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Leaving Bellshill Children's Home

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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because they were taking me to Cardross. I thought Cardross was the end of the world. I'd never heard of it and I was upset at getting moved there. I didn't have an end in mind and nobody said how long I was going there for.

Cardross List D School, Dunbartonshire

34.

I was at Cardross for a couple of months when I was fourteen years old. I felt there was a shadow over it. I felt intimidated by it and it looked scary to me. You drove up a long road and there were three units. They weren't heavy handed at Cardross but they were more strict because I kept running away. I knew not to push it because of the way the staff spoke and acted. There were boys and girls. There were about ten people in my unit and thirty in total.

Routine at Cardross List D School

General Routine

35. Ian Beattie drove me to Cardross. It felt long but was about an hour. It woke me up a bit and I was scared. I'd never been out of Lanarkshire. I didn't know anybody and I felt like a fish out of water. That made me run away all the more. zGUF was an Irish member of staff. He drove me to Vale of Leven Hospital to get my medicals because I was new into Cardross. I knew he was a rigid, strict, ex-army, no nonsense kind of guy.

36. I was in Endrick Unit. There were showers and baths. You went down for your lunch and there were tables with four chairs. All three units got served at the same time. A staff member would sit at the table with you. The food was alright. Then you'd go back to the unit and sit and watch telly. The staff didn't take us on any outings. There was a school inside Cardross because it was a List D School but I didn't go to it. I'm not sure why but I wasn't there long.

37. Ian Beattie left and I got Liz as my social worker. Liz worked at the IT Centre and said because she knew me it would suit. We already had half a relationship with being in the IT Centre. Liz asked me if I was alright with her being my social worker and I was. I got on alright with Liz. She had a calmness about her and I could open up to her. I spoke to her about things.

38. My mum always visited me at Cardross. She'd come with a bag of sweeties for me. I didn't see my brothers. I went with my mum and Liz to visit Geilsland at Beith in Ayrshire. They took me up there for an interview and Geilsland were going to take me. They said I'd not run away from there because the nearest bus stop was a mile away. I didn't like it and I got a bad vibe off it. I told my mum that and I said to Liz that I didn't want to go there. I think the jury was out about whether I was going to Geilsland or to secure.

Running away

39. The first time I ran away, I asked KJT [REDACTED] where the train station was. We called him KJT [REDACTED] and he was my pal in Cardross. He said you couldn't miss it and it was straight down the road. I bolted. I had to get two trains. You had to go to Partick and get another train to Bellshill. The first time I ran away, I went to Bellshill Home. I was speaking to [REDACTED] at her window. The nightshift heard me and phoned the police. I got caught and standby social workers took me back to Cardross. I ran away four or five times to get back to my area.
40. I ran away in my slippers and the staff didn't like that. When you were brought back, the staff shouted at you in front of everybody and took your trainers. You weren't allowed out the sight of the staff. You had to sit when you were in the unit and you had to ask when you wanted to go to the toilet. At night they left your room door open so the staff could tell if you were in there and sleeping. It was victimisation.
41. I was hell bent on running. Liz asked me if I was running to something or away from something. I couldn't understand what she meant. I said I didn't know and I was just running.

Abuse at Cardross List D School

42. At the time, I thought Cardross was alright. Back then you were allowed to smack children. It was legal. I never thought anything of it. Staff would slap you with their hand for having a carry-on or giving cheek.

Restraint and criminal charges

43. The boy next door to me in the unit was called [REDACTED] and we called him [REDACTED]. He was a few years younger than me. He could fit out his window and it brought you on to the roof. I ran in and locked his window while he was on the roof.

People were shouting out of the windows and the staff came. I was on [REDACTED] bed, opening the window and letting him back in. I had long hair at the time. IGV grabbed me by the hair and I landed on the floor. More staff came from the other units. There was a commotion and the staff restrained me in kind of the same way they restrained me at Bellshill.

44. IGV was a tall skinny guy who was about fifty. I knew he had bad knees. I lashed out and so did they. I punched him on the side of the knee and I got charged with that. I went to the panel for that but I can't remember what happened. They never phoned the police that night. I sat on my bed with one staff member talking to me to calm me down. He talked to me all night with the light on. He was an alright guy. He said I'd need to leave my door open and that was alright.

Restraint of others

45. I saw other people being restrained at Cardross. I wasn't there very long so I didn't see it always happening.

Abuse of others

46. I was scared of zGUF, a lot of people were. He never did anything to me but I saw him slap other people on the side of the head more than once. He slapped KJT [REDACTED] KJT died in his cell [REDACTED] last year. I saw zGUF slap someone at the dinner table in the hall. The noise echoed out and the hall went quiet. Then two staff members brought the guy back to his bedroom. The guy wasn't in my unit.

Leaving Cardross List D School

47. The morning after I had been charged with assaulting IGV, zGUF said I was going to Kerelaw. I was thinking, "Where's Kerelaw?" I thought he was on about another unit in Cardross. He said I'd only been at Cardross until a space opened up in Kerelaw because I kept absconding. I went to Kerelaw that morning. I think I was

sent to secure because I was done with assaulting the staff. [REDACTED] ended up in secure a few weeks after me.

Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenson, Ayrshire

48. I went to Kerelaw on a three month children's panel order, in [REDACTED]. I was fifteen years old. I'd heard of St Mary's Secure but I didn't know there was another one. Kerelaw is a stone building with a square top. You couldn't run away because there was a big fence round Kerelaw and the doors were all locked. Across from the Secure Unit office is the List D School. I was in the Secure Unit. You walked up wee stairs into the Secure Unit and Unit One was on your left. There was a space outside the unit with a pool table and Unit Two and Three were off that space.
49. In Unit One there was a living room and a kitchen in one big room. You went through a couple of doors by Unit One and up the stairs to where the bedrooms were. They were right above Unit One. If you didn't go up the stairs but went straight on, it takes you into the education bit. There were bars and a plastic window. There were three members of staff in the unit.
50. I didn't know how long I would be there for and I didn't know anybody there. There were boys and girls. The girls were in a mixed unit called Unit Three. You only spoke to them when you were going to school and you were in their class. Unit One and Two was just boys. There were about eight or ten people in each unit. They were from age thirteen to fifteen and there was a girl who was seventeen.

Staff at Kerelaw Secure Unit

51. Bob was in charge of the three units and walked between them all. There was an old guy above Bob who was called the headmaster. I never spoke to him. There was a big fat guy called [REDACTED] a woman called [REDACTED] and a woman called Dunoota. Other staff were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Pat Sweeney was my personal officer.

LYW worked in the education bit and there were other staff who were teachers as well.

52. A few staff members worked in the open part of Kerelaw as well. I think Matt George did that because he wasn't in the Secure Unit the full time. He would fill in at the Secure Unit. Matt George had black hair and a moustache. He was in his mid-forties or he was fifty. He always sang the Simply Red song, *Holding back the Years* , and that still sticks in my mind.

Routine at Kerelaw Secure Unit

First day

53. zGUF and another member of staff drove me in zGUF car. I went into Unit One. zHWV greeted us. Everybody was up at the school so the living room was empty. zHWV showed me my room upstairs. Then zGUF and the other guy went away. I was left in the living room with zHWV and Dunoota.
54. Three boys in the unit had smashed up their rooms a week or two before I went to Kerelaw. The first night I was there, they told me about Longriggend Schoolboys which was in Longriggend Young Offender's Institution. They said you got a smoke up there. You weren't allowed to smoke in Kerelaw. I found out later that Longriggend Schoolboys was in was the remand unit for young offenders. There was one section where they could house up to fourteen schoolboys. The boys smashed up that night and were throwing all their stuff out the window. I joined in and smashed my chest of drawers and things but I couldn't get my window out. There were metal bars in a design on the window. The window was plastic. I couldn't get my foot through the bars to push the window out with my feet. I felt I'd let them down because I couldn't get the window out.
55. A lot of police came. There was a plastic panel in the brown wooden door to my room. The police stood there and shone a torch in. IHB said to the police they were

putting me in the cell. The police were there when I got taken out of my room. The staff walked me down and put me in a cell at Kerelaw. I was in the cell for a few hours, until the next morning. The boys were taken by the police to Kilmarnock Police Station and to court the next day. They didn't come back to the unit but went to Longriggend Schoolboys.

General Routine

56. I had my own room and it was in a corridor. I had my own clothes and no personal possessions. We went to bed at 9:00 pm. I was usually taken upstairs at 8:00 pm as a punishment for swearing. Your prize for being the best behaved in the unit was to have late telly with the night shift. You could go into the office and they had a bit at the back of it where you could sit and watch telly. I never saw it. At night you were locked in your room.
57. We got up about 8:00 am. The staff took you to get showered in the mornings. Once they'd showered you then they took you downstairs for breakfast. Breakfast was cereal or sausages. At the weekend you got brunch which is breakfast but it's lunch. The food was never a problem for me. After breakfast you got education. The school was inside Kerelaw. You did English, maths, and woodwork. School was alright. There was a cooking class. After education, you came back down and got your lunch.
58. After lunch, we'd sit on the two seater sofas and play Super Mario Kart on the Nintendo. That was in demand. It was in a wee bit off the living room. You could watch telly and it was usually the music channel that was on. You could go to exercise and five or six of us would kick the ball about. We played a card game called 'Switch'.
59. The living room doors were locked but you could look out and see who was playing pool. On a Friday afternoon you could draw or watch a video. The video was for the least behaved ones and mine was always that. That was in the education bit, in

LYW classroom. At night we sat and watched telly and played Switch. You could phone your family every day if you wanted.

60. I didn't have a ghetto blaster. After Matt George assaulted me, he brought me a compact disc ghetto blaster from the staff room. I wondered what he was playing at. It wasn't mine but it sat outside my cell. The staff put an extension cable under your bedroom door at night so you could listen to it.
61. Not long after I went to Kerelaw, they allowed smoking. You had to get your parents to sign a disclaimer. My mum didn't want to sign the form because her mother died with something to do with smoking. I threw her out of the visit and went up to my room. At this point I was the only one in the unit who didn't get to smoke. My mum ended up signing it and I felt bad about that. You got three fags a day and the staff held on to your fags. They'd bring you to the door beside the exercise yard to smoke, after each meal. That was where the staff smoked too.
62. I never saw anyone for healthcare at Kerelaw. I never knew about birthdays. I didn't have any contact with my social worker in Kerelaw and nobody asked me how I was getting on. I don't think I would have said anything.
63. You got £5 pocket money but you could only buy sweets with it. My mum came up once a week and she'd bring sweets for me. They got kept in my box in the office. Each person had their own box. You'd ask the staff to get you a bar of chocolate and they'd go and get it. Cigarettes stayed in the box as well. The visit was on the wee sofa in the living room, beside the portable where we played on the computer.
64. The staff had to write a report on everybody every day. Pat Sweeney had to write the report on me. He'd write about me being cheeky and getting sent up to my bed. The report was in an A4 book with wee plastic pockets. We never saw the reports, only the staff filling them out. That was routine and part of their job.

Discipline

65. If you swore or you were fighting then you got a half an hour time out in your room and put on an early bedtime. One member of staff could take you upstairs. I got on okay with the other people in that unit and I was only fighting once. He was a boy from Edinburgh who was a bully. I even got on with him afterwards.
66. There was a big, empty cell they put you in to calm you down. I didn't really calm down. The staff stripped you down to your boxer shorts and threw you in. The wee window at the top was always open and it was freezing. The staff must have thought that would calm you down. It was solid concrete and there was no bed. I thought, because I wasn't taken to court after that first night, that I'd be seen as a let-down so I smashed up a couple of times after that. I spent three or four times in the cell because of smashing up the unit.
67. You could hit the buzzer and I kept hitting it, annoying the staff all night. The staff sat just outside the cell because it was next to the staff office. Once you've calmed down, they give you the mattress in. An hour after that, they'd give you your bedding in. You never got clothes. The times I was in the cell it was the night shift who put you in. When the day shift came then they took you out and showered you. The next morning Bob would pull me up and ask what it was about.

Abuse at Kerelaw Secure Unit

68. Once, four nightshift staff took me outside and into the exercise pen. They opened the door and had me sitting there, just in my boxer shorts. The cold air was blowing. It was designed to calm you down but it was intimidation. They were smoking. Then they brought me back up and put me in the cell. I got my mattress back.
69. The third or fourth time I was put in the cell, I had been banging the door all night. By this time, I'd been noising the nightshift up a few times. In the morning, Bob and Matt

George were there. I heard the rest of the boys go down the stairs and Matt George said he'd get me showered. It was just me and him left upstairs. I got ready for a shower wearing my boxers and a towel. I was in the shower room with Matt George standing there but I didn't know he was still standing there. I came out the shower and my towel and boxers weren't there. He'd thrown them into my room which was at the end of the corridor on the left. I asked where my towel was and Matt George said, "You think you're a wee wideo, a ticket, a wee Glasgow gangster." I said I wasn't from Glasgow and he slapped me.

70. It was a short walk along the corridor from the shower to my bedroom and I had no clothes on. Matt George never restrained me but kept poking me in the back and telling me to move. We got into my room and Matt George put his arm around my neck and choked me until I was out. I had tunnel vision and I was seeing stars. He was punching me in the kidneys. I don't know how long I was out for. When I came to, he sexually abused me. That's all I want to say about that. Matt George was growling at me and poking me in the chest. I could hear him in my ear and his spittle was on my face. He said this was the big boy's school, I wasn't in a stupid wee home now, and I could learn the hard way or the easy way. He said something like, "You know what we do with people like you here" and that he'd dealt with people bigger and harder than me.
71. Matt George threw my clothes at me and said to get dressed. He stood there the whole time. I got dressed and he started talking in a dead calm voice. He said when I went down, I wasn't to make eye contact with any staff members. He said nothing happened here and they had all different kinds of pain they could give me. He gave me a roll up and asked me if I had a ghetto blaster. When we walked into the unit, Matt George said to **zHWV** he'd had words with me and I'd learned. Matt George said to me, "You've learned, haven't you?" I said, "Aye." I felt scared and intimidated because I thought **zHWV** knew what Matt George had just done. Matt George was being brazen about it. I felt out of my depth.
72. I sat down and a boy called **██████████** asked me if I wanted to play Super Mario and I felt my eyes welling up. I felt numb. I wasn't listening or concentrating to what

he was saying. I didn't know what to do. I felt like I was in a dream. I went to the toilet and pulled myself together a wee bit. That was the last time I was in the cell.

73. In the daily report about my behaviour, Matt George said I tried to stick the head on him when I was upstairs on my own with him but I didn't. I was scared of Matt George after that. He would go from being nice to growling again. He gave me a ghetto blaster but then he later took it away and gave it to [REDACTED]. She was a girl in Unit 3. He would kick my heels when I was walking and make it look like he was having a carry on. I didn't know how to take him. It was bad and I was confused. I tried to keep away from Matt George. I saw him a few times after that, on the route going up to school. He didn't say anything.
74. I was at Kerelaw for another couple of months. A wee while after Matt George abused me, I was put on movement and got some weekend leaves. Movement was going for a drive in the car or visiting your parents for an hour to see if you can be trusted not to run away. Then I had an overnight and after that, weekend leave. My behaviour had changed. I had all my movement done in two months. I didn't tell anyone what happened. There was no-one to tell and no-one to tell out of earshot. I didn't want anyone to know and I was too scared to mention it anyway.

Restraint

75. IHB always grabbed my hair and pulled me forwards by the hair while the others held my arms. Then they walked me to the cell. The staff took your clothes off you while they held you before they put you in the cell. They put you in the cell, just in your underwear. Once or twice, I was allowed to take my clothes off and give them to the staff.

Leaving Kerelaw Secure Unit

76. The three month order was up and I went back to the panel. I got a decent report from the staff at Kerelaw and my mother wanted me back home. The panel took me

off supervision [REDACTED], just before my sixteenth birthday. I was put into my mother's custody. I never saw Liz again after that. It was bittersweet when I left. It was my pals I didn't want to leave. It was the first time I felt I had pals my own age group.

Living at home after secure care

77. I was glad to be back home but I was still stealing. It was ironic. I'd been running away from care a lot of the time and now I was getting thrown out of the house a lot by my dad. He threw me out for not paying bills and bringing the police to the door. I was thieving and he knew I was getting involved in the drug scene. My mum would let me back in. She was the softer of the two of them.
78. They had taken me off supervision at sixteen but I was wanting to stay on so I would have supervision as a safety net. I was still stealing and I thought, that way, I wouldn't go to court and be treated as a young offender. I wouldn't go to the jail. It didn't work out like that and I ended up in the young offenders at sixteen. My education finished at Kerelaw. They had me on a summer programme and they'd take me fishing with other delinquents. They put me in touch with Barnardo's. I only met the woman once and then I started getting remanded. It's vague what Barnardo's did.
79. I was caught shoplifting and I was remanded at Longriggend for five weeks. My social work reports were done and I went back to the court. They decide if they're going to give you a community sentence and I got probation. I breached probation by not going and got a six month sentence. I went to Polmont.

Longriggend Young Offenders Institution, Airdrie

80. I was back and forth to Longriggend for a few years. I was sixteen the first time I was in. It was a lot different from the care system. Longriggend was strict. You couldn't sit down and shoot the breeze with the screws. You knew the screws by their names

but it was more the names you called them behind their back. There was no interaction with them. It was just discipline. There were four halls called A, B, C, and D. Each hall had three or four landings. There were maybe about a thousand people there.

Routine at Longriggend Young Offenders Institution

81. You're in a cell with another guy. You get a porta potty or a pish pot. It's a set routine in Longriggend as well. You get the gym and exercise. You're locked up apart from exercise and your meals. You get marched down to the dining hall. The screws were always shouting at everyone and that was the difference. You got visits and you got canteen once a week. You had a wee radio in your cell. There were no telly's or plumbing in the cells at that time. I didn't have social work dealings unless they were doing a report on me for the court.
82. Everything you wore was jail issue and most people wore it. In the mornings you got small kit change. That was your boxers and socks. You got a fresh set and handed over your dirty set. On Friday you got another shirt, denims, or clean bedding. That was called a big kit change. A couple of guys had their own clothes but I never. It seemed too much hassle because you needed to hand them out at visits.
83. There were one or two people who got into trouble for fighting with each other but I didn't. It was mostly the Glasgow people who brought their fights in from outside. I wasn't hit or restrained at Longriggend because I knew to stay away from it.

Polmont Young Offenders Institution, nr Brightons

84. I did two sentences in Polmont. I was seventeen when I did my first one. They were six months and about eight months. There was no abuse at Polmont, not with me anyway.

Routine at Polmont Young Offenders Institution

85. When I got my first sentence, I tried to run away from Motherwell District Court. I got caught and brought back to the digger in Polmont. That was the only time I was in trouble in Polmont. I was in the digger for a month because I was an absconder. I had a wee passport book called a 'Strict Escapee Book' and I had to have the screws sign it, everywhere I went. It was so they could keep tabs on you.
86. The digger was solitary confinement. There was an exercise yard outside your window, so you could shout and talk to each other out the windows. People on exercise could walk up and pass things through the window. There was a cardboard table and chair, and a porta potty. The bed was built into the wall and there was a mattress and bedding. After a month, I was let up into the halls.
87. Polmont was more of a routine than Longriggend. You had work sheds and you got recreation every night. There was more to do. I was treated alright in Polmont. After what happened with Matt George, I never had any run ins with staff. I was intimidated by them and I didn't step out of line.

Life after being in care

88. I was involved with drugs from the age of about fifteen. From seventeen it was heroin and it was more in my dad's face. I was stealing to pay for it. I've not got a drug problem anymore. After Polmont, I got a four year, a five year, and then a seven year sentence. I was in prison more than I was out. I've been in Barlinnie, Glenochil, Shotts, and Saughton. I've not worked. I have two adult children from two different relationships.

Impact

89. I've been in and out of jail all my life. I have a distrust of most people but especially authority. When I was younger, it was adults. As a grown up, I have a distrust of people like social workers, prison officers and police. When social workers do reports on you for court, you think it's going to be a good one because they agree with you. Then you go to court and it's the opposite. I found it difficult to get on with my probation officers and I've only got on with one of my parole officers. They are all social workers.
90. Prison staff have said they think I have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. I have panic attacks, anxiety, and depression. I don't know what could have been for me. I try not to think about it because it's useless. I know where I went wrong all these years. I try not to ponder on it because it would do my head in.
91. I speak to my brothers and things are okay. It's not like a brother's relationship but they are like two strangers. I'm not close to them and that's through care. It's like that with my da. My relationship with my mum and dad was up and down. My dad's always telling me to stop and change. I always say I'm going to do it and I never do. Things are alright with my children.
92. If we'd not moved to [REDACTED] then things might have been different. People wanted to do me harm and so I ran about with older ones and got used by them. I became a criminal through it. When I was in care, everything was hectic. I didn't stay anywhere long enough to build up a relationship with staff and I kept running away. I don't think anyone tried to help me with my behaviour. Liz spoke to me in a calm way but she never went into anything like that.
93. After what happened with Matt George at Kerelaw, I stopped being cheeky with the staff and I calmed down. I realised everything was real and I was scared. I was scared of being taken up the stairs by one staff member in case something happened again. I didn't see Matt George again until he was in court and I saw his picture. He looked different but I knew the name and I knew it was him. I felt empty.

94. I'm angry at myself and where I went wrong. It didn't need to happen but it did and I have myself to blame for it. I've blamed myself for years. I've pushed things down for years but they always resurface. I blame myself for not coming out with what Matt George did. He's been at it for thirty years. It's hard to come out with something like that and I was between a rock and a hard place. I couldn't come out with it because it would kill my family. It's been eating me up all these years and it has affected my relationships. It took me a while to start going with people and have relationships. It felt strange with my first girlfriends, getting touched again.
95. I don't link the beginning of my drug use to being in care. It was just curiosity and I liked it. Heroin was there at the time and I was in the wrong place at the right time. I ended up mad with it and full of drugs for years. Heroin and any drug that was a downer was the answer to things for me. Drugs blocked out what Matt George did to me. It was a coping strategy. That's what I've been doing for years and it's bringing me back to the jail. It's burying my head in the sand. I didn't want to seem like a victim. It would have broken my mum to know about it.

Treatment/support

96. I've not had any support or counselling. I dust myself off and get on with it.

Records


97. I've applied for social work records. They told me I need photographic identification and I don't have any. If I had access to my files then I might remember things. The files might bring me back to those places, which is something I've not done before.

Lessons to be learned

- 98. The staff didn't speak to me like an adult. If they'd listened to me then things might have been different. What Matt George did was wrong. There should have been a couple of staff members instead of getting left with one staff member. What comes out of the staff's mouth is gospel and the staff have the say. Adults shouldn't be left with a kid where the adult's word is gospel. They've been getting away with abusing children for years. Care is one big machine.

Other information

- 99. I'd like to see the care system changed and I hope abuse of children in care stops. I hope people are vetted more and not left in positions where they can abuse children.
- 100. 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... 18-4-23