

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HLO [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is HLO [REDACTED] As a child and all the time I was in care I was known as HLO [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born and brought up in Lanark. We lived in a house with a front and back door in Newmains. My mum and dad were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I had two brothers and two sisters. [REDACTED] was the oldest and there is less than a year between him and me. [REDACTED] was four years younger than me, [REDACTED] was seven years younger than me and [REDACTED] was nine years younger than me. My dad wasn't there a lot of the time as he was in and out of a psychiatric hospital. I think he was schizophrenic. Both my parents are deceased.
3. When I was growing up I always thought that I had been adopted because I wasn't treated the same as my brothers and sisters. My mum and dad had very little time for me. Even when I got older I wasn't treated like I was their child. My mum told me at one point that my dad was angry because I was born so quick after [REDACTED]. The social work department were involved with my family from a very young age and were regularly in my house. My dad used to batter my mum and me regularly. When he was drunk he was violent to us but he was completely different when he was sober. I never saw him hit my brothers or sisters.

4. At the age of ten I was sent to live with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who stayed in Law village. My dad was in a psychiatric hospital at the time and my mum was going into hospital to have a hysterectomy operation. The [REDACTED] were in their sixties or seventies and were friends of my mother. They had an adopted daughter. As far as I know it was all arranged through the social work department. My brothers and sisters went to four different aunties when I went to the [REDACTED].
5. I lived with the [REDACTED] for around six months until my mum left the hospital. Everything was good with the [REDACTED], at least I don't have any bad memories from my time there, so that makes me think it was all good with them.
6. I went home again when I left the [REDACTED] but nothing had changed at home. I went to Newmains primary school but I don't recall going very often. Part of the reason I wasn't there all the time was because my dad regularly beat me. One time he threw me down the stairs and broke my arm. The police were often at my house and he was taken away. I am not sure if he ever went to prison for what he did to me and my mum.
7. Things got so bad that I tried to kill myself. Duncan Gray, our social worker came to the house and he thought it would be better for everyone if I went into care for a while. I went to a children's panel at Shotts when I would have been eleven. There were three people on the panel and I was there with my mum and Duncan Gray my social worker. My dad wasn't allowed in to the hearings room because of his bad temper. The police were at the hearings too. At the hearing it was decided that I should be placed in care and I was sent to a children's home in Crosshouse, Kilmarnock. When I was getting taken away in the social worker's car my dad was jumping on the bonnet of the car trying to stop them. This made me think that my dad actually loved me. The police took him away.
8. The social worker that took me in the car wasn't Duncan Gray. It was a woman with long black hair. She took me straight from the children's panel to the home. My brothers and sisters stayed with my mum. They were never taken into care. I felt happy that I was leaving my home and going somewhere that I was going to be safe.

### **Crosshouse children's home, Kilmarnock**

9. I can't remember anything about my stay there, not even the staff or the other children. At one point when I was there I went to Crosshouse hospital which was nearby so that is the only reason that I know it was a children's home in Crosshouse.
10. I was only at Crosshouse for about two months. I believe that my mum and dad weren't happy that it was too far away from them to visit so I got moved to Kirknowe children's home in Cambusnethan, Wishaw. I would still have been eleven. A social worker, but not Duncan Gray drove me from Crosshouse to Kirknowe.

### **Kirknowe children's home, Wishaw**

- Secondary Institutions - to be published later
11. 
  12. 
  13. 
  14. 

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

### Leaving Kirknowe

21. I think I would have been at Kirknowe about six months. Secondary Institutions - to be published  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later I went to another children's panel. My mum was probably there. At this hearing it was decided that I should go to the Good Shepherd in Bishopton. Kirknowe was only supposed to be for short term placements so I couldn't stay there. I couldn't go home because my mum said she was looking after my dad and couldn't cope with me too. I was taken straight from the panel to the Good Shepherd by a social worker.

## **Good Shepherd, Bishopton.**

22. I was in the Good Shepherd at Bishopton on three occasions. I don't remember exactly when I went in or how long each stay was. The first time I was in there would have been when I was twelve or possibly thirteen.
23. It was a massive old building which looked like it had been a church at some point. It had three floors. Inside it was quite dingy with dark staircases. Half of the building was for young pregnant girls and the other half was for girls like me. There were no boys. The age of the girls was quite mixed. I was in a room with two beds. The bedrooms were on the ground floor.
24. The Good Shepherd was run by Catholic nuns. There were about twelve nuns there and they slept upstairs. **HOJ** was **SNR** and she was very strict. The only other nun whose name I remember was Sister **GXO**. There was a priest who lived in a room at the top of the stairs on the first floor. **HOJ** wore a long black habit and Sister **GXO** and the other nuns wore a blue one. They all wore headdresses. I think I was allocated to Sister **GXO** for her to look after me. **HOJ** and Sister **GXO** were there all three times that I went to the Good Shepherd.

## **Routine at Good Shepherd**

### *First day*

25. When I arrived I was taken to meet **HOJ** who was **SNR**. I then met Sister **GXO** and she told me all about the rules and regulations. She warned me about running away because we were away out in the woods and there was nowhere to go. She showed me round the building then took me into a room where there was a TV and there were about twenty girls already in there.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

26. I was woken up every morning at 6am to go to mass. This was on Saturday and Sunday mornings too. One of the nuns came in and pulled the covers off the bed. I got dressed and went to the chapel for the service. After chapel I went back to my room then got washed and dressed. After that I went to a big open space outside which was like a playground with the other girls and sat about until it was time for breakfast. Bedtime was around 9pm. Once you were in your bed no talking was allowed and you weren't allowed out your bed even to go to the toilet.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

27. All our meals were in the big room where the television was. There was a long table where we sat. Breakfast was at 8am and we all ate at the same time. There were always two nuns there supervising us. Breakfast would be things like cereal. We had lunch and then dinner was at 6pm

### *Washing/bathing*

28. We got washed at the sink after mass. I think we bathed maybe once a week. We had to stand in a queue and wait for our turn to get in. The nuns came in and out the bathroom with towels for us and to make sure we were behaving. I am not aware that I felt embarrassed or uncomfortable with the nuns seeing me naked in the bath.

### *Leisure time*

29. There was nothing organised for the weekends and they were like any other day apart from we had church on a Sunday. There was a television which we were sometimes allowed to watch. There were books to read if we wanted and there were board games which we could play with.

### *Trips and holidays*

30. I was never taken on any day trips anywhere or on any kind of holiday away from the Good Shepherd.

### *Schooling*

31. We went to school between ten o'clock and two o'clock which was in the two school classes within the Good Shepherd. It was the nuns who did the teaching. I only remember one of the nuns first names as HOI [REDACTED]. We were taught English and arithmetic. I actually looked forward to the classes because it was something to do. There were about eight girls in each class.

### *Religious instruction*

32. I was a Protestant but regardless I was still made to get up at six o'clock in the morning to go to Mass which was about an hour long. I didn't like it but I just did what I was told. The chapel was a separate building joined on to the main building. There wasn't any other religious instruction apart from the Mass at the church.

### *Work*

33. We had chores to do like scrubbing the corridor floors. I only had to do this about three times in all the time I was there. After you had done it Sister GXO [REDACTED] would walk on it and point out bits that you had missed but it was where she had walked and it was her footprints. I can't remember doing any other chores.

### *Bed Wetting*

34. I wet the bed a lot of the time when I was there and I was punished for it. Other girls wet their beds.



### *Visitors*

35. My mum didn't visit me. Duncan Gray visited me regularly when I was at the Good Shepherd. He knew I wasn't happy and wanted to go home.

### *Weekend Leave*

36. I was only allowed home once or twice for weekend leave. A lot of the other girls got out most weekends. There was a girl, [REDACTED], whose dad visited and he asked why I was always there and nobody ever came to see me. He must have asked for and got permission to take me out at the same time as [REDACTED]. I went to their house sometimes for the weekend and I enjoyed this.

### *Discipline*

37. The nuns were very strict. I saw a few of the girls getting their legs slapped if they did anything wrong. There was another nun who liked hitting you on the back of your head as you walked past. She did this for no reason apart from because she wanted to do it and took pleasure from it. One time she hit me on the head so I jumped up on her and pulled her headdress off. I was put in the punishment room for that.

### *Running away*

38. I had only been there about a month when I started to run away. I was frequently running away and I was always caught near my house by the police and was taken back to the Good Shepherd. There were a couple of occasions when I got weekend leave and when it was time to go back I was supposed to go to Anderston bus station to get picked up by the minibus but I never went there.

## Abuse at Good Shepherd

39. I didn't like fish. One time it was served and I couldn't eat it. Sister **GXO** started shouting at me telling me to eat it. I refused. She pulled my head back and with her other hand stuffed the fish into my mouth. I was boking. She then left me. She only force fed me on this one occasion. I saw other girls being force fed the same way. The next morning my plate of fish was served to me at breakfast time. Sister **GXO** told me to eat it or I would have to starve. I never ate it.
40. Because I didn't eat the fish at breakfast time Sister **GXO** grabbed me by the hair and pulled me through to the punishment room. This was the first time I had been put in there. I was made to strip to my vest and pants then she locked me in. I think this was to stop me from running away. She came back with a metal tin for me to use as a toilet. I was in that room for four nights.
41. The punishment room was just a bare room with nothing in it apart from something that was like a sofa bed. The lights were always left on even through the night. It was cold but there was a cupboard there that was used as a store for covers and other things. I often took a cover out to try and stay warm. After that day I was put in there quite a few times always by Sister **GXO**. I was sometimes in there for a week. I was brought food and when I had been to the toilet in the metal tin they let me out to empty it but someone always came with me. No one was allowed to try and speak to me when I was in the punishment room. I saw other girls being put in there for days too. You would get put in there for things like fighting or talking when you weren't meant to talk, arguing or not eating you dinner.
42. One time when I was in the punishment room I was desperate to get out and go home. I knew that the social work department had paid for my whole family to go to Butlin's holiday camp the next day so I wanted to go with them. I set the fire alarm off because I knew that this would release all the doors and everyone would evacuate the building. When the door unlocked I ran through and grabbed a cardigan and a pair of trousers then smashed the window in the punishment room and climbed out and ran into the woods. I went to a bus station in Glasgow and begged money from

passers-by so I could phone my mum. She told me to tell me where she was and she would arrange for the police to pick me up and take me home. I told her but when the police came they just took me straight back to the Good Shepherd.

43. I regularly wet the bed. I tried to pull the covers over so they wouldn't see in the morning. They must have checked and found that I had. Sister **GXO**, **HOJ** **HOJ** **HOI** and another nun would check in the morning. Sister **GXO** said something about having to keep putting up with me wetting the bed. When they found out I had wet the bed they would grab me by the hair at the back of my head and rub my face in the wet sheets. I was upset and always felt degraded. This happened about three times in a week. They then stripped my bed and threw the sheets in a trolley outside to get washed.
44. Sometimes when I wet the bed I would get put in the punishment room until the following morning. I didn't get to have a shower or wash. When they let me out I would often be given a chore to do like scrubbing the corridor or something else they wanted done. I saw other girls having their faces rubbed in their wet sheets and getting put in the punishment room.
45. Sometimes if you were cheeky to Sister **GXO** she wouldn't let you have your evening meal and would send you to your bedroom. I just remember feeling sad and lonely all the time that I was at the Good Shepherd. There was other abuse in there but I am not ready to talk about that yet.

### **Reporting of abuse at Good Shepherd**

46. I told Duncan Gray, my social worker, everything that went on when I was at the Good Shepherd including the punishment room. He asked me if I wanted him to do anything about what I had told him but I told him I didn't. I was too scared that this would make it worse for me because he wasn't going to be there all the time. Sometimes he took me out to a coffee shop and he knew that all I wanted was to go

back home with my family. He always told me, and he was really nice about it, that he wouldn't agree to me going home.

### **Leaving Good Shepherd**

47. I was at the Good Shepherd the first time for at least eight months. Because I kept running away the Good Shepherd refused to take me back. HOJ [REDACTED] told me that I couldn't stay there and I was taken from the Good Shepherd to Calderhouse which was a remand home. A social worker took me.

### **Calderhouse remand home, Bardykes Road, Blantyre**

48. I was in Calderhouse twice in-between my three times at the Good Shepherd. The first time was when I was running away from the Good Shepherd. I was in Calderhouse for a week then I went back to the Good Shepherd. The second time I was in Calderhouse for around nine months. I would have been fourteen.
49. It was a big white building on two levels and on the right hand side of this building was a big sports barn. Inside the front door on the right was a cell, then there was the kitchen and bedrooms. There were more bedrooms upstairs. Through the back was the woodwork room. The front door of the building was locked and my bedroom door was always locked. There was a sitting room where everyone could sit about and watch TV.
50. Mr and Mrs BHN-HLP [REDACTED] were SNR [REDACTED] and they lived in [REDACTED]. They were in their early forties and I can only describe them as being quite snooty. The only staff I remember were BHN-HLP [REDACTED] a member of day staff, a teacher, the night-time security man and cleaners. I think Calderhouse was run by South Lanarkshire council. There were about fifteen boys and girls in there aged from ten up to fifteen.

## **Routine at Calderhouse**

### *First day*

51. When I arrived at Calderhouse Mr and Mrs BHN-HLP showed me around the building. They showed me my bedroom which had four beds in it.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

52. We were woken up and got dressed and went down for breakfast.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

53. I don't really remember much about the food so I am assuming that it must have been alright. There were no issues if you didn't like any of the food that was given to you.

### *Washing/bathing*

54. A member of staff would wait outside the door when I had my bath so I did get privacy. They waited until I was finished.

### *Leisure time*

55. In the evening we would usually watch TV for about an hour and then were taken into the sports barn where we would play badminton. There were books and games that we could play with inside the house. Outside we got to play shinty and other sports. We weren't allowed out to play in the grounds without supervision.

### *Trips and holidays*

56. We were never taken on any trips. The furthest we got was if someone arranged to visit and they would be allowed to take you out to a local café.

### *Schooling*

57. The only class in there was a woodwork class. I wasn't given any other education. Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> never sat down with me and taught me anything about puberty or sex.

### *Healthcare*

58. I never got any medical check-ups by a doctor or anything like that. I didn't need to see a doctor. There was a nurse that came in through the day. Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> took me to see her the day after she had made me scrub the barn floor with a toothbrush because my knees were all cut. She put bandages on my knees. I don't recall seeing her at any other time.
59. Before I went into care, when I was maybe ten, I started to have what they thought were epileptic seizures. It happened again when I was in Calderhouse. They sent me with another member of staff to hospital and I had a lot of tests done and they said it wasn't epilepsy. I still don't know what it was. Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> used to think I was just acting.

### *Religious instruction*

60. There was no religion taught to us and we weren't made to go to church.

### *Work*

61. There were cleaners who came in so I don't remember having to do any chores.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

62. I was there over one Christmas. I got a present on Christmas morning but can't remember what it was. We didn't have a party but we did get a special meal. There were no decorations or Christmas tree put up in the building. Birthdays weren't celebrated in any way.

### *Visitors*

63. My mum only visited me once and that was when I begged her to come. Duncan Gray came to see me, sometimes with another social worker. This other social worker came to see me after I left care. I was allowed to phone home but I had to ask Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] to use the phone and she would stand over and listen to what I was saying.

### *Running away*

64. I begged my mum to come and see me and she did once. I felt sorry for her because she was getting old and wasn't well. She took me out and we went to a local café. When we were in there I went to the toilet and climbed out the window and ran away. I was determined that I wasn't going to go back to Calderhouse. I wanted out of care and wanted to go home. I later phoned her and apologised and she told the police where I was so they caught me and took me back.

### **Abuse at Calderhouse**

65. Initially I thought Calderhouse was going to be okay. The first three months could be described as being alright. I tended to keep myself to myself and as long as you did whatever Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] said there were no real issues. Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] had a lot more to do in the day to day <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] than Mr <sup>BHN</sup> [REDACTED]. They both shouted at us quite a lot. Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] often said there was no wonder that my family didn't want me and that she wouldn't want me in her house either.
66. When I got back after that first time I ran away Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] gave me a toothbrush and took me round to the sports barn where she made me go on my hands and knees and scrub the floor with the toothbrush and a bucket of water. She stood there watching me and I did it for maybe two or three hours until she said I could stop. When I got up my knees were all cut to bits. It was dark by the time I finished and I thought I would be able to go to bed. When we went in the building she told the night

security man that I was to stand for two hours before I was allowed to go to my bed. I wasn't even allowed to lean over onto one leg. I had to stand straight. She told him to hit me with a cane even if I leant over to one side. He hit me a couple of times in that two hours.

67. The first time I ran away was after about three months. When I was taken back I was punished and after that I just didn't want to be there. There was a cell which was just like a prison cell. I got put in there when I ran away. There was a bit at the bottom where they could pass a tray with your food on it. At eye level there was a small hatch they opened to speak to you. I was in there a few times.

### **Reporting of abuse at Calderhouse**

68. I am not sure if I told Duncan Gray about the time I was made to scrub the barn floor. He definitely knew I wasn't happy and wanted to go home though.

### **Leaving Calderhouse**

69. I believe Calderhouse was a remand centre so they were only able to keep me there for a certain amount of time. After that I had to go to a place where I could stay longer term. The first time I was at Calderhouse I was there for a week and the second time it was around nine months. I didn't go to a children's panel before I left but Mrs <sup>HLP</sup> [REDACTED] told me that I was leaving to go somewhere else. She told me it was Dr Guthrie's school for girls but I had never heard of it before. Two social workers arrived in a car and took me straight to Dr Guthrie's in Edinburgh. I don't know who these social workers were. I would have been around fourteen.



### **Dr Guthrie's school for girls, Edinburgh**

70. Dr Guthrie's was in Gilmerton Road in Edinburgh. It was split into two. Dr Guthrie's school for boys was next door. I was never in the boys part of the building and never really had any interaction with them. There were about thirty girls altogether.
71. It was an old building on three floors. The headmaster's room was just inside the front door. The classrooms were on the ground level round to the right. On the left was cell number one. There was a sewing room at the top of the stairs and that was where cell number two was. The bedrooms were on the second floor.
72. SNR [REDACTED]'s name may have been Mr MTA [REDACTED] but I am not sure. There was another member of staff that I recall but I can't remember his name. He showed me around on my first day. There was a female teacher and she was foreign and was very strict. Her name may have been Mrs Guthrie.
73. I was in a bedroom with two other girls. They were both about fifteen or sixteen. One of the girls was called [REDACTED]. I can't remember the name of the other girl. My room was tiny and the three beds were around the walls. Some of the other rooms were single rooms.

### **Routine at Dr Guthrie's**

#### *General routine*

74. When we arrived we met a man and he showed me around the classrooms and the building. Usually in the morning the staff would wake us up and were left to get ourselves ready to go for breakfast. The food must have been okay and I don't remember there being any incidents where girls didn't eat their food. We had baths but I am not sure what the routine was. Two female teachers would occasionally come into the bathroom and check up on us. There was a games room but I am not

sure what was all there. In the time that I was at Dr Guthrie's I don't ever recall going on any trips or day excursions.

#### *Clothing/uniform*

75. We wore a uniform in there. We had to go to the sewing room and make it ourselves. It was a green material. We put our dirty clothes in a basket and they were taken away and came back washed.

#### *Schooling*

76. I was happy to go to the classes because it kept me away from the two girls who I shared my bedroom with. They were older and were in different classes. Classes started about 10am and stopped about 3pm. We moved between classes during the day. We were taught English, arithmetic and sewing and it was different teachers that took each class. I never really enjoyed the classes or learned much. I never did any exams before I left and didn't leave with any qualifications.

#### *Work*

77. I don't recall having to do any chores apart from gardening. We didn't have a choice. We had to help out. I think that was a Mrs Cowie who ran this.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

78. I am not aware of anyone's birthday being celebrated. Christmas day was just like every other day apart from there might have been a special Christmas dinner.

#### *Visitors*

79. My mum visited me a couple of times. I asked her when she came if I could go home with her but she told me I couldn't. I was able to phone her some other times too.

### *Discipline*

80. If you did something wrong you were sent to Mr MTA SNR. If you had been fighting or something like that you would be put into one of the two cells. I was only in a cell once. Anyone that was put in a cell had to strip down to their pants and vest.
81. The cells were bare rooms but they weren't as prison like as the rooms they had in Calderhouse. The door was sturdy with big hinges but there weren't any hatches for things to be passed in. If staff wanted to speak they had to open the door.

### **Abuse at Dr Guthrie's**

82. I would have been fifteen nearly sixteen when there was an incident in the bedroom and I was assaulted by the two girls who shared the bedroom with me. I didn't really have very much to do with the girls up until then because I kept myself to myself. When it started I tried to leave the bedroom but there was someone on the other side holding the door from the outside. The girls grabbed me and threw me on the bed. One of them lay on top of me holding my arms. The other forced a Johnson's talcum powder container up inside my vagina. This lasted about half an hour and they were talking dirty when they were doing this. I was screaming from the pain and I was crying. I begged them to stop but they were both laughing at me. I am not sure what made them stop.
83. It was incredibly painful and afterwards I was bleeding. When they stopped I went back to the door and it was still being held shut. I pulled and pulled and managed to open it and the male member of staff whose name I can't remember was standing there. I told him what the girls had done to me but he just said I was lying. He said that because I was lying I was getting put in a cell. I demanded to see SNR SNR but he refused to let me. He took me to the cell and told me to strip. He watched as I got stripped down to my vest and pants. He took my clothes from me then shut and locked the door.

84. There is no doubt in my mind that this man definitely knew what was going on in that room and he was stopping me from leaving by holding the handle. I needed medical attention after the girls assaulted me. I went to the man who was holding the door shut when I was being assaulted and I told him I was injured and bleeding from my private area and needed sanitary towels. He told me that if I wanted any products I had to do some chores to earn them. I had to use toilet paper. After that I was frightened to ever be alone with him and I always tried to make sure someone else was with me when I was near him.
85. I didn't get any food when I was in the cell on the first day but I was given food the next day. No one came to check up on me at any time to make sure I was okay. I was in the cell for two days.
86. After I got out the cell I had to go back and continue sharing the bedroom with these two girls. One of the girls left about a month after this incident. All the other girls were making fun of me about the talcum powder incident. They made a name up for me that had something to do with talcum powder. This really upset me and after that I stayed away from all the other girls and hardly ever came out of my bedroom and just stayed in my bed.
87. In my time at Dr Guthrie's I saw other girls being put in the cells. They were sometimes in there for days.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Dr Guthrie's**

88. When I was taken out the cell I asked and was taken to see SNR Mr MTA. I told him what the girls had done to me in the room and he just told me I was a liar. He then told me that my father had fallen into a fire and that he was seriously ill. I asked if I could go home to see him. He told me that I would be lucky if I got out of care at eighteen never mind sixteen

### **Leaving Dr Guthrie's school for girls**

89. It must have been when I was approaching sixteen in 1978 when I was told that my dad had come home drunk and had fallen into the fire within our house and had sustained burn injuries. He was basically sent home to die. Mr MTA refused to let me out. I eventually contacted Duncan Gray and within the hour he arranged for me to leave Dr Guthrie's and spend time at home with my dad before he died. They gave me two weeks leave but I never went back.

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

90. I got home to see my dad before he died. He died only a few days after I got home. I met my first husband within a few months and married him quickly so they couldn't put me back in care. I was still sixteen and I had my first child at seventeen. My husband was about nine years older than me and he was violent and nearly killed me. He ended up in the jail. A year later he got out of jail and I took him back. I had another child to him but the marriage didn't last.
91. Duncan Gray continued to visit me after I had left care along with the social worker who was with him at Calderhouse. At some point I contacted Duncan Gray and told him my partner wasn't giving me any money so he arranged for a social worker, called a home maker, to come. She showed me how to budget and went shopping with me.
92. Duncan Gray, my social worker, knew that I wanted to be a support worker for children who were in care. He helped me get a place at Motherwell college to do a certificated carers course. One time I turned up with black eyes which my partner gave me. I was asked if I wanted to take a few months out of the course. Despite what was going on at home I completed and passed a national certificate course and started a course for my higher national certificate. Because of things that were happening at home it all went wrong and I didn't complete this course. About a year

later I met another man but this too was a violent and abusive relationship. I stayed with him for quite a long time.

93. I worked at a couple of job centres and did the accounts for the [REDACTED]. At the [REDACTED] when I was about 34, I met my husband who I am still married to. Around 2000 my health deteriorated and I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, COPD and osteoporosis. I had to stop working. On a couple of occasions I developed pneumonia and developed delirium. I was close to dying.

### **Impact**

94. It was when I was at the Good Shepherd the third time that I started trying to kill myself. I would have been fourteen. I was feeling really low and didn't want to be there. I was in the punishment room at the time. A nun came into the room and quizzed me about what I had done. I didn't get any medical or mental health support at this time. I was left on my own in that room after this incident and I am not aware of anyone checking to see that I was alright. I have tried to take my own life on a number of occasions, and this continued into my adult life, and on one occasion had to get CPR to bring me back to life. This all stems back to my unhappy time in care.
95. If I had been given a better education when I was in care I think I would have achieved more and would probably have worked with the social work department especially with children who were in care.
96. I find it very hard to trust people because of my time in care. There was never anyone I could turn to for help or advice. I also had difficulty forming and sustaining any trusting relationships.
97. When I went home at sixteen I felt really strange. My two sisters were very close and they did everything together. I didn't feel like part of the family. I have never really seen eye to eye with one of my sisters. I think our differences were because we weren't brought up together so we were never close. My brother [REDACTED] had left to

join the army. I did later become close to [REDACTED] but unfortunately he has died. Since I have been in care I have always kept myself to myself and don't really mix with people. I don't even know the names of my neighbours.

98. More or less as soon as I came out of care I turned to alcohol, probably to block out all my bad memories. I think that could be why I can't remember a lot of detail about each place.
99. I have always had a difficult relationship with my mum. She has told me that I was born too soon after my older brother [REDACTED]. She tried to convince Duncan Gray that I was not fit to look after my own children when they were just toddlers. We had a meeting with Duncan Gray and I got to keep my children. This has affected my own relationship with my own children. They have occasionally told me that they thought I could have done more for them.
100. I had kept some of my certificates from college and kept them in a cupboard. I think I was keeping them because they reminded me of what I had achieved and of a good time in my life because I enjoyed the college. My husband convinced me that it would be a good idea to get rid of them and forget about my past so I did.
101. I regularly think about my time in care and when I do I try to remember more about my past. I just hope I can get my records to help me. As well as flashbacks I have nightmares about my time in care.

### **Treatment/support**

102. For a while I went to a place called the Moira Anderson centre where I received some counselling. When they found out I had a psychiatrist they said they couldn't pay for me to get this extra counselling so it stopped about a year ago.
103. For a while, because of my delirium I was having hallucinations and tended to go out walking at night. Dr Brodie at Coathill Hospital in Coatbridge who I have been with

for seven years, got me put on a list which meant that if the police found me wandering through the night they knew to take me back home. I speak to Dr Brodie once every month. He is very helpful.

104. I started getting help for my mental health at about 18 and I have been in hospital on a number of occasions. I am now on four different antidepressants, antipsychotic drugs and medication for anxiety. I have been taking medication for a long time.
105. I have been diagnosed with PTSD which I am told was a result of my time in care. Since I have been in touch with the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry I have been in contact with Future Pathways. They referred me to a PTSD clinic in Glasgow where my inability to remember things about my time in care has been explained to me.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

106. I have never reported anything that has happened to me in care to the police. I would be happy to tell the police but only after I had seen my social work records so that I could see exactly when and where I was in care. I wouldn't feel comfortable telling them about my time in care if I wasn't sure when I was there. I feel it may affect my reliability.
107. My husband knows about everything that happened to me when I was in care. My own children know I was in care but they don't know anything about how I was treated.

### **Records**

108. I have had several phone calls with Wishaw social work department about my records because I can't believe that they can't find my records. The only part of my social work records I received was one page with confirmation that I went to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] when my mum was in hospital having an operation. Part



of the reason I wanted my records was to see if Duncan had told anyone about the punishment room at the Good Shepherd. I contacted a woman from Dr Guthrie's who I was told might be able to help me. She has never been back in touch with me. Future Pathways are currently trying to help me get my records through Birth-Link.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

109. I feel that I should have been looked after better in the places I was in care. There should have been more love, affection and compassion. A counsellor would have been good because that would have been someone to talk to and tell about what was going on. There should have been someone sitting down with me after I had run away to ask me why I was running away and find out what was wrong. All they did was take me back and put me in a cell. Kirknowe was the only place that they did try and help me. They tried to find out why I was running away.
110. I am not aware what vetting was done at that time but more checks should be done to make sure that staff are qualified and capable of working with children.
111. I hope that by coming forward that it will be shown that I was telling the truth and abuse did go on in these places where I was in care. I also hope that it will give me some closure. I suspect that children in care are still being abused, especially by the nuns, but hopefully by coming forward things may be put in place to stop it.

### **Other information**

112. Duncan Gray my social worker was brilliant with me and he was the only one who regularly visited me. He even came to some of the homes and took me to church with his wife and kids.

113. About a year ago I joined a Dr Guthrie's survivor group on the internet. A woman by the name of [REDACTED] joined and I was afraid that this may have been one of the girls who abused me so I left the group.
114. I contacted the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry after I read the story about the two young girls who had been in care who jumped off Erskine Bridge. At the time the Good Shepherd were denying they had a punishment room. This made me want to come forward to confirm that they did.
115. 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.... HLO [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 9/7/21 .....