

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GPW

Support person present: No

1. My name is GPW. That was the name that I was known by when I was in care. My date of birth is 1970. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I was at a number of institutions, sometimes on multiple occasions, throughout my time in care so it can be difficult to say when I went to certain places. Because of that some of the timings may be out of order or not accurate in my statement. Where I can I have tried to provide an estimate of when I believe I was at the places I was at. I have been quite fortunate because I have some information from records I have recovered and that has helped me form a timeline.

Life before going into care

3. My mother is called . Her maiden name is . She had various different jobs when she was working. I don't remember a lot about where she worked. I think at times she worked in a bakery and a brewery in Leith. My father's name was . He passed away in 2019. He was a trawler man.
4. I was born in Edinburgh. I have one sister called . She is over three years older than me. I assumed she always stayed with my mother and that she never spent any time in care. However, recently she made a comment to my partner which suggested she had been in care. It could be that her time in care is something I blocked out growing up. It is just something that I don't remember. I don't have a lot of memories surrounding the house where we initially all lived together. The house

was in the Pilton area of Edinburgh. I don't think there are any bad memories there but there aren't an awful lot of good memories either. My father was at sea a lot of time.

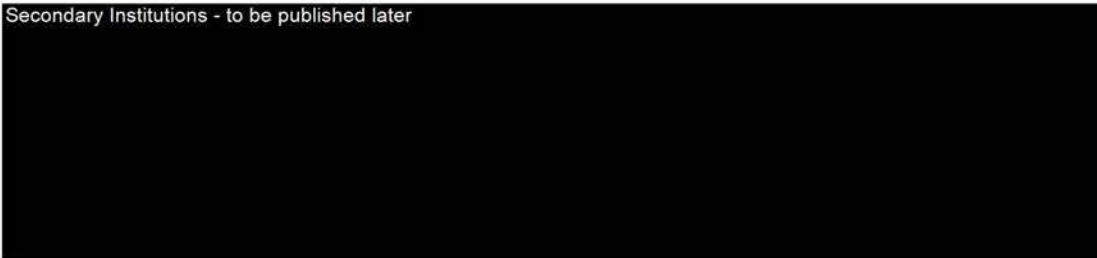
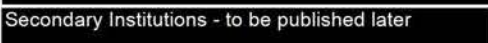
5. My parents divorced when I was about six years old. After the divorce I went back and forth between lots of different houses. I was always on my own rather than with my sister. I kind of floated between houses because my father was gambling and my mother was struggling financially and with drink. I was often allowed to go and stay with my father even though he didn't have a permanent address. I would also stay with lots of different aunts, uncles and grandparents. Looking back, I don't understand why that was allowed.

6. There was a time when I spent some time living with my maternal grandmother, Nanna [REDACTED] but that was earlier on in my childhood and my mother would have also been living with us. I probably spent most of my time with my Nanna [REDACTED] who was my father's mother. She lived in Wester Hailes. I don't want to blame anyone but looking back I think I was moved around more because of my mother and father's difficulties than anything else. I do remember there being a lot of confrontation and being dumped at Nanna [REDACTED] house. She would in turn end up with too much on her plate and then I would be dumped on my aunts and uncles.

7. The circumstances surrounding my mother and father did affect me. The moving between houses resulted in me needing to change schools all of the time. I went to a few schools. Amongst the ones that I remember are Silverknowes Primary School, Inch View Primary School, Granton Primary School, Towerbank Primary School in Portobello and Clovenstone Primary School. I don't remember how long I was at each school. I think Clovenstone Primary School was the last primary school I went to before being taken more permanently into care. My time there was the longest I had spent at any one school. I started skipping school from an early age. Money was tight because my father was a gambler. I never had some of the nicer clothes that some of the other children at school had. I would be going into school with ripped jeans and shoes with holes in them. That all lead to bullying and fighting with other kids at school.

8. I have no memories surrounding this happening but I can see from records I have recovered that social services first became involved in April 1981. I don't know whether until then I just flew under the radar. I wasn't getting physically abused by anyone. The social worker I dealt with initially, and until much later in my childhood, was a social worker by the name of John Grant. I have quite fond memories of John Grant. I liked the guy and really did get on well with him. I don't know whether I perhaps viewed him as some sort of father figure. I maybe resented him sometimes because his job was to force me to go to the places I was placed at but overall I think he was a good person.
9. I think that social services only became involved because I was skipping school and the things I was doing at school when I was there. By the time I was ten I had done a couple of stupid things at Inch View Primary School. I remember that I turned up drunk one day when I was nine or ten years old. One of the reasons I wasn't getting on at school surrounded my eyesight. I was given National Health Service glasses. That was just one of the things that contributed to me being bullied and getting into fights. I remember at Inch View Primary I was fighting other kids almost on a daily basis. That led to me avoiding wearing my glasses and that in turn resulted in me not being able to see the blackboard and starting to act the class clown. All that led to me skipping school. Looking back, the teachers must have been aware what was going on but they probably just thought I was "a little shit."

Calder Grove Children's Home, 17 Calder Grove, Wester Hailes, Edinburgh

10.  Secondary Institutions - to be published later
-  Secondary Institutions - to be published later As far as I can see from my records I was sent there for a period of assessment.

11. I don't remember where Calder Grove Children's Home fits into my time in care but I think, from reading a report I received from records I recovered, it was before I ended up at my [REDACTED]'s house and wasn't directly before being taken to Dr Guthrie's. The report says that it was the first place I went to and it was in [REDACTED] 1982. For some reason in my mind I thought it might have been after first going to Dr Guthrie's but I must be wrong. If the records are right I would have been twelve years old when I first went there.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

I can't

remember leaving Calder Grove but it could be that I went back to my Nanna [REDACTED] after being there prior to being ultimately taken to Ferniehill.

Ferniehill Young People's Centre, 2 Ferniehill Street, Liberton, Edinburgh

15. Ferniehill was a children's home like Calder Grove or Northfield. I don't remember being given an explanation as to why I was being sent to Ferniehill but I think it came around the time I was expelled from school. I can't remember why I went there but records I recovered suggest I first went there in [REDACTED] 1982. If those records are correct I would have been twelve years old when I was there. I couldn't say how long I was at Ferniehill, however, I wasn't there a very long time. My records suggest that I went to Dr Guthrie's in [REDACTED] 1982 so, if they are correct, I can't have gone there for any longer than five or six months.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Ferniehill and time leading up to going to Dr Guthrie's

22. I don't know why I left Ferniehill but I know from my records that I was expelled from Liberton High School in [REDACTED] 1982. It is during this time period that I have my first

clear memories of my social worker, John Grant, being involved. I've got a vague memory of pleading with him not to be sent to Dr Guthrie's.

23. I think I was living at my Nanna [REDACTED] house in Wester Hailes directly before being taken to Dr Guthrie's. I was supposed to go to a children's panel hearing but I never went. I couldn't say whether that was the first children's panel hearing that had been set up involving me but I remember it because of what happened next. It was because I didn't attend the hearing that John Grant turned up one dark night at my Nanna [REDACTED] house. I tried to run away and he caught me. I think my auntie showed him where I was hiding under a bed and he got me. I don't remember him physically grabbing me. I think I just conceded that I needed to go.
24. After John Grant collected me he took me straight to Dr Guthrie's in his car. I don't remember anyone else being in the car. My memories aren't clear surrounding whether John Grant explained where I was going or what was happening. I think I was probably too upset and annoyed to take anything in. I must have known what was going on because I didn't want to be taken away. Looking back, even if I had attended the children's panel hearing I think I would have still ended up being sent to Dr Guthrie's.

Dr Guthrie's List D School, Liberton, Edinburgh

25. I didn't know what organisation ran Dr Guthrie's. At the time I assumed it was run by the council because I was taken there by a social worker. I have since read up the history of Dr Guthrie's and know a bit more about who ran it and how it came about but that all came in adult life. To me it wasn't a very secure place. I think they tried to make sure you didn't leave after hours by locking the main doors to the place. However, it wasn't like a prison where they would lock the doors and that was it.
26. I first went to Dr Guthrie's when I was twelve years old. My records suggest that that was in [REDACTED] 1982. I was probably one of the youngest and smallest boys in there at that time. I left when I was about fourteen years old sometime approximately before

1985. I was definitely there in the lead up to it closing down. By that time I had stopped staying residentially and was only attending the school as a day pupil. I couldn't say how old I was when I finally stopped staying residentially at Dr Guthrie's but I can say that there were a number of times I resided there between attempts to try and place me at other children's homes.

Layout of Dr Guthrie's

27. Dr Guthrie's was in its own grounds. There was a drive that led up to the main building. The main building entrance looked like a really old school building. I remember that the rooms all had high ceilings. There was a big corridor that led from the main entrance. There was a room to the left of the entrance which you first went into when you arrived. All it had in it was a table and chairs. There were three wings to the building. Those wings wrapped around a square in the middle. That was where we went on our breaks and things like that. There was an outside toilet located in the corner of the square which was called 'The Pans.' That was where we would congregate to smoke during breaks.
28. On the ground floor was the dining room, the nurse's room, some staff rooms and one or two classrooms. I remember there was only one further floor but there were rumours amongst the boys that there was a second floor. The rumour was that the second floor was haunted and so on. The first floor was where all the dorms were located. There were three dorms in each wing of the building. Two of the dormitories were larger than the other one in the wing I was in. There was a staff room and a television room between the larger dorms in my wing. A little bit down some of the stairs was a smaller dorm opposite the showers and the toilets.
29. Towards the back of the main building was a newer building where the school was located. There was a workshop where we did Woodwork, a room used for Art then a block of classrooms where we were taught music, English and maths. In that block there was a room where we could sit quietly, read or play chess. There was another building where the gym and the swimming pool were located.

Staff structure

30. When I first went to Dr Guthrie's I was one of the youngest and smallest boys there. Because of that all the staff seemed big and scary to me. There was a headmaster, a deputy headmaster and an assistant headmaster. There were separate staff members who worked in the school to those who worked on the residential side of Dr Guthrie's. There was a teacher in charge of the school and someone separate in charge of the residential side. There were usually two or three members of staff on duty in your wing at any one time. There were some staff who worked in the kitchen, possibly some cleaners and a gardener.

Staff

31. Mr [GFC] was [SNR] [LYI] was [SNR] His nickname was [LYI]' They were the top two members of staff at Dr Guthrie's when I first went there.
32. [HWG] was something like [SNR] in Dr Guthrie's. I can't remember his exact job title. He was quite high up. He was one of my main key workers throughout my time there. He was my main point of contact at Dr Guthrie's. I recall him being a very nice guy and was one of the staff that I trusted. I think he went on to work at Wellington School after Dr Guthrie's closed down. I believe he ultimately [SNR].
33. [GQC] was responsible for me when I was upstairs in the dorms. He was a bit like my key worker when it came to the residential side of things rather than being my key worker for all of Dr Guthrie's. He was a really big guy both in terms of height and weight.
34. Liz was another member of staff who worked in the residential side of the school. She worked in the wing where my dorm was. I can't remember her surname. I think she worked in a team when on shift with [GQC].

35. GBD was one of the staff members who worked in the dorms in the main part of the building. He was a strange man.
36. Jacqui Horsburgh was the main teacher who taught English. I think she was the head teacher on the school side of Dr Guthrie's. She was quite nice. She was one of the few teachers who was ok and actually tried to teach you.
37. KEP was a PE teacher. GWV was an English teacher. Mr Mallon taught woodwork. I don't remember his first name. HIH was a music teacher. I don't remember his second name.
38. GBE was an older guy who was the gardener. He had worked at Dr Guthrie's since the time my dad and uncles were there.

The children at Dr Guthrie's

39. It was all boys. I'd say there were over fifty boys there but possibly not as many as one hundred. The age range was between about ten and sixteen years old. There were guys there when I first arrived who were twice the size of me. I remember some of the boys had near enough reached full puberty with beards. I think there were boys who were from the areas I had lived albeit I didn't know them before I went there. I later discovered that they knew members of my family and so on.
40. There were various different reasons why boys ended up at Dr Guthrie's. Some of the boys had been found breaking into things or stealing. Some were there for more serious things. Other boys had been playing truant. Although I wasn't breaking into places I was from a similar background to the other boys around me. Some of the boys were quite laid back but others were more 'barmy.'

Routine at Dr Guthrie's

First day

41. My father and a couple of my uncles went to Dr Guthrie's when they were children. I was aware of that when I went there. I think that might have added to me being scared about going there before I arrived. The first memory I have of Dr Guthrie's is seeing this grand old building and having this feeling of being dumped. I remember the place giving me the creeps. After arriving, I think I was taken into the room to the left of the entrance by my social worker, John Grant, to meet a member of staff. I think the staff member was HWG. HWG explained what was going to happen whilst John Grant was there. I don't remember what was said. He might have explained why I was there and how long I would be staying. I was very upset at the time so I couldn't say whether he did say those things or not. I wasn't happy and just wanted out.
42. After John Grant left HWG said he would take me upstairs and introduce me to my dorm. I think the first person I was introduced to upstairs was a staff member by the name of GQC. I think I was initially welcomed by the other boys as most boys were curious when new boys arrived. I think that helped me feel a little bit more relaxed. My mind went into overdrive past that point so I don't remember what happened next. I remember being quite worried, upset and panicking. It could be I was handed my clothes but I don't remember anything surrounding that. Looking back, I was in a space where I was basically not looking forward to the experience.

Daily routine

43. You would be got up in the morning by a member of staff. I can't remember what time that was done. You would then go down and parade in the hall. That was done so that the staff could undertake a head count. After that you went up and queued for a shower. I can't remember whether we stood with a towel or whether we stood naked. A staff member put some toothpaste on one of your fingers to brush your teeth before you went in. After you had your shower you would get dressed then make your bed

ready for inspection. After your bed area was inspected you would go down for breakfast in the dining hall.

44. After breakfast you would have a short break for a smoke before going straight to school for classes. I think the only weekday where that didn't happen was a Friday when you would instead go up to your dorm to learn whether you were getting out early for weekend leave before going to church and potentially going home on leave. After the morning classes we had lunch followed by a break. It was more classes in the afternoon followed by dinner. You got to smoke another cigarette after your evening meal. You had a bit of time to yourself in the evening before bedtime. That was spent in the dorms. You would later on have to get into your pyjamas but I don't remember the routine surrounding that. I think lights were out by 9:00 pm.
45. If you stayed at Dr Guthrie's over the weekend there were staff present to look after you. I wasn't the only boy who stayed during the weekends. There was usually five or six of us there. They would put you all into one wing. The staff tried to keep you occupied at the weekends but I don't remember anything special being done. We mostly sat around watching television. I remember that over potentially a couple of weekends ^{HWG} ██████ took me home to his house to stay with his family rather than leaving me to be abandoned at Dr Guthrie's. He had a son called ██████ who I would play with. ^{HWG} ██████ must have cleared that with social services and staff. There was nothing strange in that arrangement.

Sleeping arrangements

46. All the dorms had names. I think they were named after islands in the Forth. I can't remember the name of the dorm that I was in but it was a larger one located in the East Wing above the main entrance. I can't remember exactly how many beds there were in my dorm but I can say that there were more than ten. We each had a single bed with a bedside cabinet with drawers and somewhere where we could hang our clothes. There was an almost military approach to our beds and things. The staff would inspect them.

47. It was all sorts of different aged boys in each of the dorms. There would be boys all mixed in between the ages of ten and sixteen. For the most part that was ok. There was a hierarchy amongst the boys in each dorm. I don't remember being bullied by the older boys after lights out. You just put your head down and went to sleep.
48. The dorm doors weren't locked at night time. However, I think the doors that led downstairs might have been locked at night. There were staff members who were on night duty throughout the night. I can't remember who the night staff were or whether the staff I saw during the day took turns. Whoever the staff members were I think they put their heads into the dorms to check we were behaving through the night. You could go to the toilet through the night but I think you had to knock on the staff room door to let them know that you were doing that.

Washing / bathing

49. We had a shower every morning in the shower room. I don't remember having showers any other time. It was an open shower with curtains. I'm not sure whether there were three or four showerheads in the room. It was one boy in then one boy out. I remember sharing showers with guys who were much older and twice the size of me. They'd have full beards and things. There were always staff members standing there watching us shower. I remember Liz being one of the staff members who did that if she was on duty. I don't know whether that was for our protection or something else.

Mealtimes / food

50. Mealtimes were all had in the dining hall. We all went down to eat at the same time. The dining hall was always busy and we would sit along long tables. I think we could sit anywhere we liked. I don't remember whether the staff ate with us but I do remember that there were always staff present keeping an eye on us. One of the staff members who did that was LYI [REDACTED]. He would parade up and down the hall making sure we weren't misbehaving.

51. There was a serving hatch but I can't remember whether we got our food from that or whether the food was served from a trolley. The food was edible. There was nothing special but there wasn't anything bad about it either. I was a really fussy eater but I don't think I ever starved. It was all my kind of food. Everything was fried. I remember spam fritters for some reason. You always got a pudding. I remember there was always a plate of bread on each table with the evening meal. We would always try to make sandwiches with that which wasn't allowed. I don't remember there ever being an issue if you left anything on your plate. There was always someone else willing to take something you didn't want to eat.

Work / chores

52. It was like being in the army. We had to polish our shoes every night. Every morning we had to make our beds and tidy our bed area. I can't remember who first showed me how to do all of that. I think it was a staff member. All the other boys would keep you right later on. Mr GFC inspected our bed area throughout the whole time I was there. Your drawers had to be set out in a certain way and a certain distance from your bed. Your cupboard door had to be lying slightly open. I remember that Mr GFC used to drop a coin on our beds. If the coin didn't land how it was meant to land he would make you strip your bed and start again. It was to everybody's benefit to get it right because stars were awarded to those boys in dorms who did get it right. Those stars in turn would be used at the end of the week to assess whether you got out early for weekend leave.

Clothing / uniform

53. You were given all your clothes. I can't remember how many sets of clothes we were each given. I wore a black jumper with a grey or white 'DG' on it, horrible looking jeans, horrible green polo shirts and brogues. I think we all wore the same uniform. There may have been a different coloured jumper for each wing but I am not sure. I think we put our clothes in a basket that would be taken away to the laundry. I can't remember whether we had names in our clothes, whether we all had our own clothes or how the clothes were returned to us from the laundry.

Pocket money

54. I think you were given pocket money just before you left for weekend leave on a Friday. I think how much you got depended on how good you had been during the week. I don't know how much there was but there was enough to have bus fares to get back to Dr Guthrie's the following Sunday.

School

55. We moved between classrooms during the day. I know that because I would sometimes use that as an opportunity to run away. I have a slight memory of there being a timetable so you knew what classes you were in during the day. I don't think there were staff members taking us from class to class. I think you were with the same group of boys throughout the course of the day. There were at least ten boys in each class. I don't remember doing homework after the school day finished.
56. I think I initially tried to impress during classes at the school but I don't remember anything special about the classes. There was teaching but I couldn't really say to what level it was. There were very few of the teachers who really tried to teach you. I think the presumption was that you wouldn't amount to much and we knew that we were never going to amount to much. I remember that half of Mr ^{GWV} English classes were spent listening to the radio. I remember in particular us regularly listening to 'Our Tune' on the Simon Bates show on Radio 1. That was a regular occurrence and took up half the lesson. There wasn't a lot of work getting done but, looking back, I do think he tried to teach us at times.
57. They must have at some stage felt that things were going ok because they allowed me to attend schools outside of Dr Guthrie's. I attended Gracemount High School. That didn't last very long because of the way I reacted to that. I was told to go back to Dr Guthrie's after a few weeks. I think my time came to an end there because of issues that I caused. I was generally playing the class clown. The truth was that I was distracting people away from realising that I couldn't see the blackboard because I

was avoiding wearing my glasses. There weren't issues with other pupils it was more with me not wanting to be there. Looking back, I can't criticise Dr Guthrie's in their approach to my education because they did try to get me into mainstream education.

Leisure time

58. PE consisted of swimming, playing 5-a-side football in the gym, football outside or other things. I think PE happened a couple of times a week. There was a pool table that was inside the dorm I was in. I liked playing pool. There was a television we could watch. That was located in the dorm opposite mine. There might have been books to read but I chose not to read because it avoided me having to put my glasses on.

Smoking

59. I was a smoker right from the start of going to Dr Guthrie's so I would have been smoking from the age of about eleven years old. During breaks we would smoke in The Pans. The staff knew that boys smoked because we were allowed to smoke. When I was there you were allowed between four and five cigarettes a day. The staff kept them in a box and issued them. I can't remember who bought the cigarettes. I don't know whether permission had to be provided for us to smoke at Dr Guthrie's. I know that was the case at later places I went to. Occasionally older boys would steal cigarettes and tobacco off of you in The Pans. There wasn't a lot you could do about that because the boys who did that were quite a lot bigger.

Religious instruction

60. I don't really remember Dr Guthrie's being religious but they did make you go to church. We went to church every Friday morning before we got away for home leave. We were taken round to Liberton Kirk. It wasn't optional and we were marched round to the church from Dr Guthrie's. If you were good you were let out early after attending that. Looking back, the boys attending church was probably done to keep the local minister happy. It meant that he had numbers at his services.

Trips / holidays

61. I don't remember any trips or holidays during my time there.

Leave home

62. I think they left you a few weeks before you were granted weekend leave. They did that to settle you in. I'm not sure of the timescales surrounding when leave all began and changed for me. I always wanted to go to my Nanna [REDACTED] house in Wester Hailes. I would want to go there even though she wasn't my legal guardian.
63. A lot of the time I stayed in Dr Guthrie's over the weekends. Whilst I was good, and a lot of the other boys got to go home, I didn't get to go home. I can't remember how far into my time at Dr Guthrie's that that set of circumstances started. The reason behind me staying at weekends was mostly because I didn't have anywhere to go to due to problems at home. Dr Guthrie's didn't have anywhere that they were happy to send me. That all began after my mother got remarried to a guy called [REDACTED]. My mother's house was broken into and I was accused of stealing a video recorder when I hadn't. Because I knew the person who had stolen the video recorder it was made known to me that I wasn't welcome at their house. I was informed of that in a meeting at Dr Guthrie's with my mother, [REDACTED] and ^{HWG}[REDACTED] present. I was pretty much told by my mother that I wasn't welcome. I found all of that quite upsetting. Looking back, I think she had probably been placed under pressure by [REDACTED] to make that decision.

Birthdays / Christmas

64. I have no real memories surrounding birthdays. I can't remember staff wishing me happy birthday or anything like that. The only memory I have is that on one occasion I met my mother in town and she took me to buy some clothes. I think I was fifteen or something like that so that could have been after Dr Guthrie's. I have no memories surrounding Christmas either in Dr Guthrie's or at home. I have no good memories surrounding Christmas at all.

Visits / Inspections / Review of Detention

65. I only recall being visited twice by mother during the whole time I was at Dr Guthrie's. The second time was a meeting where she visited with her new husband, [REDACTED] to say I couldn't go back to the family home. Nanna [REDACTED] visited me once or twice. I can't remember anything surrounding how the visits from my relatives were undertaken.
66. Social services did keep in touch with me throughout my time in care. My social worker, John Grant, visited me at Dr Guthrie's. I don't remember his visits clearly but he would go over things with me. I remember him taking me out on a couple of occasions. A time when he took me to the fish and chip restaurant, Brattisani's, particularly sticks out in my mind. Looking back, I think John Grant was fighting my corner throughout his time involved with me. I think he realised that I shouldn't be at Dr Guthrie's because it wasn't the place for such a small young boy. I think he realised I wasn't all that bad a kid compared to some of the other boys there. He tried to get me into places like Calder Grove and Northfield because of that. I think he thought that it would be more beneficial to me to get help in those sort of environments rather than Dr Guthrie's.
67. I attended some children's hearings during my time at Dr Guthrie's. I can't remember how many in total I went to. I remember my social worker and Nanna [REDACTED] being there. That makes me think that my Nanna [REDACTED] must have been recognised as some sort of guardian at some point. I remember three panel members deciding what was good for me and what was best for me. I remember my behaviour and where it was best to place me being discussed. It was also discussed how things were going.
68. There were regular meetings with ^{HWG}[REDACTED] but I couldn't say how often. Although he wasn't my key worker I dealt a lot with him. I don't know whether he was some sort of senior key worker. Although I never reported anything to him he seemed to be the one that I would go to for advice. I certainly felt that he was more approachable than anyone else. I'm not sure what the result of those meetings were.

69. I don't remember there being any inspections during my time at Dr Guthrie's. I didn't really see any people from the outside coming in.

Healthcare

70. You would go to the medical room if you needed treatment but I can't recall who it was you saw. There was a time when I was prescribed medication for my bed-wetting but I can't remember who prescribed me that. I don't know whether it was a nurse or a member of staff who was involved. I don't remember seeing a doctor or having any other medicals other than when I first arrived. There must have been a nurse because I'm sure that there was a medical undertaken when I first went in. I don't recall what happened during that medical. I'm pretty sure there was a nurse but I don't have clear memories surrounding who that was.
71. I don't remember going to an optician but I must have because there were attempts made to help me with my eyesight. I did get given glasses but I would purposively either hide them or break them. I just felt really uncomfortable wearing my glasses because they led to me being bullied. Wearing them just prompted things.
72. I was taken to see a dentist on Dalkeith Road during my time at Dr Guthrie's. The surgery was just down from The Commonwealth Pool. It was very different days back then. I remember the dentist smoking and listening to the radio whilst I was being seen. He knew we were all from Dr Guthrie's and he used to give me a cigarette at the end. The treatment was all fine. I remember getting teeth extracted but that was after I had things like toothache. I am terrified of dentists now but looking back that particular dentist kind of made me feel relaxed.

Running away

73. I discovered from my records that the first time I ran away from Dr Guthrie's was three days after I first arrived there. I hadn't, before seeing those records realised that that had come so soon. The records also state that I never proceeded to run away again.

That is a lie because I definitely did run away again. I know that for a fact because I remember all the different ways I ran away. The absence of notes surrounding those attempts to run away makes me question the reasons behind why they weren't logged. It could be that they'll appear in other records I am yet to recover.

74. There were a few things that came together to make me want to run away. It became a regular thing for me. If I felt I didn't want to be there I was gone. I just didn't want to be there and would run away to be away from there rather than to get home. I never had a home as such so that was the reason more why I would run away.
75. I was quite devious in how I ran away and would always find a way. The first time I ran away I escaped when we were walking between classes. I lagged behind then took the opportunity to jump over a wall into another property. There was one occasion during a weekend when me and another boy called ██████████ went out of a fire exit attached to the dorm I was staying in. We waited until the night staff were in another part of the building then took the opportunity.
76. When I ran away I usually would run to my Nanna ██████████ house in Wester Hailes. She would hide me during periods when I was on the run. Although it wasn't my home I perhaps felt safer there. Unfortunately, I had a large extended family and they would inform people where I was. That would end up with me being taken back to Dr Guthrie's. It was usually the case that someone would report me. They would phone the police or something like that. My uncles and my aunties were probably just looking out for my Nanna ██████████ and trying to stop her becoming involved. There were other times where the police saw me in the street and picked me up. I absconded that often that the police in Wester Hailes came to know me. They would either take me back to Dr Guthrie's or to Howdenhall. Most of the time I was taken back to the police station and collected there by someone or other.
77. I don't remember anything bad happening after I was returned to Dr Guthrie's. They might stop your weekend leave the following weekend if you were getting that. I don't remember any punishments beyond that. Sometimes when I tried to run away they

would call HWG to speak to me. I would speak to him and he would ask me about my concerns.

Bed-wetting

78. I was scared of where I was and that led to me having a problem with bed-wetting. I would try and hide that as best I could. I would hope that the sheets would dry out by the morning. They eventually put me on a tablet called Tofranil to try and stop my bed-wetting. I am aware that Tofranil can also be used as an anti-depressant. Looking back, I do wonder whether that was part of why they gave it to me. Maybe if they thought I was relaxed I'd not wet my bed? The medication either worked or the fear and embarrassment of how they responded to bed-wetting stopped me doing it again. I certainly don't remember doing much bed-wetting after taking the medication.

Discipline at Dr Guthrie's

79. I don't remember anyone formally explained to me the rules of the place. I think HWG may have generally told me what the rules were and how I should follow them. He would have basically told me that I had to do what I was told to do and to follow the routine. Staff would generally shout and ball at you if they wanted to discipline you. You might have your weekend leave taken off of you. I don't remember anything else that they regularly did. I don't remember being locked up, there being corporal punishment or anything like that. I think that once things started happening you generally just tried to toe the line. I probably did give staff members some cheek but I can't remember of anything specific. I think I ultimately tried not to speak back to them.
80. Dr Guthrie's was run on a rewards basis. That was obviously done to try and get boys to behave. You were given stars for certain things. I think there was a gold, silver and bronze star you could receive. The better you were the better it was for you. Teachers could nominate you for things. The staff must have passed the information on in some way about how you were in your dorm or the school. On a Friday they would count

how many stars you had. If you had certain amount you could get out earlier for weekend leave. It was half an hour or an hour earlier than the time you normally would leave. I think for the dorm I was in it was GQC who would read it out. I think he did that in our dorm on Friday mornings after breakfast. I think you may also have received slightly more pocket money depending on how you had behaved during the week. I don't remember stars being taken away from you if you misbehaved.

Abuse at Dr Guthrie's

81. There were both problems with the staff and the other boys at Dr Guthrie's. That all led to me questioning why I was there. There were a number of issues with the staff and that led me to wanting to get away. In many ways Dr Guthrie's was just a frightening place to me.
82. Dr Guthrie's had a small swimming pool. We sometimes had swimming at night as an after school activity. I remember a number of staff members, including KEP, forcing us to swim naked in the swimming pool. I do remember other staff members being there but I couldn't say which particular staff members other than KEP were there. We would walk to the swimming pool clothed, strip our clothes off in the cubicles then go into the pool. I remember some occasions where I wore shorts or trunks so they must have been available. It could be that they only had a certain amount or the ones they had wouldn't fit you.
83. More often than not we were swimming naked. Being naked was just accepted as being ok. At the age I was I was barely in puberty and I was being made to swim in front of other older boys. I think that gave me a wee bit of a complex. Looking back, I appreciate that boys would be naked getting changed or during shower times but the swimming naked thing was one of the things in particular that added up to me having the feeling that I couldn't handle the place.

LYI

84. LYI [REDACTED] nickname was 'LYI [REDACTED]' because he had [REDACTED]. He had grey hair. He was quite tall and always wore an old looking suit. I would guess that he was an older man compared to the other staff members. He was possibly in his sixties. He was always battering you if you did something wrong in the dining hall. He would parade up and down the dining hall and mealtimes and slap you with an open hand round the back of your head for things like trying to make a sandwich out of your dinner rather than using your knife and fork. He would say something like "don't do that boy." The slap hurt but the pain came more from the shock of not expecting it coming than anything else. It wasn't enough to knock you off your seat or anything like that.

KEP

85. KEP [REDACTED] was the PE teacher with the school. He was maybe in his forties. I didn't like him because he was definitely a bully. I found him quite intimidating. My memories of him surround always being frightened of him and never wanting to go to PE because of that. I was absolutely terrified of him. He would make me feel scared and closed in. His classes were partly why I tried skipping school at Dr Guthrie's and why I started trying to run away.
86. I remember being pushed about by him. There was a cupboard off of the gym. It's where we would have kept all the balls and things like that. If he was angry with you he would push you into that cupboard then use it as an opportunity to hit you. I don't know how many times that happened with me but it happened on at least a couple of occasions. I can't remember what I had done but I feel that it would have probably been something that would have upset him. I remember him poking me in the chest to get me into the cupboard. I remember him pushing me into that cupboard, bending down and screaming in my face then slapping me across the face. He would only slap me once. I don't know whether he slapped you in the cupboard on purpose so that nobody else would see. After slapping me he would let me out of the cupboard and the class would carry on.

87. After the first time he slapped me in the cupboard I remember him pushing me and poking me about a lot more. Whatever I did that first time must have upset him. I have a memory of someone grabbing and nipping my chest but I am not sure whether that was **KEP**. I might be tying that in with him because I do distinctly remember him poking me in my chest. I found all of that very intimidating.

88. **KEP** was possibly the same way with all the boys but I am just seeing things from my perspective. I don't recall seeing him being physical with other boys but I did hear him screaming at them when he was angry. I think I didn't see him being physical with the other boys because after the incidents I tried to avoid going to PE.

GQC

89. **GQC** was a bully. He would try and embarrass me in front of the other boys. I had a problem with bed-wetting that I would try and hide. I remember on one occasion **GQC** discovering I had wet the bed after I had made my bed. I don't know how he discovered that because I usually tried to hide it. He stripped the bed in front of all the other boys and said something like "you pissed the bed boy." All the other boys in the dorm would have heard that. There was no other punishment. Looking back, I think he purposively made a point of doing that so the other boys would hear. It was as if he was trying to embarrass me to stop wetting the bed. He could have taken me aside and had a quiet word but he didn't. All that did result in me being picked on and bullied by some of the other boys.

90. There was another occasion when I did something and he humiliated me. It was earlier on during my time at Dr Guthrie's but I couldn't say the exact age I was. It was an incident involving a boy called **_____** **_____** had pulled away a chair as I was sitting down. As I fell I went into a kind of bicycle kick and kicked **_____**. When **GQC** saw that he pulled down my trousers and pants in front of the other boys in the dorm, put me over his knee then smacked me on my backside. I was only a small boy. The incidents with **GQC** are one of the things that made me start to feel intimidated. That combined with the other things that were

happening in Dr Guthrie's led to me just wanting to get out of there and starting to run away.

GBD

91. GBD was maybe in his forties. I can't remember what his role was but he was more senior and on the dorm side of things. He had a big black beard. I remember that he carried a big bunch of keys and wore clogs. They made a noise when he walked. The clogs sounded like they were wooden but they weren't.
92. GBD wasn't really bad to me but I did see things that he did to other boys I didn't feel was right. He could be a bit of a bully. He was actually quite creepy. Most of what he did was in the smoking room. He would whack boys with a big bunch of keys that he used to carry. He would launch the keys at them. He never did that to me but I saw him doing that to other boys. I can't remember whether the keys would make contact. If boys were in the smoking room and didn't have any cigarettes he would make them rub his back with a fob that was attached to his keys and massage his shoulders for cigarettes. He would ask them to do that. If they did he would give them a cigarette. I didn't experience that but I did see other boys doing it. I found that all very strange and really creepy.

Other boys at Dr Guthrie's

93. There were issues with bullying amongst the boys in Dr Guthrie's itself. I recall getting into a few scraps following boys discovering that I wet the bed. That wasn't so much with the bigger boys. The first issue I had was the wetting the bed issue. Two boys by the name of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would gang up and call me names like "pish the bed" and "speccky four eyes." That in turn led to fights. I eventually would retaliate. It was difficult when you were placed in that situation. I had to either fight back or opt to take it.
94. I think the staff once caught me and [REDACTED] fighting. They separated us but nothing further happening. Looking back, the bullying didn't happen too long. Once I

started fighting back I think the bullies realised I wasn't going to be a push over. I continued to get called names by some of the older boys but that was it.

95. I was sexually abused by two older boys during my time at Dr Guthrie's. Fortunately, it only happened to me once. It would have happened some time before I was thirteen years old. I would estimate that it happened at some time between January and the summer of 1983. It was on a night when I had been detained over the weekend. I think I had been detained because I wasn't, for whatever reason, able to go to my mum's that weekend. I'm sure it happened on a Friday night.
96. I would have been quite small when it happened. The names of the boys who abused me were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I don't want to reveal their surnames or go into the nature of what happened. One of them was quite a bit taller than me but they were both bigger than me. Looking back, I think they were boys towards the end of their time at Dr Guthrie's who were disturbed. I can't comment on what the staff knew or suspected about those boys. The incident happened in my dormitory. I'm certain that I was the only boy who was sleeping in my dormitory that night. The two boys were in another much smaller dormitory. I remember that the following night, because there were so few boys, we were all moved into another dormitory in the West Wing.
97. It was after that incident that I ran away with [REDACTED]. We escaped down the fire escape the subsequent Saturday night. I never told anyone about what happened because I was ashamed, embarrassed and scared. I never told [REDACTED] what had happened. I think he ran away with me because he was just looking to run away at that time also.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Dr Guthrie's

98. I could have discussed what happened with family members but I don't have any clear memories of that. I might have told my Nanna [REDACTED] what was happening at Dr Guthrie's when I ran away.
99. GQC [REDACTED] was meant to be my key worker but after the incident with him when he slapped my backside all my trust for him went out the window. I felt that HWG [REDACTED] was really the only person there that I could trust. I never talked to him about the abuse I was suffering from the other staff members. I don't know how he would have reacted to that had I spoken to him about it. I don't know whether he was aware that these things were going on. I don't think I spoke to him about the bullying I was suffering. I think that was more because of the areas that I had grown up in. Growing up in those areas taught you not to grass on people. That was just the way it was. If you grassed someone up you would just make things worse for yourself. I think because of that the only way I could deal with things was through running away and avoiding being there.

Leaving Dr Guthrie's

100. I don't remember the occasions when I left Dr Guthrie's during my time as a resident there. That could be partly because there were instances when I ran away and simply was placed elsewhere after I was caught. The last time I attended as a day pupil at the school would have been in the lead up to [REDACTED] 1985 when Dr Guthrie's [REDACTED]. After that came to an end I started attending Wellington School as a day pupil instead. I think by that time I was at a placement with a lady called [REDACTED] but it could well have been earlier when I was at Hawthornbrae.

Howdenhall Centre, Liberton, Edinburgh

101. Howdenhall was an assessment centre. It was a secure place and everything was locked up. There was a buzzer for the front door, none of the windows opened and if you wanted to get out you needed to work out a way to get out. I was at Howdenhall two or three times over my time in care between approximately [REDACTED] 1982 and, at latest, [REDACTED] 1985. All the times I was there fell within a relatively short period of time. It could be that they all fell within a six to nine month period. I am not certain what ages I was when I was there but I would say my first stay was when I was about twelve and a half or thirteen.
102. I couldn't say how long there was between each stay. All the occasions there seemed very long. I am aware that the usual assessment period was up to about ten weeks though. They would place me in Howdenhall either when I ran away or when I needed to be assessed. It was used more or less as a place to get a grip on me and find out what was going on. I remember that on one of the occasions I was there I was being assessed as to whether I should be sent to Rossie Farm. Rossie Farm was a much more secure place. Thankfully that never happened.
103. The memories I have about Howdenhall are really just the bad memories. By the time I was going to Howdenhall I was running around with a different crowd. I was getting in trouble for committing offences so I wasn't there purely for running away or skipping school. I did do some things that I wasn't overly proud of in my life. It was nothing major that I could have gone to prison for but nonetheless I did do those things.

Layout of Howdenhall

104. Howdenhall was located near Mortonhall Crematorium off Liberton Road. It was a newer building than Dr Guthrie's. At the entrance there was a reception area. There was a dining room which doubled up as a recreation room at night. There was a gym which contained a boxing ring. Beyond that I don't remember much about the layout of the place.

Staff structure

105. I don't know who was in charge at Howdenhall. The people I dealt with there were lower down. Below whoever was in charge there were staff members who would be in charge in and around the wing you were in. Those are really the only staff members I remember. It was the same staff members on all the occasions I was at Howdenhall. I think that is because there wasn't a great deal of time between the first and last time I was there.

Staff

106. **GQB** was a staff member. I don't remember his full name. He was in his mid to late twenties. He seemed to work in a double act with a staff member called **GPX**. He was sporty, quite fit and seemed to love himself.
107. **GPX** was a staff member. I don't remember his first name. He was in his mid to late twenties. He was sporty, quite fit and seemed to love himself.
108. **HYY** was a staff member. He seemed like a fair guy. Mr **GPZ** was a staff member. I don't remember his first name.

The children at Howdenhall

109. There were boys and girls there. The girls were in a separate wing that the boys weren't allowed into. We would mix during classes during the day. There were maybe more than thirty children there. The age range was between ten or eleven and sixteen years old. Most of the children there had been up to something or other like shop lifting or glue sniffing. It wasn't just a place for children who had been skipping school.

Routine at Howdenhall

First day

110. I don't remember much about what happened when I would arrive or the day to day routine there. I was always taken there by the police. I think by the stage I was getting to Howdenhall I wasn't intimidated by places and was starting to get used to the systems. I didn't find my first day there as intimidating as Dr Guthrie's. I probably initially thought that it was just going to be another children's home. I thought that until I got inside and realised that it was more secure than Dr Guthrie's. It was a bit of a wakeup call when I realised that.

Sleeping arrangements

111. There was more than one boy to a room. There was certainly one occasion where there were four boys in the room I slept in.

Washing / bathing

112. Staff were generally there when you were showering. Beyond that I can't remember anything further.

Mealtimes / food

113. The only thing I remember about the food is that I didn't want to eat the butter and preferred margarine. I don't remember ever being punished for not eating.

Work / chores

114. I don't remember having any chores to do. The only thing I remember having to do was helping out with the visitors. I suppose that could have been considered a chore.

Clothing / uniform

115. I think we all wore our own clothes because I don't remember wearing a uniform.

School

116. We attended classes inside the place during the day. I don't remember there being a lot of classes. We were in one classroom and everything was taught there. I couldn't say whether it was a teacher who came in from the outside or whether it was one of the staff members who taught us. I can't recall what was taught.

Visits / Inspections / Review of Detention

117. The only people who I remember coming into Howdenhall who weren't staff were visitors for the children. I didn't tend to get visitors in any of the places I was at. I think I had a visit from my sister. I can't remember who she came with. It could have either been my Nanna [REDACTED] or my mum. My Nanna [REDACTED] also came to visit me. I can't remember anyone sitting down with me and telling me where I was going or how long I was going to be in Howdenhall. If there was I don't remember that.
118. Howdenhall was an assessment centre but I don't recall actually being assessed or who was doing that. I have read in my records there was a time when they were considering sending me to Rossie Farm. I don't know what it was that stopped that happening. I do remember that HYY [REDACTED] was one of the staff members who would try and speak to me and ask me what was going on. I don't know whether he was assigned to me or whether he took that on himself. I'm not sure whether he was formally my key worker. I remember that he tried to relate to me and understand to me. He certainly tried to help. He would say things like "if you keep your head down we'll try and get you out of here" and "we will try and sort you out."
119. I remember police taking me straight to Howdenhall so that makes me think the initial decisions to place me there were made by the police rather than children's panels. I don't remember going to a hearing and a panel saying I should be sent to an

assessment centre. I think, whatever was happening, I wasn't privy to the panel's conversations surrounding Howdenhall.

120. I don't remember anyone coming into Howdenhall to inspect the place. If they had I don't think I would have been fully aware who the people were anyway. I imagine if there had been inspectors who had come in we would have just been told to be on our best behaviour.

Leisure time

121. Free time was spent either playing pool or watching television. Nothing major happened there in terms of leisure time.

Healthcare

122. I don't have any memories of seeing a matron, a doctor or a dentist whilst I was at Howdenhall. There was nothing significant that happened that would have required medical care. I didn't need hospital treatment following the times I was attacked at Howdenhall. It was a couple of bruises and that was it. I think if you had something like a cut you would deal with it yourself.

Running away

123. I ran away from Howdenhall a few times. The reason I was running away was because of the way I was being treated by the staff and the other boys there. Although it was a secure place some of the ways in which I escaped were ridiculous. The first occasion was a time when I had been trusted to answer the front door to visitors during a visiting time. Instead of letting the parents in, I ran out of the front door. Another time involved the kitchen. I was a fussy eater and I liked margarine instead of butter. I asked a staff member in the dining hall whether I could ask the kitchen staff for some margarine. When I went into the kitchen there was no one there but the back door was open. I ran out of that and jumped over the fence. A later occasion involved stealing a member

of staff's keys. I can't remember in what order or when I ran away those ways. Looking back, it was quite funny how I escaped.

124. I was always heading for Wester Hailes to my Nanna [REDACTED] house every time I ran away. Running away is ok if you have some support but once that support isn't there you are out on your own. There was one time when I ran away I discovered my Nanna [REDACTED] was away visiting an auntie in Oxford so I had to sleep on floors at mates' houses. After a few days of doing that I went to hand myself in. I was walking down Clovenstone Road through the night and I stopped a policeman to say that I had run away from Howdenhall. The police officer told me to stay where I was and that they would come back. That happened probably at 1:00 am or 2:00 am. In the end the police never did come back. I can't remember what happened next.

125. I can't remember what happened after the first time I ran away or whether I was punished. I just remember the staff not being too happy with me because they thought they trusted me. I think after the third time I was taken back to Howdenhall after running away I was locked up in a padded cell in the secure wing they had there. They locked me up in that to prevent me from running away again. I think they were just fed up with me running away. It was like being in a prison. You couldn't get out of that room unless somebody opened the door. Looking back, they should have been asking me why I was running away rather than sticking me in that room for a couple of days.

Bed-wetting

126. I wet the bed occasionally. I think it was a nervous thing. I think I managed to cover it up when it happened. There might have been nice staff who helped me. I don't remember getting bullied or anything like that for wetting the bed.

Abuse at Howdenhall

127. It wasn't a pleasant experience being there. There were times when I witnessed boys fighting in the square area and seeing staff turn away when they saw that. More often than not the staff would just leave boys to get on with it. I couldn't say which staff members in particular would do that.

GQB and GPX

128. GQB and GPX could be quite harsh. They made no effort to keep kids calm. GQB and GPX would whip you with towels when you were standing waiting to go in for your shower. They'd work almost as if they were a double act. One of them would pull your towel off you then the other one would swirl their towel then whip you with it whilst you were naked. They found that funny. I remember them laughing when they did that. You would end up with big bruises on the back of your legs. That was a regular thing and left you always being wary whenever you went in the showers. You would hope that they wouldn't pick on you that day. Looking back, it was just brutal behaviour.

129. GQB and GPX used to encourage you to want to beat each other up. If you were arguing they would say things like "go in there and sort it out." They would then throw you into the gym and make you box things out with the boy you had a disagreement with. They wouldn't physically force you into the gym but you felt you had to do it. They would give you boxing gloves to fight it out. Looking back, the boxing wasn't the worst thing that happened to me but it was bad and was encouraged by the staff.

130. There was one occasion where I made to box a boy who was called either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. It was one of two brothers but I don't recall which one. One of them did more boxing than the other and that was the one I was made to fight. We had had a fallout and either GQB or GPX instigated the fight. The boy I boxed was between a year and two years older than me. He was quite a bit bigger than me and stocky. Staff and other boys were there when we were fighting. I remember that I was

frightened. I took a bit of a licking and was thoroughly beaten. I think I hit the deck after a few punches and it was the staff that said that it was enough.

131. I couldn't say how long the fight went on. I wasn't badly injured. I had a bit of a bruise on my face but I didn't need any treatment. It was all a bit embarrassing. I couldn't believe the staff were encouraging the fight to happen. I felt as if I was the victim all the way through. I had been bullied by either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] then all of a sudden I was being made to fight the same guy. Looking back, I sometimes wonder that the staff making you fight other boys was something like an initiation to teach boys how things were sorted out in Howdenhall. I also think that the staff got their kicks out of seeing boys kick the shit out of each other. That was especially so with GQB and GPX. You could see that they found it funny.

Mr GPZ

132. Mr GPZ was quite a heavy set man. He was quite aggressive. He certainly didn't like me. There was a time when I stole Mr GPZ keys, escaped and ran away from Howdenhall. I think it was after that incident he felt like I was due some payback. It's difficult because looking back I sometimes think that I deserved the way in which the staff responded to me. However, even with that he shouldn't have done the things he did.
133. When I came back from running away Mr GPZ made it known that he wasn't happy with me. He grabbed me and pulled me aside. I remember the anger in his face. I can still smell the smell of his breath. I can't remember exactly what he said but it was along the lines of "you do that to me fucking again and there will consequences." After that he used to grab me on my arms quite hard and push me about. When he grabbed me on my arms he wouldn't make it obvious but he was squeezing them quite hard.
134. I'm sure that Mr GPZ encouraged boys to bully me. I remember receiving a bit of a kicking off of a boy from Bingham in Edinburgh in a corridor whilst we were heading towards a wee television room. I can't recall the name of the boy who did that. The boy suddenly turned around, head-butted me then punched me a couple of times. He

didn't say anything about why he did that. It was all out of the blue and happened within a day of returning back to Howdenhall after running away. Mr GPZ was there on duty when the incident happened and turned a blind eye to it. I think that he saw it happen but did nothing about it. A bigger boy called [REDACTED], who had been with me at Dr Guthrie's, stepped in to help me and make it known that I should be left alone. [REDACTED] was quite a big lad and helped me out on that occasion.

135. I'm certain that Mr GPZ instigated me being attacked. I previously had absolutely no issues with that boy. I think it would have been obvious to any boy who would have been around at that time why that happened. Mr GPZ continued to be generally horrible to me after the boy attacked me. He would grab my arms and push me about. It was always made to look as if he wasn't doing anything wrong but he was squeezing my arms really tightly. I didn't see him doing that to other boys but he might have been.

The other boys at Howdenhall

136. There were wee bits and bobs involving the other boys at Howdenhall. It was fighting between the boys. That was inevitable in the situation we were in. It wasn't just because we were all similar ages. It was also because we were from different parts of Edinburgh. If there was one group from Pilton and another from Niddrie they were just going to fight one another.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Howdenhall

137. There really was no one there that I could have trusted. I probably could have tried to have trusted staff members and reported things but I don't know whether I would have been willing to take the chance. If staff started telling people that you were a grass then it would have just made your life even more worse. That was particularly so with places like Howdenhall and Dr Guthrie's. The guilty staff members wouldn't then have to do anything because the other boys would do something for them.

Leaving Howdenhall

138. I am not exactly sure which places I went to after the times I was at Howdenhall because I was there on more than one occasion. I think Dr Guthrie's and Northfield would have been amongst the possible places I went to.

Northfield Children's Home, 34 Northfield Drive, Northfield, Edinburgh

139. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Ins I don't know when I got there and when I left but it would have occurred at some time between [redacted] 1982 and [redacted] 1983. I don't know how long I was there. I would say that it was longer than a month and less than six months. I

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

140.

141.

142.

143. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
place. I don't know whether it was maybe a short term place. That might be some sort of explanation for my limited memories surrounding Northfield, Calder Grove and Ferniehill. I don't know how my time came to an end at Northfield. Secondary Institutions
Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later I think I went to Hawthornbrae after Northfield.

Hawthornbrae Home for Children, 46 The Causeway, Duddingston, Edinburgh

144. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later My records suggest that I first went there in 1983. If they are right I would have been there when I was thirteen years old. I think Hawthornbrae was meant to be more of a longer term place for me but I don't recall how long I was there. I think my social worker, John Grant, was involved with getting me a place there.

145. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
146. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

147.

148.

149.

Leaving Hawthornbrae

150. I do remember Hawthornbrae coincided with a time in my life when I was starting to rebel and that could be the explanation why I left. I started running away to Wester Hailes and not coming back. I can see from my records one possible explanation why I maybe went a little bit out of control. The report didn't bring up memories but it did

shed a little bit of light on a couple of things. In the report it highlights that John Grant had stopped being my social worker [Secondary Institutions - to be published later] The two of them seemed to leave around the same time for whatever reason. I think that upset me and things started going downhill after that. I think it was a time in my life when I had started to feel settled then that was taken away from me.

151. There is some talk in my records around about 1984 considering my next placement being St Joseph's but ultimately I went to stay with [redacted] and then Wellington Farm. There is an application that pre-dates my time with [redacted] to social services which I have filled out to find a more settled home. That makes me think that the placement there could have been more permanent or longer if it wasn't for my attitude. I'm not sure how long I would have been there had I behaved. Looking back, I don't think Hawthornbrae worked out because I went off the rails. [Secondary Institutions - t

[Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

Placement with [redacted], [redacted] Clovenstone, Edinburgh

152. The house was located [redacted] the primary school in Clovenstone. I can see from my records that I was placed there in [redacted] 1984. I couldn't say how long I was at [redacted] but it was maybe only a few months. [Secondary Institutions - to be publis

[Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

Looking at my records, the placement was something that social services were pushing for because of my circumstances at home.

153. I don't think [redacted] was a bad woman. She was fine to me. I can't say anything bad about the way that she treated me. She stayed in the house on her own. It is hard to say how old she was but she could have been young enough to still be alive today. [redacted] used to have a guy that she saw who would occasionally come up from London. I don't remember his name. I didn't know what that was about and didn't really care. It didn't bother me.

154. ██████ had her own son living with her. His name was ██████ and he was four or five years older than me. ██████ and I didn't really hit it off. I didn't like him. There was another young boy by the name of ██████ who stayed with her. He was black. I'm not sure whether ██████ was quite all there. It isn't something I'm happy about but I think I took the piss out of him because of that.
155. I don't have a lot of memories from my time staying with ██████. When I was there I would have still been attending Dr Guthrie's as a day pupil. After Dr Guthrie's began shutting down I started going to Wellington Farm as a day pupil for school during week days. I'm not sure how long that arrangement continued because there was a time when I became a resident at Wellington Farm itself. I was again collected at Cameron Toll and dropped back off there at the end of the day.
156. By the time I got to the placement with ██████ I was out of control. I was turning into someone who I shouldn't have been. I was drinking, sometimes quite heavily, by that time. I was getting involved with stealing various things which I regret. I think the police dealt with that all at the time. I remember an incident towards the end of my time on that placement surrounding ██████ buying me a pair of trainers I didn't like. For whatever reason I kicked off and, with Wester Hailes being just down the road, I ran off. I think after that I was caught and ended up back in Howdenhall for assessment. I think after that it was decided that I would be sent to Wellington Farm on a permanent basis. I'm not sure how that came about or whether a children's panel was involved.

Wellington School, Penicuik, Midlothian

157. When I was there we called the place either 'Wellington Farm' or 'Welly Farm'. By the time I was there I was definitely either fourteen or fifteen. It was around the time that Dr Guthrie's was closing down. That means I would have gone there at some point before ██████ 1985. I think I was there for at least a year so I must have been there until at least ██████ 1986. I think my time there spanned the last year I was at school. I don't have a lot of memories surrounding Wellington Farm. It was very much like a

place where they had units preparing boys for adulthood. I think that, because it was that more relaxed there and closer to my release date, I didn't pay too much attention to what was going on.

The children at Wellington School

158. It was all boys there. We were split up between units. I couldn't estimate how many boys were there in total. The age range was between eleven or twelve and sixteen years old. The boys were from all sorts of different areas. I think there were boys from Dundee, Haddington and various other places. Boys were there for various different reasons but they had usually been offending in some way. I had been up to mischief myself.

Staff

159. I can't remember who was in charge but I remember there being a headmaster. **HWG**, who had previously been a staff member at Dr Guthrie's, came out to work at Wellington Farm after I started there. He **SNR** of the place. I believe he went on to **SNR**. The only other staff member I remember was **HKM**. He was the teacher who taught bricklaying but he also was involved with organising various other activities.

The layout of Wellington School

160. The place was divided into different units. Each unit had their own kitchen, television room and dorms.

Routine at Wellington School

First day

161. I don't know who took me there. I don't remember the day I first arrived there to stay as a resident rather than attending as a day pupil.

Daily routine

162. It was really quite a relaxed place. In the mornings, you got up, got dressed and ready then had breakfast in your unit. After that you went to school classes or went to do whatever trade you had selected to do over the course of the day. Just like normal school there were breaks and a lunchtime over the course of the day. I think lunch was had in your unit. There was a timetable that told you where you needed to be. After classes or trades in the afternoon you went back to your unit. In the evenings you would have your dinner, do the dishes then go upstairs for recreation. Everything was quite chilled at that point.
163. There weren't many boys who stayed at Wellington Farm over the weekends but I did stay there on occasion. The weekends were quite relaxed with us having more recreation time during the day rather than classes and trades.

Sleeping arrangements

164. All the boys slept in dorms. I think most of the dorms contained four beds.

Washing / bathing

165. I can't remember anything surrounding washing and bathing. I don't know whether they had showers or baths.

Mealtimes / food

166. The kitchen delivered all the food to each of the units for mealtimes. All the boys in each of the units ate together then did the dishes afterwards. I remember the food being ok. I think they tried to feed the boys what boys back then ate. Looking back, it was probably all unhealthy stuff.

Work / chores

167. We were encouraged to do dishes and chores because by that time we were all young adults. We all would help each other out in the unit with things like the dishes. There was a roster up for all of that. One boy would wash, one boy would dry and another would put the dishes away. I remember being given other jobs to do. One of the jobs I was given was sweeping and mopping the gym and changing room. That was probably one of the better jobs to have in there.

Clothing / uniform

168. You wore your own clothes rather than a uniform. It was more relaxed like that. I can't remember where we got our clothes from.

Pocket money

169. I was given pocket money for doing chores. I can't remember how much I got. There might have been a standard amount of pocket money with extra on top of that given for any jobs that you did.

School

170. There were academic classes where you were taught things like maths, English and geography but a lot of the teaching more surrounded learning trades. It really was more of a 'pick your trades' kind of place. When you first got there you tried each and every one of the trades available over the course of a couple of weeks. There were

workshops where you could learn painting and decorating, engineering, brick laying and so on. It was bricklaying that I kind of settled upon. Bricklaying was taught by a man called HKM. I think I crossed paths with him a couple of times but he was an alright guy by and large.

Leisure time

171. In my unit there was a television, a snooker and pool table, darts and a table tennis table. In that way it felt a little like a holiday camp. There was a big field where we could knock about a few golf balls and play football. There were go-carts and a track that we could use if the staff could be bothered sorting that out. HKM ran a running club. I was part of that club. We went out as a group running around the local area. We were quite fit and I quite enjoyed that. Looking back, that was one of the things that left me feeling that I had more of a positive experience at Wellington Farm. They made an effort to put on things that I wanted to do.

Religious instruction

172. It wasn't a religious place. It wasn't like Dr Guthrie's where you had to go to a church round the corner each week.

Trips / holidays

173. I remember going on a fishing trip to Ayr. HKM seemed to organise these sorts of things. We went out to sea for the day. I remember us fishing with feathers and I think we did catch fish. I think we were all quite satisfied when we came back.

Leave home

174. I got weekend leave whilst I was a resident there. By that time it had been agreed that I could go and stay at my Nanna in Wester Hailes. I think that led to my life feeling a bit more settled. However, the family part of my life still wasn't sorted out. I still hadn't visited my mother's after the time she said I couldn't go to her house at Dr

Guthrie's. That would mean that occasionally things would go back to the same issues as before and I would have nowhere to go. That would mean I would have to stay in Wellington Farm over the weekend. Sometimes I wouldn't get weekend leave as a punishment, however, looking back I can't remember anything significant happening in terms of my behaviour to have caused that.

Visits / Inspections / Review of Detention

175. I can't remember anyone visiting me whilst I was there. I can't even remember whether there was a visiting room. Looking back, none of my family drove back then so it would have been very difficult for them to get to Wellington Farm. I think that was the reason why I probably didn't get any visitors. I don't remember any inspectors coming in.
176. I think by the time I was there as a resident ^{HWG} [REDACTED] had moved to Wellington Farm. ^{HWG} [REDACTED] and two social workers, called Mr Craig and Sheila Lockhart, were the ones who kept me updated in terms of what was happening with my care. I don't remember there being any children's hearings but there might have been one. I'd imagine there would have been at least one held to decide to send me to Wellington Farm as a resident.

Healthcare

177. I don't think I got ill when I was younger so that might explain why I have no memories surrounding what healthcare was available at Wellington Farm.

Running away

178. I only ran away from there once. It wasn't anything to do with what was going on there. It was more down to me rather than the staff doing anything. I had got into a couple of fights with boys and wanted to get away. I had a lot on my mind from elsewhere as well. After I ran away I was collected by ^{HWG} [REDACTED] and spoken to. After speaking with ^{HWG} [REDACTED] I came to the realisation that I was fifteen and going to have to accept that if I didn't behave then I was probably going to end up getting what I deserved.

That would likely have been ending up in a prison like Saughton. I think it was because of that that I behaved from that point onwards.

Bed-wetting

179. The bed-wetting hadn't stopped by the time I was at Wellington Farm. I guess that all came from nerves. I was still nervous at times. I probably, by that stage, didn't do it any near as much as I had when I was younger. I would do a good job of hiding that I wet my bed. I remember pissing on someone else's bed and making out that they had wet their bed. I think I did that to cover up what was happening and to try and avoid being bullied. I think I felt that if it was thought that there were two of us with the same issue in the unit then it wouldn't be seen as such a big thing.

Abuse at Wellington School

180. I didn't find Wellington Farm too bad at all. I liked it in comparison to the other places I was at. I appreciate it might not be the same for everybody but I had no issues whatsoever whilst I was there. I enjoyed it there. I learnt trades and did a lot of running to keep fit. There was nothing bad happened and I didn't really have any issues with any of the staff.
181. If abuse or anything bad happened at Wellington Farm then I don't remember it. I had a couple of run-ins with staff where keys were thrown but I don't really think that was abuse. I think by that time I was one of those teenagers who would try and wind staff up. I definitely deserved what was coming my way on those occasions. I did have a couple of issues with other boys. It was fighting and stuff like that. You are always going to get that sort of thing with these types of places. Unfortunately, you just couldn't avoid it.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Wellington School

182. I think because of what I had experienced in the past I learnt not to confide in anyone about what was happening. That was certainly the case with adults. I might have spoken with other boys, such as [REDACTED], over the years but that would have been the exception and not something I remember. Looking back, my relationship with those in charge was like what I imagine prison would be like. The worst thing you could be was 'a grass.' Being a grass was seen as being worse than whatever would have happened to you amongst the boys.

Leaving Wellington School

183. I ran away from Wellington Farm around about six months before I ultimately left there for good. It was HWG [REDACTED] who came to pick me up. On the way back I spoke with him. I must have felt close to him and felt I could trust him. He told me that I only had six months left and that if I kept my head down I would be out of Wellington Farm. In my mind I made the decision I wanted to turn away from being in care and all the bad stuff I was doing at that time. I remember feeling quite excited about making that decision and getting away from things. Happily, I did turn my back on it all and managed to keep out of trouble. I think I got into one fight but other than that my behaviour was positive.
184. I remember being quite happy when I left Wellington Farm. I realised that I was old enough to make my own decisions with nobody telling me what to do any more. In other ways I was sad. I realised it was quite a scary moment and I would be going out into the big bad world. When it came to leaving I think I was just kicked out the door and that was that. I don't remember there being anything in terms of support for me. I don't recall going back to anyone to seek help. I don't remember any follow up from social workers or anything like that. Although I hated having to fall back on people, knowing then that I had no one to fall back on was a bit scary. However, even with that, looking at the way I was back then, even if there had been an offer of some help I would have refused to take it because I wanted to be independent.

Life after leaving care

185. After leaving Wellington Farm I moved in with my Nanna [REDACTED] for about a year. I signed on the dole and never got a job in Wester Hailes. Up until the age of seventeen I pretty much bummed around and enjoyed being lazy. By then I was smoking hash and drinking. I looked into joining the YTS, or whatever its predecessor was, but chose not to do that in the end. When I saw how much you would earn and realised that you could get more money not bothering and getting a bedsit in the city centre I chose to do that instead. In the end I lived in Haymarket. I was paid rent for my bedsit by the government so that I could stay there. In reality I spent most of my time back at Nanna [REDACTED] in Wester Hailes.
186. At one stage I considered joining the army. I must have been sixteen or seventeen years old when I was thinking about doing that. Unfortunately, I ended up getting in trouble with debt because I refused to pay the poll tax. I was listening to adults around me and followed their lead. To join the army I had to be seen to be responsible for my debt on a weekly basis and I couldn't do that at that time.
187. When I was seventeen I had a friend from Wester Hailes whose mother had moved down to a small village in Lincolnshire. My friend and I managed to get some cash together to go down and visit her. We stayed there a week or two. When it came to the day to travel back to Edinburgh my mate said that he was staying. When I got back to Edinburgh I discovered I was on my own. I kept in touch with my friend and after a couple of months asked him whether there was any chance his mother would put me up. In the end I moved down to Lincolnshire and stayed with one of my friend's sister's friends. The lady I moved in with was called [REDACTED] and she was nine and a half years older than me. She had a spare room and I helped out with looking after her son whilst she was at work. One thing led to another and we became a couple. We ended up having our own son together.
188. By 1988 I was working. I have pretty much worked ever since. My first job was in a garage serving petrol on the YTS. I then got a job in a food factory when I was eighteen. I did that for a few years across a few factories. Over the years [REDACTED], our

son and I moved back and forth between Lincolnshire and Edinburgh. It wasn't until about 2000 that we ended up moving back up to Edinburgh permanently. Since then I have worked predominantly as a facilities manager and in security.

Impact

189. The source of the impact on my adult life is all mixed together in my mind. I appreciate that the way I am is partly because of the way my parents were and partly because of the things I experienced in care. It's all mixed in together. I have tried to make a go at a lot of things in my life but I have kept on reverting back to who I was as I went through adulthood.
190. Every now and again I do get down. That results in me taking a lot of drink. There's also been drugs over the years. The drink and drugs help make me forget. In the past I have self-harmed and have wee scars on my arms because of that. I have always contemplated not being here. I have got over that side of things now. However, I still have lapses when it all beats me up. I think a lot about the incident in Dr Guthrie's where I was sexually abused. I think about that more when I go off the rails, run away and I turn to drink.
191. Over the time I was in care I started committing crime with the people I met in the institutions I was at. That all started when I was in Dr Guthrie's. My offending could have begun as early as when I was twelve years old. I started glue sniffing, taking drugs and getting up to mischief so as I could get money. Looking back, that can't have helped my relationship with my mother and my family. I didn't get into any trouble after leaving care because that was all pretty much behind me. I realised that the next place I would end up, if I did turn to crime again, would have been Saughton. That's where a lot of my friends from care and my neighbourhood had ended up. I didn't want to be there too. I wanted to get out of all that sort of thing and move on.
192. My childhood in particular has affected the way I have been in my relationships. At times I am very standoffish with people. If I do get close to someone I end up messing

things up. It's as if whenever I got to a good place in my life I nosedive and crash. I was with [REDACTED] for twenty four years before we separated. I think that was in about 2015. I had an up and down relationship with [REDACTED] as time went on. All that was mostly down to me. Sadly, [REDACTED] subsequently passed away. I feel guilty about how that all came to an end. It all came back to how I was. If I wasn't the way I was then things may have been different.

193. My relationship with my son has been affected. I have always had a good relationship with my son. It has been absolutely brilliant recently. I think that has come mostly since his mother passed away. He knows I miss his mother as much as he does. However, there are things I wish I could have done better. That's a difficult thing to realise because my son is the most important person in my life. I regret the way I have been around him as a father. I've never been a bad dad but I've also never been the dad I should have been. I've never lifted my hands too him but at the same time I have never been someone who is 'cuddly.' Instead of hugging him I will shake his hand. I don't tell him I love him. I regret not being able to be that embracing dad. I'm certain that all came from being pushed away during my time in care. I wasn't shown that sort of affection by staff myself. If they were going to touch you they were going to smack you across your head. I think that in turn effected my own ability to show affection.
194. I have a great relationship with my current partner but every now and again I just disappear. It's as if I regress back to my childhood. I will say, or think, "don't you dare tell me what to do" and then will run away. My partner won't have really done anything but I will still disappear for a couple of days. That response to situations in my relationships has been a cycle throughout my life with anybody that gets close to me. I think that all comes back to my resentment towards how I was treated during my time in care.
195. There have been times when I have been told that I am over helpful with other people to the detriment of myself. I guess by doing that it makes me feel good. Sometimes though I feel overloaded with other people's problems. I listen to their problems without stopping them. No matter what I will always sit there and listen. I am left

thinking that I am glad that the person I'm listening to feels better but also upset that I feel shit because all their problems have been uploaded into my head. They don't know what is going on with my mind and that what they are saying has left me frustrated after speaking to them. My mother is someone who makes me feel that way. She will overload me with her problems because of the way she is now. When I listen to her I just think "you don't want to know what is going on in my mind." I know that she picked her second husband over caring for me, however, I will never tell her what I think about that. She is elderly and we have built up a relationship over a number of years. I wouldn't want to harm that relationship for the sake of something in the past that cannot be changed.

196. I don't think I was ever daft. I was always very streetwise. I have looked at some school reports I have gained following recovering my records. From those records it looks like at some point I was doing not too bad in terms of my education. That was during the time I was at Hawthornbrae and going to Dr Guthrie's as a day pupil. The reports suggest that I was doing some reading which I don't remember. The reports also say that I was doing ok for the level I was at. However, I still do think my time in care has affected the education I received. When I was in classrooms I just couldn't sit down and get my head down. Ultimately, the education I received was all geared up to preparing me to enter a trade rather than anything more academic. I ended up leaving care without any qualifications. I think that if I had stayed on at school, and managed to hold down a mainstream education, I would have ended up with qualifications if I had been given the chance.
197. When I left care I found it difficult to tell people where I had been to school when growing up in care. I would lie on my CV and in job applications to get around that. I would worry that if I told the truth prospective employers would check up on the institutions I had been at. It scares the life out of me when I discover I have to undertake courses now. I've always been better verbally than in writing. I have recently had to sit courses run by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health as part of my job. When I read the questions I understand what they mean but I just can't get what I want to say down onto paper. It is as if I go blank. I question myself and that doubt just makes things all the more harder. Fortunately, although my mind froze

I still managed to get some answers down that allowed me to pass the course. Another impact in terms of my career surrounds how I interact with those who have authority over me in the workplace. My current boss is younger than me, and is a nice guy, but if he starts going on about something I just freeze and can't cope with it. I just nod my head. That can be difficult sometimes because I can't say back what I want to say.

Treatment and support

198. At times I have felt that it might be helpful to get everything out so that I can leave it in the past where it belongs. Unfortunately, that has never really happened. A few years back I did try to speak to one doctor but the treatment didn't work out. There was a suggestion that I could come in and speak to someone in privacy up the stairs at the surgery. When I met that person in the surgery I didn't feel they helped me. I felt as if they weren't telling me anything that I didn't already know.

199. I think I have been a bit old fashioned when it has come to speaking to doctors or counsellors. Every time I go to go to my GP I am fobbed off with a paracetamol or a couple of ibuprofen. I am yet to find a doctor I can trust. It isn't like years ago where you had the same doctor over a number of years. Every time you turn up it is a different doctor. You can tell that they aren't really interested. Moving forward I am hopeful that Future Pathways may be able to help me in some sort of way.

Reporting of abuse after leaving care

200. It is difficult telling people about my experiences because telling people about everything makes me feel weak. For the most part I have just wanted to bury it. I've found that sometimes when I tell people things they offer too much of their own opinion. Sometimes you do want someone's opinions but not always. If they aren't trained psychologists then it's not something I feel I can listen to. If people aren't qualified and they start analysing things it feels a little bit like they are pushing the boundaries a bit too much.

201. I have spoken a wee bit about my experiences with my partner but not gone into all of the detail. I haven't told her everything about my time in care. When I speak to her about the homes I was at they tend to get mixed up in my head. That is particularly so with Northfield and Ferniehill. I think that is because they were very similar places in the way they look. I have shared a little bit of information with my son but I haven't gone into all the detail. I think he is intelligent enough to work out from what information I have given him how my time in care has impacted on me. He appeared quite interested in our conversations afterwards. If anything speaking to him has made us a bit stronger because he does understand a little about my past. He said jokingly "I can't wait for the next episode."
202. Apart from speaking to the Inquiry I haven't talked about what happened during my time in care with anyone official. I haven't spoken to a solicitor. I have never reported my experiences in care to the police. I don't want to re-live what happened with them. I don't see the point in reporting the boys who abused me in Dr Guthrie's. There may be other people who experienced what I did and they want to report what happened with them. I appreciate their reasons for that but I don't want to be involved in that. I couldn't imagine standing up in court giving evidence or anything like that. It's not something that I want to keep dwelling on.

Records

203. I applied for my records via Future Pathways and Birthlink. That process started before May 2022. The people I have dealt with have been very helpful and explained everything every step of the way. Unfortunately, I have only recovered some of my records. They appear to only be the ones that aren't related to Edinburgh Council. I have emailed Birthlink to follow up and try and get the rest of my records but sadly they still aren't forthcoming from the Council.
204. From the records I have recovered I can see that Hawthorn Brae were very good at keeping records. I don't know whether that is a Crossreach thing or something else.

It is through those records that I have recovered some of my school reports from Dr Guthrie's during my time I was staying there. Until I get my records from Edinburgh Council though I am not going to get a complete picture. I was made aware that the records they hold are over a thousand pages long but, as of the time of signing this statement, nothing has been provided. I don't know whether they are wary about providing me with my records but I know I am still entitled to them.

205. It's a strange experience reading reports written by other people about you. The social workers describe me as being something like "very aware of what's happening around him." I am described as moody, mischievous, a delinquent but also confident, more aware and more mature for my age than I should have been. There is one entry noting that I took the piss out of myself. The reason I was doing that was to stop other people doing that to me. It was as if they were describing me as if I was a grown up even though, when some of the entries are made, I was just twelve or thirteen years old.
206. Reading those records at first brought a smile to my face. It made me think that I was maybe a lot wider than I thought I was. Then I came to realise that I shouldn't have been getting described in the ways I was being described. I should have been having a childhood and not been the way I was. It made me realise that I should have been at home with my parents and getting help to go to school. It made me realise that I had been growing up too fast in order to cope with the things around me.
207. It amazes me that a lot of what I have remembered are bad memories. There were good times but for the life of me I just can't remember them. There are one or two that have come after reviewing my records, like being taken on a holiday in a caravan to somewhere like Callander or being taken fishing, but even then I can't place when that happened and what children's home I was at. I hope that when I recover all of my records I will be able to piece together the later years of my time in care. I was all over the place and I feel I don't have a lot of memories surrounding that part of my childhood. I want to see if there is anything that will trigger some more of the good memories about those times. I just don't know why I can't remember that period of my life as well as other times in my life. I would expect to forget some things but there

just aren't that many memories there. Hopefully my records can help me overcome that.

Lessons to be Learned

208. I don't tend to try to blame anyone but where I have placed blame in the past it has been with social services and the council. That changed after reviewing what records I recovered. It was strange to read them because I didn't really have memories attached to a lot of the things that were there. The records made me feel as if I had been placing the blame in the wrong place and made me realise that there were other people involved in the process. It was through reading my records that I started to think that some of the blame lay with my parents. A lot of what happened really came from them. I found that difficult to realise. My mother is still alive, and I have a very good relationship with her, but I can't help feeling that way now. I was responsible for my behaviour and not going to school but, given the age I was, I should have been better guided by my parents. It was almost as if I was pushed aside by my parents then ended up in care. Looking back, it was strange how I didn't blame my parents.
209. By the time I was on social services radar I had spent a number of years going back and forth between different people's houses. That part was more the fault of my family. However, there still should have been, and could have been, a lot more social services could have done. There could have been a lot more done by social workers to try and understand why I began skipping school. Their decision making could have been a lot better surrounding that. It could have been better surrounding where to send me too. I don't understand their decision to send me to Dr Guthrie's. I believe I was one of the youngest boys at Dr Guthrie's. I found myself in a place where the other boys were already into drink, drugs, fighting and crime. They were in there for all these reasons. I wasn't in there because I was getting into trouble with the police. I was there purely because I had been skipping school and because my parents didn't want me at home.

210. As soon as you are in places like Dr Guthrie's you need to pick your group of friends. You just can't be left on your own. You go with the gang. I look back to a lot of the things that I did as a kid and I think I shouldn't have been in that environment in the first place. Dr Guthrie's just wasn't the right place to put someone like me at that time. Social services should have known not to place me in a place like that. All I needed was some help with attending school, however, it was decided that I should be effectively punished repeatedly for five years instead. That decision affected what I was like there and probably changed me for the rest of my life.
211. There needs to be more of a focus by social services on trying to get kids back into a family home. I missed out on that during my time in care. I should have been helped out more in the family home. I appreciate that may not have been possible because of my own family circumstances but I'm sure that isn't the same for all children in care and their families.
212. Generally across all the places I was at the staff were fine. However, there were also staff members who certainly shouldn't have been in the jobs that they had. Every place I was at I would wonder to myself whether I was doing something wrong. Almost every place I went to I was bullied or abused. Staff must have seen the things that were going on. I can't believe that they didn't see the sort of things I experienced. I can't help feeling resentment towards Dr Guthrie's because of the sexual abuse I experienced. Although none of the staff were involved I was still in their care. I probably wasn't the first to experience those things. There probably are more instances of what I experienced but that doesn't change things.
213. There needs to be less children sent away. I appreciate that there will always be some boys who are totally out of control and they need to be removed from the family home and placed into care. However for the rest, there should be more help in and around the family unit to prevent children from entering the care system. I believe there needs to be better training for staff to understand how to care for children. However, no matter if that training has been providing, if you put a load of children in an environment like Wellington Farm or Dr Guthrie's, there is always going to be bullying and the same mentality that "you can't grass." That will never be eradicated in these sort of places.

I don't think there is one magic answer to overcoming the problems I faced when I was in care.

214. Wellington Farm understood that most of the kids in there were never going to go onto become doctors. They knew that kids needed to have trades and to be handy. In that way it worked. They did try to get you ready for adult life. They placed you in units, had you doing chores, had you being more responsible and taught you trades. In that way they did prepare me for the outside world. However, personally, I don't think there could have been anything that those involved in the care system could have done to help me in my adult life after the time I left Wellington Farm. I just wanted to see the back of the care system after I left it. It wouldn't have changed anything if I had been offered support. I just wanted to leave Wellington Farm and have nothing to do with it. I appreciate that might not have been the case for everybody. If there was a place now like Wellington Farm in that sense I would have it as a place where children can attend during the day rather than a residential place.
215. The easy solution was to place kids into children's homes and let someone else deal with them. I think that solution just created more problems than were already there. I think I am a good example of that. I went into the care system for skipping school. Because of the way I was cared for I could have come out the other end in Saughton. You were mixed in with older boys who were in there for doing things they shouldn't have been doing and you did learn from them. That just made things worse. I chose not to do that but there was a real chance that that could have happened.
216. There needs to be less of the sort of places where large groups of boys and girls are placed together. There's always going to be trouble with those sort of places. There are always going to be children who want to get something over on staff, that want to run away or want to play up to the gang. There are always going to be children who want to cause trouble. If they are sent away then children need to be placed in smaller groups. Places like Wellington Farm and Dr Guthrie's, if they still exist, should be closed down.


Hopes for the Inquiry

- 217. Everybody who saw positives or negatives in me after I was placed in care all worked for an institution. I now realise that they didn't really care about me. They cared 'for me' but not 'about me.' I was just part of the system. The things I experienced and the way I wasn't cared for just should never have happened. I'm sure that these things happen all over the world but at least people are now coming to the realisation that they shouldn't have happened.

- 218. In some ways you blame yourself for the way you were treated. After you are abused you start to doubt yourself. You question whether you deserved it. You ask whether it was because of things that you did. You question why the same things happened in more than one place. When I read my reports it doesn't sound like I was an angel but that still doesn't mean that it was appropriate for staff to be physically abusive or to use other boys to be physically abusive towards me.

- 219. I initially wasn't going to bother with speaking to the Inquiry. I felt that there were people who might need much more help than myself. I then realised that the Inquiry was so much bigger than just helping individual people or looking at one particular place. That realisation led me to thinking that the people running these places, working in these places or the institutions themselves needed to be held accountable. Speaking to the Inquiry will hopefully achieve that.

- 220. 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... 13-09-2022