

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GFP

Support person present: No

1. My name is GFP. My date of birth is 1981. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. My parents were and I had an older brother and a younger brother called . My parents were married but they split up when I was five years old, when we lived in Castlemilk on the south side of Glasgow.
3. Before my parents separated, life was hectic. My dad was a drug addict when I was a child. That was probably the cause of my parents splitting up. There was a lot of domestic abuse that I witnessed, where my dad was battering my mum. They were always separating and then getting back together. My mum moved from house to

house. The last time I saw my dad, when I was a young child, was when I was six years old.

4. I can't remember the police being involved when my mum and dad were fighting, or the social workers. The first time I remember the social workers being involved is when I went into care.
5. My mum moved in with another man called [REDACTED]. I got on well with [REDACTED]. She had another six sons with him. The eldest of them is nine or ten years younger than me but I ended up in care before my other brothers came along.
6. I moved about to a lot of schools before going into care. The one I was at when I went into care was Holmlea Primary School, in Cathcart. I was truanting from school when I was eight years old and I was stealing money out of the house. It wasn't to buy drugs or anything, it was to have money to play the arcade games.
7. It got to the point where I was buying slings and lock knives and things like that when I was eight years old. I was out of control and matters came to a head and I went into care. I just never done what I was told. I was always like that. I remember going to see psychologists but I can't remember much of what they did. My brothers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] weren't getting into trouble.
8. My nana, my mum's mum, was staying with us because my mum couldn't cope. My nana didn't like me, I don't know if it was because of my dad. It was my nana who made the decision for me to go into care. She gave the social workers an ultimatum. Either they took me into care, or I would be out on the streets.

#### **Lochgarry Children's Home, Glasgow 1989**

9. I got taken to Lochgarry when I was eight years old. I can't remember who took me, it was quite sudden. It was only meant to be for three weeks for respite. I didn't get to

go back home but I wasn't bothered about that. I was in there for a few months. Secondary In

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Southannan, Fairlie 1989 to 1993**

13. I was still eight years old when I went to Southannan. It was a big mansion house with loads of grounds surrounding it. The army had been in a few years before I got there and built a big assault course. It was great for a young boy, a lot of adventures.
14. I'm sure that Southannan was run by an organisation called the Quarriers but I think it was still under Glasgow Council that I was placed there. I had a couple of visits to Southannan before I went there and it seemed pretty good. I think I settled in not too badly, it wasn't too bad. There were things that were good in Southannan, although nothing really sticks out in my mind.

## **Routine at Southannan**

15. I remember a lot of the staff from Southannan. The guy in overall charge was a guy called George Gill. There were a few managers as well but I can't remember their names.
16. My keyworker was a guy called GFT. He was allocated to me, he was alright. He would attend my case conferences and children's panels. He would help me with my personal stuff and ask me how I was doing.

### *First day*

17. I don't remember arriving on the first day. I don't remember if I had my clothes and things with me, I probably did. It was a mix of boys and girls at Southannan. We were all younger children, all primary school age. I don't know how many kids were there, maybe thirty or forty.
18. When you went in the front door of Southannan, there were a couple of offices and classrooms on the ground floor. The kitchen, and dining room, were downstairs too. Upstairs were all the bedrooms and recreation rooms.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

19. I was in a shared room. I think there were two or three of us in that room. There were dormitories too. I got moved from one room to another, I don't know why I got moved. I think you could make it your own space with toys and things but I don't remember getting to do things like pick my own duvet cover.
20. There were staff who were on duty, awake, overnight. They had their own office. They were available to help you if you needed it.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

21. I think the food was alright, I can't really remember. We all ate together in the dining room. We had enough to eat and I think we could get snacks if we wanted.

### *Washing/bathing*

22. You could go for a shower or a bath any time you wanted. It wasn't private, anyone could walk in but there were no issues for me in the showers.

### *Leisure time*

23. We would just have had whatever toys and things kids had at that time, I can't really remember. I don't even know if I had any of my own toys, I am just presuming what we had. I got on alright with the other children but I can't remember the names of anyone I was friends with.
24. We played in the woods in the grounds. You weren't supposed to leave the grounds but I did. I used to go to Largs which was four or five miles away. I would either get the train or walk. I just kicked about in Largs. I was still probably using glue at that time, but it escalated to nail varnish and petrol. I did that sometimes in Largs, I would steal stuff in the shops. I think I did get caught shoplifting sometimes but I can't remember going to the children's panel about it. I can't remember getting any help about my substance abuse.

### *Trips and holidays*

25. They took us on trips to go swimming in Largs and ice skating at the Magnum centre in Irvine. We had other days out too. They had a van and a car they would take us in.
26. We did have overnight trips to caravans which was alright. Not everybody went on these trips at the same time, but everybody got to go.

### *Schooling*

27. The education was all done on the premises. There were porta-cabins at the side of the building for different classes. We moved about from classroom to classroom. I can't remember much about the teachers but they were different staff from the care staff. None of them stick in my mind for good or bad reasons.
28. The schooling was alright, it was relaxed. It was different from mainstream school. If you didn't want to do something, you didn't have to do it. I did start to do better at school in Southannan. I think it was because I wanted to get back to normality, back closer to where I lived.

### *Healthcare*

29. Although I had been seeing psychiatrists before I went to Southannan, I didn't see anyone like that when I was there. I don't remember getting any medical treatment at Southannan.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

30. I don't remember being at Southannan for my birthday. I was there at Christmas time, but nothing really stands out to me about that. I got Christmas presents from my family and from the home. You got a clothing grant a couple of times a year and the staff would take you out shopping.

### *Bed Wetting*

31. I think there were some kids who wet the bed when I was at Southannan but I didn't have that problem. I don't know how the issue was dealt with.

### *Visitors*

32. I did get visits from my family sometimes. I would get out sporadically as well and the contact would go well for some time but then something would happen, like me getting into bother, and it would stop. There were periods where I might go six months without being able to see my mum or my brothers, but I don't know why that was. I probably did find it difficult when I wasn't having any contact with my family.

### *Review of care / detention*

33. There were social workers involved with me when I was at Southannan, I can remember them visiting me but I can't remember anything they did for me. Sometimes they would take me out of Southannan.

### *Discipline*

34. The thing that stands out in my head with discipline is that if you were carrying on when the night staff were on, they would come in in the morning, get you out of your bed, and make you sit so that you couldn't sleep. It was earlier than the normal time for getting you up, maybe before 7:00 am. That kind of escalated and it was a fine line between discipline and abuse.

### *Running away*

35. I ran away a lot. they would take your trainers off you and make you wear pyjamas, so that if you wanted to run away, you didn't have clothes or shoes to do it in. It got to the point where I would just run away in my pyjamas. There was nothing they could do about it.
36. There must have been something driving me to run away, but I don't know what because I was still very young. I would be away for a week at a time, and I was less than ten years old. I would run away to Glasgow, so I always had somewhere to go. It was always the police who would pick me up, or I would go home and my mum would

phone the police. I can't remember if the police said anything to me when they lifted me.

### **Abuse at Southannan**

37. Thinking back, I feel it was abuse when some things were done as discipline. It escalated from getting you up in the morning and having to sit so you couldn't sleep, to being made to stand in your bare feet when it was freezing cold. They would also make me sit in the dining room with nothing to eat, when everyone else around me was getting some breakfast.
38. It wasn't all the members of staff who would do this, but one in particular stands out in my mind and that was [REDACTED], he took it to extremes. [REDACTED] was a member of the day shift staff. I think [REDACTED] second name was [REDACTED]. I don't know how old he was, probably in his forties. He had whitish hair. He was a wee guy who was a bit overweight.
39. They did use restraint techniques at Southannan. I couple of times I experienced restraints when I hadn't done anything wrong. They would restrain you to try and make you blow up, to lose your temper.
40. There was a room in Southannan called the soft room. It had padded walls, floor, and ceiling. One time, one of the staff took me in there and restrained me for nothing. It was my keyworker [REDACTED], and I got on alright with him. From what I can remember I wasn't antagonising him. I was laughing at first but it did get to the point where my temper did break.
41. When the staff restrained you they would sit on you so you couldn't use your arms and legs. Sometimes they would cover your mouth so you couldn't spit. At ten years old, in the heat of the moment, you don't care what's disgusting, you'll spit and try to head-butt people if they are restraining you. I was restrained quite a lot, I couldn't say how often. I didn't really have any injuries from that, sometimes my arms would be sore.



42. When I think back to that time, and think what I would have done to restrain someone, I wouldn't have done what they did. There were some staff who used restraints more than others. I can't remember what the other staff did instead of using restraint techniques.

### **Leaving Southannan**

43. I started doing alright at school in Southannan so I started going to mainstream school in the community. I went to Largs Academy for secondary school. I think I was there for eight months and they decided I should go back to a residential home so that I could continue to go out to school. I went to Park Lodge for a period and I went to Hillpark Secondary School on the south side of Glasgow.

### **Park Lodge Children's home, Newlands, Glasgow 1993 to 1994**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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52. I had various social workers over the years and I can't remember who I had at Park Lodge. I think I was at Park Lodge for about a year, I'm not sure.

#### **Alva Children's Home 1993/4**

53. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

#### **Leaving Park Lodge**

54. I can't remember moving to Newfield but I remember being in Park Lodge when it was decided that I was going to Newfield.

#### **Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone 1994**

55. Newfield was a new building, it was designed for being an assessment centre.

#### **Routine at Newfield**

56. Newfield was made up of different units. They all had names but I can't remember the names. Newfield was a mix of boys and girls and the separate units were also a mix of boys and girls. I don't know how many people were in my unit but they were all

about the same age as me. I can't remember if the different units were based on age range.

57. I can't remember much about the daily routine at Newfield. They didn't take us out anywhere, we were always in Newfield. I don't remember anything particularly bad or good about Newfield.

#### *Schooling*

58. I think we got education but I can't remember.

#### *Running away*

59. I was always running away from Newfield. I would just sneak out of one of the doors or the fire escapes. I would go back to Glasgow, I would be away for nights at a time. The police would find me and bring me back. When I did run away, I was getting into trouble. I was at children's panels for new charges and offences.

#### **Leaving Newfield Assessment Centre.**

60. I was only in Newfield for a few months. I didn't get assessed by any professionals, it was just a place to be while they decided if I was going back to my family, or going into residential care. I'm not sure what I wanted to happen at the time but I would have been part of the decision making process. What did happen is that I went to Kerelaw.

#### **Kerelaw, Stevenson 1995 to 1996**

61. I'm not sure if I visited Kerelaw before I went there. I think I was a bit paranoid about going there because I had heard rumours about it in Park Lodge. They said that Kerelaw was where all the baddies went. It had a secure unit in it as well, which was

different to the other places I had been in. I might have felt a bit intimidated when I arrived there.

### **Routine at Kerelaw**

62. I can remember a few of the staff at Kerelaw. There was **KBE**, **KBD** **KBD**. There was a man called **KGJ** and a woman called Winnie but I can't remember their second names. They were alright to start with but not at the end.
63. My keyworker was a guy called **KBL**. He was alright. He did the same thing as my previous keyworkers. He came to my children's panel meetings and things.

### *First day*

64. I can't remember being shown around or there being anything done to settle me in but I'm sure that was done.
65. Kerelaw was made up of four big long units. They were like long corridors with upstairs and downstairs. There were two units for boys and two for girls. There was the separate secure unit but I was never in there.
66. The unit I was in was open, it wasn't really secure. You could come and go if you wanted. I don't know how many boys were in my unit, maybe 25, I'm not sure. The other boys were all about fourteen to sixteen years of age. They were all about my age.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

67. There were single rooms at Kerelaw but I was in a double room.

### *Clothing/uniform*

68. Your stuff was always getting stolen at Kerelaw. If you had a pair of denims, or a pair of trainers, somebody bigger than you would steal them. The staff noticed this but I can't remember anything getting done about it.

### *Leisure time*

69. I can remember some kindness at Kerelaw. My keyworker, KBL played He took me and another couple of boys down to his training and to matches.

### *Trips and holidays*

70. They took us out on the usual trips, like swimming and ice-skating. There were a lot of things that happened on outings that I haven't spoken about. Things that the staff did to amuse themselves but they weren't right.
71. I remember my keyworker KBL team played a team from Musselburgh and KBL team won. On the way back in the coach there was a big booze up and we got a couple of beers. There were some good times, but it was mostly all bad.

### *Schooling*

72. There was a school in Kerelaw and you had to go to school, it was mandatory. Even if you didn't like it, you still had to go. We had all the usual subjects Maths, English, and Music. I still liked Maths when I was there. The teachers were alright. If you stepped out of line you got disciplined. The discipline would depend on what you had done. There were a couple of occasions where teachers cracked up and probably took it a bit far. I had a couple of experiences of teachers assaulting me in Kerelaw, on different occasions.
73. There was an independent living unit in Kerelaw, for people getting ready to leave care, but I was never in it.

### *External Inspections*

74. I didn't really get family visits at Kerelaw because I was on the run so much. When I was on the run from Kerelaw I was away for weeks at a time. I was going home but then I was never home, I was always out.

### *Running away*

75. I think I was on the run from Kerelaw more often than I was in it. I mostly went back to Glasgow but a couple of times I went to Ayr. I was pally with a couple of boys in Kerelaw who were from Ayr. I would sleep rough on the streets rather than going back to Kerelaw and experience the assaults and the bullying.
76. The police would always be out looking for me, then I would get arrested, and then stand-by social workers would come and get me. I think some people did ask me why I was running away. I can't remember if I ever told them why.

### *Discipline*

77. The staff used restraints in Kerelaw. It would depend who it was whether it was reasonable or excessive. If you got into an argument with one of the staff, they might throw you about for a bit before they put your arms up your back and sat on you. That happened to me but I wasn't badly injured from it, just sore. <sup>KBE</sup> [REDACTED] was one of the ones who would throw you about before sitting on you.

### **Abuse at Kerelaw**

78. There were things that happened in Kerelaw. I got terrorised when I was in Kerelaw, by staff and pupils. My experience wasn't good there.

79. One time I was in the Maths class. I was carrying on with another boy. The teacher told me to stop but I just carried on being problematic. I can't remember the teacher's full name but I know his first name was KBK. When he got angry, KBK used to make a kind of growl. Sometimes we would antagonise him to make him do it. One time I antagonised him he pinned me against the wall with a table, then dragged me over the table, and threw me across the classroom. It was probably my own fault but he was a teacher, so thinking back it wasn't really O.K. what he did. I wasn't injured by that incident but I got a shock. The other kids were probably shocked as well. After he did that KBK called me, "A wee bastard." and threw me out of the class. I just went back to the unit. I think some of the other staff asked me what had happened. I just said I was mucking about in class and got thrown out. I don't think I said any more than that but they didn't ask either.
80. The art teacher, Matt George, also assaulted me a couple of times. He slapped me about, around the face. He was actually alright but we antagonised him a lot. The background to him assaulting me was that I wasn't doing what he wanted me to do. I was supposed to be making something out of clay, I think I was making an ashtray. I was messing about with the clay and he told me off a couple of times but I just kept doing it. He confronted me about it and I think I was cheeky to him. He slapped me across the face with the back of his hand and then with the open palm of his hand. I don't remember being left with any marks but it was sore and I got a fright. I just left the class and I think I ran away from Kerelaw that night.
81. There was another time when I was assaulted by the Matt George. We used to noise him up a lot so it was partly my own fault. He looked like SuperMario from the Nintendo games so we used to call him SuperMario or Luigi. He had really bad breath as well so we also called him Carbolic Coffee-breath. He used to tell us that he was a second dan black belt in Karate, and that he did Kung-Fu. There were times when he would try and show you things but he would hurt you.
82. Matt George would always hurt people with arm locks and hitting pressure points He would grab you at pressure points and put you down, or grab your head and do things in a certain way to put you down by just touching you. He would do it until you



screamed. He wasn't doing that all the time in class, just on occasions. He did that to me two or three times.

83. I saw Matt George hitting a few other people as well. Matt George actually hurt a couple of people, including me, with some of the things he did. There was one boy called **KMX**. Matt George twisted his arm up his back. I think he nearly broke his arm because **KMX** had to walk about with his arm in a sling for a week or so. I was in the class when that happened.
84. In Kerelaw it wasn't always serious assaults but it was brutal a lot of the time. A lot of the abuse happened in the unit rather than the classrooms. There was one time I was in the shower and **KBE** was telling me to get out. I didn't want to, I was standing there washing. I told him to fuck off. He dragged me out of the shower, naked, and dragged me along a long corridor. I had carpet burns on my back and my backside. He gave me a lot of verbal abuse and put me in my place.
85. **KBE** assaulted me a few times. There was one time that me and another boy were in the process of running away. We sneaked in the office window and stole the petty cash. It had all the kids' pocket money in it. We ran away and I got caught and was sent back to Kerelaw.
86. When I went back it was **KBE** and **KBL** who met me and they were all nicey-nicey. **KBE** said, "Sit down son. I just want to talk to you." so I thought everything was alright. **KBE** shut the door and as soon as he did that, he lifted me off my chair and threw me against the wall. **KBL** was outside when that happened. **KBE** then sort of rag-dolled me about. I wasn't badly injured by that but I was scared of **KBE**. The other staff members knew what was going on. They could have done something to prevent that from happening again but they never.
87. There was another time when we went on holiday to a lodge in Dumfries and Galloway, it was off-grid. They had a diesel generator for electricity. They probably took about twelve of us, I'm not sure how many. We would build a fire and sit around that. The

staff were always drinking at night, they brought booze with them. That night, we went in to go to bed but our beds had been terrorised. The staff had poured coffee and cereal on our beds and they were soaking, so we couldn't go into our beds. We thought it was just a joke but the next night me and other boy, **KMX** went upstairs to go to bed. We walked into the room and **KBE** and another member of staff, **KBD**, were pissing on the beds we slept in.

88. The boy I was with, **KMX**, started cracking up. He said it was out of order that they were doing that. It was one thing to have a carry on with the cereal but not pissing on the beds. The staff had a drink in them and **KBE** grabbed **KMX** by the throat and head-butted him. He burst **KMX** nose. **KMX** ended up with black eyes as well.
89. The other member of staff involved in pissing on the beds, **KBD**, wasn't assaulting any of us, but he was involved in it.
90. **KBE** was one of those ones you didn't want to step out of line with. If someone was doing something like that to my child, I would go mad. **KBE** wasn't assaulting people every day but if anyone stepped out of line **KBE** would deal with them. I witnessed **KBE** being violent towards people several times. The other staff were aware of it. They were complicit in it.
91. The other staff weren't violent in the sense of battering you but they would do things. For instance, they used to take us into the gym for a game of football or something. There was an unofficial rule that before you got a game of football you had to have a game of Murderball. Sometimes they used medicine balls, other times the staff were using golf clubs to hit golf balls as us while we were running about trying to avoid being hit.
92. The Murderball didn't go on for too long. It went on until the staff were satisfied or someone had been hurt enough. I was hurt sometimes when they did that. I don't remember someone being hurt to the extent that they were badly injured, just getting the wind knocked out of them, or getting a blow on the kidneys. There were a few

different staff who did that. I can't remember all of their names but it would always be the same kind of ones like **KBE** and **KBS** who was from another unit. I can't remember his real name, I think he did boxing.

93. **KBS** would also do something that he thought was a joke. He would throw a bunch of keys in the air for you to catch, and while you were trying to catch it he would punch you in the ribs. He thought it was a joke but it wasn't funny.
94. I saw other young people being assaulted but I never experienced any sexual abuse and I never witnessed that happening to anyone else. All the stuff that happened to me or I saw happening to others was physical. The staff would sometimes burst into your room at night and turn the fire extinguishers on us as we were lying in bed. The staff also got kids up in the middle of the night and had them run races through a burn and then back. That didn't happen to me but it did happen to others.
95. Those were just a couple of things that happened at Kerelaw, there were hundreds of instances of abuse. I don't want to say that the staff were always battering us, they weren't, but there were a couple of occasions where they did physically hurt me.
96. There was a lot of bullying by other kids in Kerelaw. I was the victim of bullying in Kerelaw. The staff knew it was going on but they didn't often intervene. I don't think it would be a good idea for me to give you the names of the other kids who were doing the bullying. I have been in jail for the best part of twenty years now, and I have bumped in to some of the bullies from Kerelaw. Your past always catches up with you.
97. There was one time these boys who were bullying me shouted me up to a room. I knew what they were doing because they had done the same thing to someone else the week before. They put me in a wardrobe and put the wardrobe on the ground with me locked inside and the doors facing the floor. They put mattresses and beds on top of the wardrobe.
98. I wasn't worried because I had worked out how to get out, I let them get on with it, I was calm. They left the room laughing, they thought it was funny. As soon as they left

I booted the bottom of the wardrobe, went out the window, and went on the run. I told my mum what had happened and I told my lawyer, Jim Friel. He intervened and I ended up getting put in Cardross.

### **Cardross 1995/6**

99. Cardross was like Newfield, it was an assessment centre. It was somewhere I didn't know. While you were in Cardross you had to sit in pyjamas, a housecoat, and slippers. There were bars on the windows, it was like being in jail. I was only in Cardross for a few weeks. There wasn't anything abusive that happened to me in Cardross.
100. I ended up going back to Kerelaw because compared to Cardross, it seemed like the better option.

### **Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw**

101. My keyworker knew about the bullying that went on, they all knew because it had been brought up by me, my family, and my lawyer but nothing changed. Sometimes they would speak to the person that was doing the bullying but that would usually make it worse. I probably did stop telling them about it because that made it worse.
102. I told my mum about the abuse in Kerelaw and my mum instigated a lawyer getting involved for me. I told my lawyer about the abuse as well.
103. I'm not sure if I reported the incident with the wardrobe to the children's panel but I'm sure it was raised by my mum or my lawyer.

## Leaving Kerelaw

104. Things escalated with my drug misuse at Kerelaw. I was drinking, I was taking ecstasy. Some of the time you got treated with respect but Kerelaw was like an anomaly. Things were done officially but some things weren't done right, weren't done officially. Just the way they did things wasn't right. I can't remember anything good about Kerelaw, it was one of the worst experiences in my life.
105. I had been in a lot of different places by the time I was fourteen or fifteen, but by then it was normal for me. I was probably fifteen years old by the time I left Kerelaw. In my opinion, I was a problem for them. A placement came up to live with a family in Livingstone. I went as soon as I could. The family came up to visit me and I went to visit their house and see the area.

### FOJ-FON ██████████ Foster Care, ██████████ Livingstone 1996 to 1997

106. FOJ ██████████ real name was FOJ ██████████ but he was known as FOJ ██████████. It wasn't a proper foster placement. From what I can recollect, it was a new organisation and I was one of the first people to stay with a family through that organisation. I can't remember the name of the organisation. They weren't just taking kids from Kerelaw but I don't know all of the arrangements.

### Routine at FOJ-FON ██████████

#### *First day*

107. I was fifteen years old when I went to live with FOJ-FON ██████████ FOJ-FON ██████████ drove me through to their house. FOJ ██████████ and FON ██████████ were from Glasgow so I had something in common with them. They were from the same kind of background.

108. Their house was nice. They had other children, two girls and a boy. Their oldest daughter, [REDACTED] had her own house so it was their younger daughter, [REDACTED] who was the same age as me, and their son [REDACTED] who was about four or five years younger than me, who were in the house. It was alright to start with, it was fine, but things changed. As time went on I didn't like the placement.
109. [REDACTED] was a bit strict. One of the first things he said to me was, "I don't care what you do, just don't bring trouble to my door." And with reference to his son, [REDACTED] "You touch a hair on his head, I'll fucking do you in." That wouldn't have been an issue anyway, but that's what he said.

*Mornings and bedtime*

110. I shared a room with another boy who was from the same circumstances as me. He was from Edinburgh but I can't remember his name. He was the same age as me, fifteen. We had bunk beds. He arrived around about the same time as me.

*Schooling*

111. I wasn't going to school at [REDACTED]. I was working in a place called Blackburn, near Livingstone.

*Work*

112. I was working as a trainee joiner in Blackburn, I liked the joinery work. [REDACTED] was pushing me to join the army, even though I didn't want to join the army. I was just doing it anyway. I had been to the careers office and did the aptitude tests. They decided they were going to let me in and send me to basic training, but I had to wait until I was sixteen years old. I just carried on doing my training, which was running five mile to work and running back five miles after work. I was getting myself fit.

## Leaving [FOJ-FON] foster care

113. My placement at [FOJ-FON] family came to an end abruptly, I don't want to say any more about it. I went to stay with another family. After I left [FOJ-FON] the idea of me going to the army went out the window.

## [FOJ-FON] Foster Care, Bo' Ness 1997

114. [FOJ-FON] real name was [FOJ-FON] I think. I was only there a couple of months. I think that placement was organised by the same organisation that place me with [FOJ-FON]. Because of the problems I had in the previous placement, I just didn't want to be there.

## Routine at [FOJ-FON] foster care.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

115. I shared a room with another boy who [FOJ-FON] were fostering.

### *Leisure time*

116. My drug use continued when I was at [FOJ-FON] house. I didn't know anyone in the area but I was always in Glasgow.

### *Review of care / detention*

117. There would have been social work involvement and children's panels when I was at that placement but I can't remember anything about it.

## Leaving [REDACTED] placement

118. My placement in Bo'ness just broke down. It wasn't their fault, it was my fault. After that I went back to stay with my mother for a week or two before the social workers sorted me out with a supported accommodation.

## Life after being in care

119. I went to live in the high rise flats [REDACTED] in Glasgow. It was my first experience of living independently. In the blocks of flats where I stayed there were four or five flats for people and a flat that was like an office for the staff to stay in. I think it was council run. Every so often they would come in and check on you. Every week they would give you your money to buy messages, and then make sure you had actually bought messages. I had to cook for myself and there was help with that if you needed it, but I managed alright.
120. It was alright because it was an area a lot of my pals were from, I knew a lot of people. I had my first child when I was sixteen years old. My girlfriend stayed downstairs from me, it was good. I stayed there for about a year. I can't remember how I was filling my days, I wasn't doing a college course or anything.
121. My involvement with social workers ended when I was seventeen years old because I went to jail. I went to Longriggend and then Polmont Young Offenders Institutions. I was just on remand at Longriggend a few times before I got sentenced. Longriggend was alright. I can't think of anything abusive in Longriggend or Polmont but there was bullying going on.
122. There was always bullying going on in the jail back then, but nowadays bullying isn't really tolerated in the jail. These days the bullies get bullied, if you follow what I mean. If someone tries to bully someone else now, it doesn't get tolerated, nobody stands for it. I was terrorised growing up with bullies but now if I see it happening to someone else I'll put a stop to it. It does still go on, there are all forms of bullying, but the classic



type of bullying doesn't. People stick up for the victims of bullying because probably everyone has been subjected to bullying. People's attitudes have changed.

123. I have been in and out of jail ever since my first remand at the start of 1999. My first sentence was in [REDACTED] 2000. I have only been out of jail for about sixteen months in total since then. I did have a couple of jobs when I was at liberty, but not for any length of time.
124. Most of my offending has been related to violence. Most of my adult life has been spent in jail, and that is nobody's fault but my own, but I have thought about it a lot and, without trying to justify my behaviour, my experiences of growing up in care probably had something to do with the position I am in just now.

### **Impact**

125. Kerelaw had a big impact on me, again without trying to justify my behaviour. My time in care had a big impact on my education. I chose to leave school without any qualifications. The older I have got, the more education I have got. I have been in the jail for ten years. About five or six years ago I thought I should use my time to get qualifications. I don't have any goals set for what I want to do but I thought if I could get a Higher or two, maybe that could lead to something else.
126. I think my time in care has affected my mental health. When I meet people there is probably a brick wall between us before I let my guard down. I have opened up to the Inquiry team but if you met me in different circumstances I would probably be totally different. I find it difficult to trust people.
127. I think my time in care has affected my relationships with other people. I was always isolated. I was the only one in my family to get put into care. It definitely affected my relationship with my brothers. I feel I was closer to my older brother and my younger brother before I went into care, my other brothers came along while I was in care so

that was another situation. I missed out on time with them when I was young so I don't really know them. I only speak to a couple of them and my mum.

128. My dad died when I was sixteen years old. I wasn't bothered about it because the last time I saw him was when I was twelve years old and that was when he was sitting in front of me on a bus when I was getting taken to Glasgow Sheriff Court. I didn't speak to him, I remember the bad things he did to us.
129. I would say that my misuse of substances was another consequence of my being in care because I probably wouldn't have known about any of that stuff if it hadn't been for the people who were introducing me to it. I know you could get that kind of exposure to substances anywhere but probably more so in that environment. The kind of substances I was exposed to in care led me on to other things.
130. I do think about my time in care, I dream about it a lot. Sometimes I have nightmares and flashbacks. I don't know what triggers them. Things sometimes just pop into my head for no reason. I have had panic attacks but the older the get, the better I can deal with them. I don't know if that's from being in care, or drugs, or what.
131. I think my time in care has impacted on me being a dad because I am in jail. I still get to see my kids but they are older now. My son is 18 years old and my daughters are 22 and 24 years old. My son is in jail just now. It does worry me that he is there.

### **Treatment/support**

132. I haven't had any counselling. I spoke to a psychologist once but I never went back to see her. I may have been offered support in the jail and refused it, I'm not sure. I did speak to someone last year who asked me some general questions, not specifically about childhood abuse.
133. Before I came into prison I was given probation one time but I breached that and got re-sentenced.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

134. I haven't made any report to the police as an adult about the abuse I experienced in care. I think reporting matters to the Inquiry is probably enough for me.
135. I came forward to the Inquiry because of a lot of high profile cases in the media recently and because a lot of folk I grew up in care with were abused.

### **Records**

136. I don't have any records from my time in care. I haven't tried to get them, it's not something I'm bothered about.

### **Application to the redress scheme/ other compensation**

137. I did speak to my solicitor last year about an application which I thought was for the Inquiry and for her to fill in the forms for me because I am not very good with official documents. I think that was what the forms were for, I don't think it was for compensation. I should speak to her about compensation.

### **Lessons to be learned**

138. I'm not sure what lessons can be learned from my experiences in care, I have never really thought about it to that level. Perhaps if there had been something in place to help with some things then some things might not have turned out badly for folk.
139. There are people in the same situation as myself who were abused in care. Not everybody who is in care goes to jail but I have met a lot of people who were in homes

in jail. There were things that happened that should never have happened and should never happen. But they did.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

140. I know the Inquiry is probably going to help young people who are going through the system just now and in the future. I am happy to have been asked to help with that.

**Other information**

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

GFP  


Signed .....

Dated 26.5.2022 .....