

1

Tuesday, 4 June 2024

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome back to our evidential  
4 hearings in Chapter 6 of Phase 8 of our case study.

5 In this chapter we're looking into evidence  
6 particularly in relation to Dr Guthrie's provision and  
7 provision by Loaningdale School.

8 We start this morning with an oral witness, who  
9 I think is on the other end of the link, which is  
10 functioning well, am I right?

11 MR SHELDON: It is, my Lady. Or at least it was a few  
12 moments ago. This is an applicant who is known as  
13 'Robin'.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 'Robin' (sworn)

16 (Evidence given via videolink)

17 LADY SMITH: 'Robin', thank you. I'll hand you over to  
18 Mr Sheldon in a moment, but before I do that, I want to  
19 assure you that if you have any questions at any time,  
20 you must speak up. It's not a problem. If you want  
21 a break at any time, because it's all getting too  
22 difficult or you just need a break, do tell me. That's  
23 not a problem either.

24 Really the key is if there's anything I can do to  
25 help you give your evidence as well as you can and as

1 comfortably as you can, you must let me know. All  
2 right.

3 A. Thank you very much.

4 LADY SMITH: I'll hand over to Mr Sheldon and he'll take it  
5 from there. Thank you.

6 Questions by Mr Sheldon

7 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

8 'Robin', I think you have your statement in front of  
9 you, with you there. For our purposes it's just  
10 a reference number to get into the record, the statement  
11 is WIT.001.002.0654.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. 'Robin', could you look at the very last page in your  
14 statement, please. It's page 29.

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Just the last paragraph there. You say:

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

21 Is that correct, 'Robin'?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Is that your signature at the foot there?

24 A. That is my signature.

25 Q. Great. Thank you very much.



1 A. Thank you, David.

2 Q. 'Robin', I don't need your date of birth, but I think  
3 you were born in 1965, is that right?

4 A. That's correct.

5 Q. You tell us -- this is back on page 1 of your statement,  
6 'Robin' -- a bit about your life before care. You were  
7 brought up in Glasgow and I think to put it mildly it  
8 was quite a difficult upbringing?

9 A. Very chaotic. Alcoholic parents.

10 Q. Alcoholic and I think you say abusive?

11 A. Very.

12 Q. Do you want to tell us a little about that?

13 A. My dad was a perpetrator and my mum was the beater, so a  
14 bit of both --

15 Q. So physical and sexual abuse --

16 A. Yes, very much sexual abuse and it wasn't just myself.  
17 Obviously my other sister as well, so other family  
18 members and other people in the community, so it wasn't  
19 just us, but there was a lot of alcohol, drink -- drugs,  
20 everything in the house, people coming in and out. It  
21 wasn't a very good home. Eight children, one disabled,  
22 so it's not a very good home. My mum was the beater.  
23 She was the one that gave out the beatings. Not my dad.  
24 He was the other side.

25 Q. He sexually abused you?

1 A. Yes, he was the one that was the worst.

2 Q. When did that start, 'Robin'?

3 A. Probably about the age of four when I was getting picked  
4 up and rubbed up and down, but I didn't know it was  
5 happening to my sister before that, so obviously we  
6 weren't aware until later in life, but it all came out  
7 when I left obviously the system. It all came out then,  
8 because I had to go for a DNA test for my oldest son for  
9 I thought it was my father's -- that's how deep ...  
10 I don't like to go too deep, but that's how deep it  
11 went. I did go for a DNA test on my oldest son.

12 Q. This was from an incident later in your young life?

13 A. Yes, when I was 16. My dad got us drunk and I woke up  
14 in his bed with being disturbed and then ... I kept  
15 quiet of course, I was ashamed, I was just --  
16 a disturbed child anyway and bad behaviour, I had been  
17 in and out of care, so, you know, I ran away and hid it  
18 from everybody and then it wasn't until I had the child  
19 and I started having issues by looking at the child.  
20 Not wanting to love him because I had that fear  
21 unbeknown to me, that's what it was.

22 Q. Yes.

23 We'll come back to look at your life after care,  
24 'Robin', a wee bit later on. But just going back to  
25 your earlier years, you told us your father is an abuser

1           and did this really carry on throughout your childhood?

2    A.   Oh, yes.

3    Q.   How often was that happening?

4    A.   Quite regular.  He would always be feeding us kids with

5           alcohol.  It was called Eldorado wine, which was

6           a fortified alcoholic drink in Glasgow at the time.  He

7           used to take us to the nightclub called the Plaza

8           Ballroom, probably sell us off to men and different

9           things like that, because we were just kids, we didn't

10          know that it was -- we had become used to it being

11          normal, so different things were happening to us.

12   Q.   He would sell you to men?

13   A.   Well, that's the way I look at it now.  Back in those

14          days I didn't see it like that.  I thought it was us

15          having fun as kids, but obviously that is what he was

16          doing.  When you get older you start realising.

17   Q.   You were expected to do things with these men?

18   A.   Yeah.  Well not just that, just the way life was.  To me

19          it was normal.  To be getting touched and stuff.

20   Q.   You tell us that perhaps unsurprisingly you used to run

21          away a lot.  How often was that?

22   A.   A hell of a lot.

23   Q.   How often were you running away?

24   A.   -- sleep in the woods, I managed (inaudible) and it

25          wasn't until a guidance teacher actually -- I got a shoe

1 hit in my face one time by my mum because I ran away and  
2 I went to school and that was the only reason why I went  
3 into care I think, was because I ended up -- a guidance  
4 teacher had noticed the bruise and I said I had bumped  
5 into a door or something, told lies to the teacher, but  
6 they had phoned Social Services and I think that was  
7 initially when it started, me going into the care  
8 system.

9 Q. Was that the first time, 'Robin', that anyone had  
10 noticed that there were things going on in your life  
11 that weren't good?

12 A. No. All I remember is at times my mum would go to  
13 Dundee to a women's place where people were -- obviously  
14 she must have been going through stuff herself with my  
15 dad, but as kids we were dragged about different  
16 places --

17 Q. This was to a women's refuge?

18 A. ... very well.

19 Must have been, because that is when my sister  
20 [REDACTED] was born in Dundee.

21 Q. Right. You told us that an obviously quite perceptive  
22 guidance teacher realised something was wrong and you  
23 ended up in the care system?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. How did that happen? Do you remember there being any

1 Children's Panel or hearing of any sort?

2 A. Oh, yes. Lots of Panels. Lots of hearings. Probably  
3 lost count by now. A lot of it is still a bit fuzzy in  
4 my memory. The only memories I've got really is one  
5 social worker, which stands out a million times,  
6 Maggie Mearns, I don't know if I'm allowed to say her  
7 name, but she was to me my saviour. She was the only  
8 person in the Social Services that ever I said was my  
9 saviour, because she protected me. She went and spoke  
10 to my mum, took me to the house in a car, spoke to my  
11 mum, whatever was said she come back out of the house,  
12 she was extremely upset with whatever mum had said to  
13 her and the next thing I know I was whipped away.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So that was my journey start.

16 Q. All right. So you describe Maggie Mearns as your  
17 saviour and she gets you away from the house?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. You said that there were a number of Panels.

20 First of all, can I just ask you what your  
21 experience of the Panels was like. Was it easy for you  
22 to understand what was going on at the Panels for  
23 example?

24 A. No. Absolutely not. I thought they were there to  
25 protect me, but sometimes I felt like I was the one that

1           was being the naughty child, that I had the behaviour  
2           issues or I had the problems. Of course I did. Now --  
3           looking back now I understand why I had these issues and  
4           running away and doing the things I was doing. I didn't  
5           understand that as a child. I didn't understand my  
6           behaviours, you know. So I thought they would have  
7           understood me. But I just kept on getting sent back  
8           home.

9    Q. I was just about to ask you, as a result of some of  
10       these Panels, I think you were returned to the home  
11       where your father was able to continue abusing you?

12   A. Many a time. Many a time.

13   Q. Did you feel able to tell the Panel what was happening  
14       to you?

15   A. No.

16   Q. Did you feel able to tell Maggie Mearns what was  
17       happening to you?

18   A. No, I had more fear from my father at the time and my  
19       mother, actually -- if I'm being honest, I was more  
20       fearful of my mother than my father, even though he was  
21       the worse predator. It's hard to say that, but my mum  
22       was the worst.

23   Q. You tell us that you think you were about 11 when you  
24       first went into the care system. This would just be  
25       when you had just started secondary school; is that

1 right?

2 A. Yes, that was -- I think we had been in care before as  
3 a family siblings sector, but on my own, me and my  
4 brother, there was only two.

5 Q. You talk about going to a children's home in Glasgow,  
6 Eversley. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

7 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

8 A. [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 Q. [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 A. [REDACTED]

18 Q. If we can turn to page 6 of your statement, please.

19 I think we see that the next placement that you had  
20 after the children's home or children's homes was  
21 Beechwood Remand Home.

22 A. Yes, I thought it was an assessment centre.

23 Q. Well, I was just going to ask you that. We have the  
24 heading 'Remand Home' here. What did the staff call it?  
25 What did the children call it at that time?

1 A. As kids -- well we just thought it was an assessment  
2 place to be assessed for our behaviours, but to be  
3 honest it was a bit chaotic there anyway.

4 Q. I was going to ask you that as well. Were you aware of  
5 any assessment being done?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Did any social workers come to speak to you?

8 A. Not that I can remember.

9 Q. All right. You describe it as rather chaotic, perhaps  
10 you can just --

11 A. Very chaotic --

12 Q. -- tell us about that?

13 A. It was the kids looking after each other, I suppose.  
14 Because we did, we looked out for each other. We ran  
15 about in little gangs. We ran about the streets, we ran  
16 about different peoples houses. Got into a lot of  
17 trouble and sometimes we ran away, but the staff won't  
18 bother. It was a case of they were getting paid to just  
19 do a job and come in and look after us and that was it,  
20 as far as we were concerned we were just getting fed and  
21 watered and allowed to run amuck --

22 Q. They really just left you to your own devices?

23 A. Yeah. Basically. We had parties and stuff like that,  
24 but it wasnae for -- it was like different homes coming  
25 together, you know, to have a party and stuff like that



1 for the kids. That was the best thing that we could  
2 have --

3 Q. Roughly how many children were there?

4 A. There wasn't a lot in there. There wasn't a great deal  
5 in there, because I remember three or four people all  
6 coming together and a few of us going out, but there  
7 wasn't that many kids there. Not many that was there,  
8 but there was more at Dr Guthrie's than there was at the  
9 Beechwood place.

10 Q. Are we talking about maybe a dozen or 20 or is it that  
11 sort of order, more than that?

12 A. No, I think it was -- I think it was probably less than  
13 that. I'm not sure. I can't really remember. I just  
14 know there was less kids in the assessment place than  
15 there was --

16 Q. You described it as chaotic, 'Robin'. Did you  
17 experience any abuse or did you see any abuse there?

18 A. No, not really, not at Beechwood. There was just  
19 neglect mostly, I think. People didn't get taken care  
20 of the way they should have, some kids were a bit wilder  
21 than others.

22 Q. Yes. You say at paragraph 25 that you thought there  
23 just wasn't much emphasis on care giving. Some staff  
24 gave a toss and others didn't?

25 A. Yes, that's the way we looked at it, yeah.

1 Q. Can you just explain what you --

2 A. Got your pay packet and that was it -- some people came  
3 for the pay ... there wasn't ... the only time I really  
4 felt cared for was when I went to Dr Guthrie's.  
5 I remember three decent staff members, so if I can't  
6 remember staff members there is an issue for that,  
7 because usually staff members have an impact on you.

8 Q. Can you put your finger on what the difference was in  
9 terms of care giving between Beechwood and Dr Guthrie's?

10 A. I think it was just having somebody to listen to you,  
11 empathy and understanding even though they might not  
12 have said anything about what was going on with you,  
13 somebody might have had an inkling, where I didn't see  
14 that until I went to Dr Guthrie's. When I went to  
15 Dr Guthrie's I seen a bit more compassion, a bit more  
16 emphasis on my education, where at Beechwood I never got  
17 none of that nae feeling at all of anybody cared.

18 Q. I think you say that in material terms Beechwood was all  
19 right, you got fed regularly and --

20 A. I got looked after that way, I got fed and watered and  
21 I had a bed to sleep in that was clean.

22 Q. How many children slept in a room or a dormitory?

23 A. To be quite honest I can't remember. About four or six  
24 maybe. Something like that. I can't remember.

25 Q. All girls I presume?

1 A. Beechwood was a mixed one. I'm sure it was mixed.

2 Q. In the dormitories?

3 A. No, not in the dormitories. It was a mixed care home.

4 It was not the same as Dr Guthrie's. That was -- the

5 only place that was girls was Dr Guthrie's.

6 Q. That was girls only, yes.

7 A. Girls only.

8 Q. On page 7, paragraph 30, you talk a bit about schooling

9 at Beechwood. You say, I think, you got home

10 schooled --

11 A. People used to come in, I don't know if it was for

12 myself or whatever, but I never remember actually

13 getting schooling, but I remember other tutors coming in

14 and whether it was somebody who was special needs

15 I don't know, but I remember tutors coming in, whether

16 I was meant to take part I don't know --

17 Q. You didn't get any schooling?

18 A. No.

19 Q. None at all?

20 A. I can't remember getting any schooling at all at

21 Beechwood. I did at Dr Guthrie's.

22 Q. Did anyone go out to school from Beechwood or were you

23 just kept in Beechwood?

24 A. I think some people did go out to school. The local

25 schools, if they were local, or some people got taxis to

1 school, whether they went to school and stayed in school  
2 is another thing. We weren't forced.

3 Q. But certainly you say that, this is paragraph 32, you  
4 could come and go as you please, and did you?

5 A. Yeah, it was running riots on the streets.

6 Q. You say in the next paragraph that at that stage you  
7 started drinking and dabbling in some drugs. Was that  
8 quite common among the children at Beechwood?

9 A. Very common, because you are talking about an inner city  
10 area, where it was easy access to stuff like that and  
11 especially with adults quite willing to give it to you  
12 in the local community, so that's what we used to do as  
13 kids. We used to go to other people's houses and stuff.  
14 It was quite free and half the time you got picked up  
15 and took back by the police to the care home.

16 Q. You say also in that paragraph, paragraph 33, you  
17 realise now that you were putting yourself in  
18 a vulnerable position. You'd go to some old men's  
19 houses and they would give you drink, chocolates and  
20 money and did they expect you to do anything for them in  
21 return?

22 A. Sometimes ... I wouldn't do nothing but I know that some  
23 of the other kids would do stuff, but not -- I don't  
24 know how it would go down then, but we would sort of go  
25 along and sometimes we would either do something for

1           them or sometimes the kids would rob them as well. So  
2           it worked both ways for the kid who was doing whatever  
3           they were doing. So there was kids out there selling  
4           themselves as well, I'm being honest.

5    Q.   Were staff at Beechwood aware that this was going on?  
6           Do you know if they were aware it was going on?

7    A.   I don't know if they were aware, but it wasn't unaware  
8           among the kids. We all knew where to go to.

9    Q.   You say that there wasn't a lot of supervision. Were  
10          staff checking up on what children were doing?

11   A.   No, because as far as we were concerned, they weren't  
12          bothered because it was up to the police to bring us  
13          back, so that's why they weren't really too bothered  
14          about us, because they wouldn't come out and look for  
15          us. It was the police that done that. It was the  
16          Scottish police that used to give you more in trouble  
17          than anybody else. A good boot up the backside off  
18          them.

19   Q.   You say at paragraph 37 that at this stage you were  
20          still being sent home for overnights to see your family,  
21          including your father?

22   A.   Oh, yeah. Yep.

23   Q.   Then at paragraph 38 you talk a bit about discipline.

24                You say that when you were really disruptive you  
25          were put in a thing called the quiet room. Can you tell

1           us about the quiet room, please?

2    A.   Just somewhere to chill off and be quiet.

3    Q.   What sort of room was it?  What was in the room?

4    A.   Nothing.  Just like mats, mats, like white mats with

5           pinhole thing, buttons on them.

6    Q.   No bed or anything like that?

7    A.   No.

8    Q.   No toilet?

9    A.   There were probably toilets, but I can't remember

10           anything about it, except it being a room we had to go

11           out and chill in for safety and that as well.

12   Q.   It was quite a bare room?

13   A.   Mm-hmm.

14   Q.   How long would you be kept typically in the quiet room?

15   A.   They'd come in and check on you and that.

16   Q.   And how --

17   A.   ... behaviour.

18   Q.   How long would you be in there?

19   A.   Not long.  Not that long.

20   Q.   Hours?

21   A.   Depending who it was.  I don't have any conception of

22           time back then, so if you were emotional you wouldn't

23           remember what time you were in there for so I couldn't

24           be honest with you and tell you exactly what time.

25   Q.   Were you aware of other children being in the quiet room

1 for particular periods of time?

2 A. Not that I can recall. Different things happened, but  
3 I'm not going to say that there was definite and there  
4 wasn't. I can't remember.

5 Q. Okay. Okay.

6 Then you tell us a little bit about being at  
7 Beechwood, although you don't really remember much about  
8 that. Then over the page, page 9, you really summarise  
9 Beechwood, which you say was quite a good place, other  
10 than just not being very well controlled?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Did you feel safe when you were in Beechwood?

13 A. Better than anywhere else, yeah. Well, I felt safe.  
14 I felt okay. I felt looked after, but I just didn't  
15 feel that there was enough emphasis on education and our  
16 basic needs, if you know what I mean, education and  
17 healthcare needs and other things. I had issues, so if  
18 the issues had been taken care of before I ended up in  
19 the other place then I would have been all right.

20 Q. You mention healthcare, 'Robin', what were the problems  
21 that weren't addressed by Beechwood?

22 A. I didn't know that I had dyslexia or dyspraxia, I never  
23 found out until I was 48 about all the issues. So  
24 there's lots of issues that could have been dealt with  
25 earlier on in life if it had been picked up, but because

1 I was classed as a naughty child, the behaviours were  
2 misconstrued as obviously that was probably my own  
3 downfall, I am a child, I didn't know ...

4 Q. Did anyone take any steps to assess you for issues like  
5 that?

6 A. No, no. Never had nothing done.

7 Q. Was that the same at Dr Guthrie's or were they a bit  
8 more proactive about these things?

9 A. I think Dr Guthrie's was a bit more proactive. That's  
10 why I've got more fonder memories of Dr Guthrie's,  
11 because there was home schooling. You had your own  
12 classes to get up and get ready for in the morning and  
13 because it was a more secure unit I actually felt very  
14 protected there -- actually I used to run away from  
15 there just so I wouldn't be sent home so I could stay  
16 there. So that's how different -- a massive difference.

17 And I remember three staff in particular from there,  
18 where I can't remember from any other care homes. That  
19 to me is very important, because for them three staff to  
20 actually touch me in my heart and say I can still  
21 remember them with fondness, means that they done  
22 something or the way I look at it is, maybe they knew  
23 something and maybe they couldn't say or they were held  
24 back from saying, but I had a true feeling that they  
25 cared and I got somewhere in there, you know. It's just



1 a shame.

2 Q. Can you recall first of all, before we go to  
3 Dr Guthrie's, how long you were in Beechwood? Was it  
4 about a year or so?

5 A. I do not remember to be honest how long that was, the  
6 periods of time, I couldn't define, because there were  
7 that many different things happening. I couldn't give  
8 you a specific time, how long I was in each care home  
9 for.

10 Q. Sure.

11 A. To be honest, not even Dr Guthrie's. I don't even  
12 remember how long I was in Dr Guthrie's either.

13 LADY SMITH: Do you remember that you were possibly about 11  
14 or 12 years old when you went into Beechwood?

15 A. I know I was young and I was very -- easily influenced  
16 then, more so than I was when I was older in  
17 Dr Guthrie's.

18 LADY SMITH: If you had been going to school, I know you  
19 were running away, but if you had been going to school  
20 at that time, would it have been a primary school you'd  
21 have been at or a secondary school in.

22 A. It would have been St Mary's Secondary School, I would  
23 have just started the secondary school.

24 LADY SMITH: You maybe were 11?

25 A. Yes.

1 LADY SMITH: Okay. You can't remember exactly how long you  
2 were in Beechwood.

3 A. No. I knew I'd been in other care homes before that  
4 with family members, but as myself I know that I was in  
5 Beechwood after 11.

6 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thanks.

7 A. It was after 11, definitely after 11.

8 MR SHELDON: 'Robin', just to put that in some context, the  
9 records that we've seen suggest that you probably went  
10 to Dr Guthrie's in early 1980. Does that sound right or  
11 do you think it was earlier than that?

12 A. Probably because it was -- it could have been 1980s,  
13 roundabout then, because it was the latter part of  
14 coming out of the system.

15 Q. Okay.

16 Turning to Dr Guthrie's then, this is paragraph 43.  
17 What were your first impressions of Dr Guthrie's when  
18 you arrived at the front door, as it were?

19 A. Beautiful big school. Big building. Massive. Quite  
20 impressive. Actually probably it was all the locked  
21 doors and stuff like that, but it was just a nice --  
22 I ended up liking it there.

23 Q. Did anyone come to see you to welcome you to show you  
24 around or anything like that?

25 A. The staff and that was there. There was -- they all had

1 housemothers. I remember there's a -- the manager was  
2 very proud of his rose gardens there, so there was  
3 a nice little rose bit at the front. It was nice and  
4 pretty.

5 Q. You tell us that Dr Guthrie's was a secure place and the  
6 doors were all locked?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I mean, do you mean that literally, that all the doors  
9 inside the building were --

10 A. No, the front doors and stuff -- you couldn't escape  
11 like we could at Beechwood.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. You know, we were actually secured in the building so we  
14 could get around, we could still be free moving inside,  
15 but we couldn't go out the front door, if you wanted to  
16 try and run away.

17 Q. Sure. It was more difficult to run away from there than  
18 from Beechwood?

19 A. Yes. But we still managed to smash the wire windows  
20 upstairs with the fire extinguisher and get out of the  
21 window upstairs --

22 Q. You got out that way? Okay.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. We'll come back to that in a moment or two.

25 You tell us a bit about the internal layout of the

1 place and the workings of it. You say at paragraph 44  
2 that there were a number of small houses, each of which  
3 had a housemother.

4 First of all, are these houses physically separate  
5 from the main building or are they inside the main  
6 building?

7 A. No, little bits inside the units. Little bits. One was  
8 called Ogilvie, Clover -- there were four, just -- they  
9 were called houses.

10 Q. Right, so were these different wings of the building  
11 perhaps?

12 A. Yeah. Something like that. I don't know what you call  
13 it nowadays, but probably wings but we just called it  
14 houses, the name of the house. You all belonged to each  
15 unit.

16 Q. You tell us that you think your house was called  
17 Ogilvie?

18 A. Something like that, yeah. Ogilvie or Clover,  
19 something -- there was Ogilvie, Clover, there was  
20 another D and something else. I can't remember all the  
21 names to be fair.

22 Q. Okay. Four to six girls in each house?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Were the girls all roughly the same age or were they  
25 different ages?

1 A. They were roughly about the same age group.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Some were a bit older than me, I know some were older  
4 than me, because the one that I ran away with had  
5 a boyfriend that was in the army, so she was older than  
6 me.

7 Q. Right.

8 Over the page, you talk a bit about the staff and  
9 you have already said to us that you found the staff  
10 just more pleasant and perhaps more caring than  
11 elsewhere. Is that fair?

12 A. Very, very caring compared to the other care homes,  
13 yeah.

14 Q. You talk about a particular staff member, who you think  
15 was a Ms Frujay?

16 A. Frujay.

17 Q. All right.

18 A. She was one of these older ladies, kind of like  
19 a grandmother figure, but she was very warm. She seemed  
20 to listen to us girls. She had time for us. It was  
21 just something different that actually somebody was  
22 actually spending time with us and learning about us and  
23 actually cared.

24 Q. You say in the next paragraph that Dr Guthrie's was  
25 a very, very strict place but in a good way, can you

1           just explain what you mean by that?

2   A.   Yes.  When you've had chaos all your life and somebody's  
3       actually giving you a bit of structure and trying to put  
4       you on the right path, that's how I felt at that time  
5       about Dr Guthrie's.  So there was a better structure  
6       there, I don't know if it was because it was more of  
7       a secure unit.  Well -- or just the people that was  
8       different, or because it was Edinburgh, not Glasgow.  
9       I don't know.  But it was a total transformation  
10      compared to what I'd been living in.

11  Q.   Sure.

12                 Can you just tell us a bit about the structure of  
13      the day, how it was broken down, how a typical day would  
14      go?

15  A.   You used to get up in the morning, we'd be making  
16      breakfast, we would have to help do most of the things  
17      for ourselves, and we'd have to go to classes in there  
18      and that's why I remember it quite clearly, because  
19      there was an art teacher, who obviously knew that I had  
20      a bit of -- I mean I hated doing stuff like that or  
21      trying to achieve something that I couldn't do, but she  
22      took time with me.  She got me to do charcoal drawings  
23      instead, so I found I had an artist thing for charcoal.  
24      It was the fact that they took time with us and got us  
25      to learn things and actually if I couldn't learn one way

1 she got me to learn another, which was probably  
2 something that I needed.

3 Q. Okay. What other classes were you given or taking?

4 A. There was other classes there. Crafts, sewing, stuff  
5 like that, home economics, cooking, kind of skills like  
6 that, which I found it was a lot better than having  
7 nothing. That was the education I got, but obviously  
8 I didn't get maths and English, degrees or anything like  
9 that, because I wasn't there for that long enough. And  
10 maybe my disabilities weren't able to be picked up  
11 there, maybe they weren't educated enough to look for  
12 stuff like that --

13 Q. Were there classes in things like maths and English?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay.

16 You talk a bit about leisure time, leisure trips.  
17 At paragraph 52, you talk about a staff member with  
18 a curly moustache who used to take us to his house, we'd  
19 have lunch there.

20 A. Aye.

21 Q. You say that you'd go in a group, was it always with  
22 a group?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. You talk then a little bit about trips out of the  
25 school?

1 A. Yeah, we used to go to the rapids --

2 Q. Paragraph 53 --

3 A. ... boats and stuff like that and --

4 Q. Yes, I was going to ask you about that. What do you

5 mean by the 'rapids'?

6 A. A dinghy. You go with all the bricks and stuff -- no,

7 you have to go down the streams. That was fun.

8 Q. This was in East Lothian, was it?

9 A. Yeah. And we used to go -- we used to put sausages on

10 the barbecue thing, the fire, so normal things like that

11 was fantastic, we'd see old railways and old bits of

12 buildings and stuff like that, so it was really good and

13 we went to Arthur's Seat and done walking and stuff that

14 I wouldn't get anywhere in Glasgow. So it was

15 different.

16 Q. You say that there was never a time when you were taken

17 out on your own with another member of staff and that

18 Dr Guthrie's was totally strict and above board?

19 A. Yeah, totally.

20 Q. Were you aware of any --

21 A. Proper care there.

22 Q. Were you aware of any of the girls being taken out by

23 a single member of staff?

24 A. No. Never.

25 Q. You talk about Dr Guthrie's School for Boys and various



1 activities there. Did you ever go to Dr Guthrie's Boys'  
2 School for swimming?

3 A. I can't remember going there for swimming, but  
4 I remember that they came to us for parties, the schools  
5 get together. Discos we would get together, where units  
6 would get together.

7 Q. How was that?

8 A. That was fine. That was fine. That was -- as far as  
9 I know, it was all good.

10 Q. Supervised by staff?

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. You talk about being allowed to smoke but you had to  
13 earn cigarettes in the points system. Can you tell us  
14 please about the points system?

15 A. If you got permission from your parents you were allowed  
16 to have four cigarettes a day. The points system is  
17 when you -- good behaviour you get points system and  
18 then when you get enough points obviously you get treats  
19 or whatever it was you'd get, but sometimes I used to  
20 lose -- I would lose my points on purpose just so that  
21 I wouldn't get sent home, so I'd lose my privileges.

22 Q. Because you didn't want to be sent home?

23 A. No, and that's when we run away (audio interference) and  
24 we got the fire extinguisher --

25 Q. I am sorry, 'Robin', we lost a little bit of that answer

1           because the signal broke up I think. I think you were  
2           talking about running away and breaking the window?

3   A.   Yeah. So when I would lose my points system, when  
4           I tried to lose my points system, I would smash -- it  
5           wasn't just me, it was the other girl wanted to go and  
6           see her boyfriend anyway who was in the army, the older  
7           girl. So we went upstairs and we got the fire  
8           extinguisher and they told us it was unbreakable glass,  
9           but we managed to break it because it had the wee bits  
10          of wire through it and we managed to get a hole through  
11          it and we poked it through, so we managed to get out.  
12          We jumped into the rose bushes, the nice lovely rose  
13          bushes downstairs, and ruined all the boss's rose  
14          bushes.

15   Q.   How did that go down?

16   A.   Not too good, but we never got into much trouble. We  
17          just lost our privileges.

18   Q.   You say in paragraph 57, this is page 12, that you would  
19          stay away just long enough to be reported as  
20          an abscondee and then go back to the home and have  
21          a lovely weekend?

22   A.   Oh, yes.

23   Q.   What were the weekends like that you were spending at  
24          Dr Guthrie's?

25   A.   We got taken out, trips and stuff like that, so it was

1           actually worth running away and not getting sent home,  
2           especially for the kids who didn't want to go home like  
3           myself and I knew that I would have to be looked after  
4           that weekend, you had nae choice but to stay indoors.

5   Q.   You say that in the next paragraph nobody ever asked you  
6           why you didn't seem to want your weekend visits home.  
7           Were staff at Dr Guthrie's aware then that you didn't  
8           want to go home?

9   A.   I always assumed -- maybe I was wrong to assume, but  
10          I always thought that somebody must have known why I was  
11          doing it --

12   Q.   Why do you say that?

13   A.   ... want to say nothing.

14   Q.   Why do you say that? Why do you say you assumed that  
15          they knew?

16   A.   I don't know, I just had a feeling that some people  
17          might have known, especially the way they were caring  
18          for me, because, like I said, Frujay was -- she was  
19          an older lady. She must have had some kind of inkling.  
20          I don't know if she maybe knew ... said nothing, I don't  
21          know if anything was said, but I don't know if I had  
22          made indications that --

23   Q.   Did anyone speak to you about it directly, 'Robin'?

24   A.   Not that I can recall.

25   Q.   You go on then to talk about the other girls in

1 Dr Guthrie's and talking sometimes to each other about  
2 abuse that you had suffered.

3 Was this quite a common experience among the girls  
4 who were at Dr Guthrie's?

5 A. Yes, especially the ones that were more into  
6 self-harming. There was one girl in particular, I won't  
7 mention her name for legal reasons, but she used to sit  
8 in her bedroom playing her guitar, just on her bed and  
9 [REDACTED], Jesus loves me, all these kind of  
10 songs and I didn't realise until many, many years later  
11 that the stuff that she was telling us was to do with  
12 a lot of Satanic ritual abuse, which was even deeper  
13 than anything we could go through, but you don't think  
14 about that as kids. To you every abuse was just the  
15 same, so you didn't -- I knew hers was worse than ours  
16 by the severity of the damage she was doing to herself,  
17 [REDACTED] and  
18 she was young.

19 Q. What was she using [REDACTED]?

20 A. Anything she could, [REDACTED]  
21 [REDACTED], anything you can get your hands on,  
22 so ...

23 Q. Were staff aware that this girl and other girls were  
24 doing this?

25 A. Yes. But they would be taken -- especially at

1 Dr Guthrie's they would have seen it happening there,  
2 where the staff would take the girls to get them seen  
3 to.

4 Q. To --

5 A. To get better help --

6 Q. Sorry to get?

7 A. You would get better help there.

8 Q. Okay. Were these girls taken to see a doctor for  
9 physical injuries or --

10 A. Probably, yeah --

11 Q. Or a psychologist --

12 A. ... bandages.

13 Q. Were they ever taken to see a psychologist?

14 A. I don't know what they were doing, what was ... their  
15 individual case, was their case, nothing to do with me.  
16 I just know they came back with bandages and cleaned up  
17 and they'd been to doctors or hospital.

18 Q. Can you give us an idea of how many girls at  
19 Dr Guthrie's were self-harming, perhaps not as seriously  
20 as this girl, but to any extent?

21 A. Probably a couple. Not that many, two or three.  
22 I mean, I was one of them, but mine was only --  
23 I've still got the scratches, scars now.

24 Q. Would you have been aware of what was going on in other  
25 houses, because of course you were in your own wing of

1 the building?

2 A. No, but we used to hear stories from other people but we  
3 obviously -- you can't go on stories, can you, on what  
4 was happening in other places --

5 Q. What sort of stories, 'Robin'?

6 A. You just hear different stories about what girls were  
7 doing or what staff were doing and whatever, or somebody  
8 didn't like somebody, they might have a vendetta against  
9 somebody, you know. Sometimes if they would say one  
10 staff was horrible we would say, 'No, that staff's all  
11 right'. It's just your opinion, I suppose. We don't  
12 know because we don't live in their room.

13 Q. What sort of things were they saying about what staff  
14 were doing in other wings?

15 A. Some people would say they were being nasty to them or  
16 (audio interference) get kids saying they were being  
17 bullied by another staff member. Or something happening  
18 to them, but we can't say because we don't know.

19 So we just heard stories, different stories. All  
20 different stories in that place.

21 Q. I'm on page 13 now, and you talk about the quiet room,  
22 which you say was similar to what you had in Beechwood.  
23 Could you tell us please about the quiet room and what  
24 it was like at Dr Guthrie's?

25 A. That was a bit more different. That was really nice in

1           there.  Theirs was right up to the floor to ceiling,  
2           nice soft room.

3   Q.  The walls were padded, is that right?

4   A.  Yeah.

5   Q.  And the floor?

6   A.  The floor was nice as well.

7   Q.  What was on the floor?

8   A.  There was nothing -- I can't -- there was nothing --  
9           I can't remember anything dark and dingy there.

10  Q.  There was a window, was there?

11  A.  Nice and comfortable.

12  Q.  Was there a window?

13  A.  Do you know what, I can't remember, I'll be honest.  
14           I just can't remember if there was a window there --

15  Q.  A bed, toilets?

16  A.  There would be toilets, yes.

17  Q.  And --

18  A.  There would be a mat bed, the bed thing there.

19  Q.  Sure.  How long would girls typically be kept in the  
20           quiet room?

21  A.  Not long.

22  Q.  Okay.  Did girls sometimes call it 'the cell'?

23  A.  Well, yeah.  It's like back in the dark ages when you  
24           think about being put in a straitjacket, that's what you  
25           think about in the white jacket.

1           No, I don't think it was that extreme. I don't  
2           think it was that extreme. I think it was quite good.  
3           If you needed to be away, you needed to be away.  
4    Q.    Okay. You remember going to a few Children's Panels and  
5           you tell us that you always felt intimidated at these  
6           Panel hearings. What can you tell us about that,  
7           please?  
8    A.    I just remember a long table with about four people  
9           sitting across it and they all making decisions about  
10          you. That was all I remember.  
11   Q.    Would they speak to you directly?  
12   A.    Some of them would speak to you, I think they would  
13          speak to you directly, yeah.  
14   Q.    Did you understand --  
15   A.    ... social workers.  
16   Q.    Did you understand what was being said to you?  
17   A.    No, most of the time not. You would just be in there  
18          and hurry up and get it over and done with and get out.  
19          They're the decision-makers, not me.  
20   Q.    You tell us in paragraph 66, you don't remember anything  
21          getting explained to you beforehand about why you were  
22          going to a Panel?  
23   A.    Nope.  
24   Q.    Were you still being seen by a social worker at this  
25          stage, was there a social worker around?



1 A. Probably were. I don't remember any social workers  
2 except Maggie Mearns.

3 Q. You had kind of lost contact with her?

4 A. Yeah. She got married to somebody called Bates, so that  
5 was the last I heard about her.

6 Q. Sure.

7 You talk about leaving Dr Guthrie's at paragraph 14  
8 and that you'd started to go back to your dad's at  
9 weekends. Why had you decided to do that?

10 A. I think because I knew it was getting to that stage  
11 where I was going to get kicked out the care system  
12 anyway and I'd nowhere else to go, and because I think  
13 at that time I thought I'd be old enough to handle  
14 stuff, obviously not, but as you're a big teenager you  
15 think you're cool, you think you can handle stuff and  
16 you think you can manage. Clearly not, but that's my  
17 own fault I suppose.

18 Q. You tell us in paragraph 70 that you felt that being at  
19 home was the only place you were getting love. Is that  
20 how you felt at the time?

21 A. As in love as in from my family?

22 Q. Well, I'm just interested in what you meant by that.

23 A. Maybe in my own mind that's what I thought that was all  
24 I was entitled to, was getting that kind of love from  
25 them, but probably more out of fear than anything else,

1 as I say. Because I thought it was love, you know.

2 Q. Over the page, you tell us that -- well, things still  
3 weren't great living at home again?

4 A. No.

5 Q. You describe various things that happened. Can you  
6 perhaps sum up that time for us, what it was like and  
7 how you were feeling?

8 A. I suppose I went back more for my siblings than anything  
9 else, to be fair, and I thought families can have a lot  
10 of drive in that. I did feel sorry for my younger  
11 sisters and stuff like that that was in the family as  
12 well, and my disabled brother especially and I think --  
13 myself, I think I went back because I always said in my  
14 whole family that I would always be there for my brother  
15 [REDACTED], who is non-verbal, and I know families have a lot  
16 of draw and you don't want to grass up your family, you  
17 don't want the family to fall out with you, you don't  
18 want things to happen to your family. So you try to be  
19 your best and get back and do things. You think because  
20 you're older, but now my dad had other plans, you know.

21 Q. Yes, you tell us --

22 A. There was more alcohol, used to have the local  
23 councillors coming round, and the final straw is when me  
24 and my sister [REDACTED], sadly who has passed away now, he  
25 sold us for a bottle of wine to a local councillor and

1           that was it. I actually got a shovel and chased him out  
2           of the house, so I thought I was brave enough back then  
3           so obviously I was old enough to stand up for myself  
4           then, but I knew my sister was at risk as well if  
5           I hadn't have stood up, but my dad was still prepared to  
6           sell us.

7    Q. You tell us that you were sexually and physically abused  
8           by different people during that time?

9    A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. And I wasn't the only one.

10   Q. And --

11   A. I watched some horrific things happening to other people  
12           too, which I don't know if the Inquiry wants to hear  
13           about that, but you know.

14   Q. If you want to tell us about them then please do.

15   A. I did watch my dad and six other men rape another lady  
16           and an old man upstairs was made to watch. He was  
17           forced to watch and they were so brutal with this young  
18           lady they actually poured a tomato sauce bottle over her  
19           and put the tomato sauce bottle somewhere on the lady's  
20           body and because she was a working girl it was okay to  
21           do that to her, and me and my sister were looking  
22           through the letterbox laughing at it at the time, but we  
23           didn't know -- we didn't understand there was sickness  
24           that was actually happening in the house at that time.

25   Q. So pretty horrific experiences?

1 A. Yes, my dad and all his people that he was hanging about  
2 with was pretty sick characters.

3 Q. Yeah.

4 You tell us at paragraph 83 that you moved --  
5 ultimately were worried you were going to get sucked  
6 back into that sort of life and --

7 A. Oh, yes.

8 Q. -- you simply left Glasgow?

9 A. Yeah. By the time I was 16 I was pregnant with my first  
10 child, by the time I was 17 I was pregnant with my  
11 second child. The first child I didn't know if it was  
12 my dad's or not.

13 By the time I was 18 I was getting battered rotten  
14 in Govan in Glasgow. They moved us to Pollok from  
15 Ibrox. I realised then there was no way I was going to  
16 have a life, so the best thing for me to do at the age  
17 of 19 I put my two boys into (audio interference) foster  
18 care and decided to get on a train and get the hell out  
19 of Glasgow to make a fresh start.

20 At 19 years of age at least I had the balls to get  
21 up and go, bye.

22 Q. Were you able to make a fresh start?

23 A. I was, until I was found by my dad in Nottingham and he  
24 came to Nottingham and abused five children in St Ann's  
25 in Nottingham. Until I was questioned by the police,

1 and I'm going to show you something now, which I think  
2 is very important to the case, because I have saved  
3 these two cards, David, all these years.

4 Now I couldn't find these two cards, two police  
5 cards, one Scotland Police and one Nottinghamshire  
6 Police. My dad was questioned in the 1990s about these  
7 cases in Nottingham, this is when I first disclosed  
8 about the care system.

9 LADY SMITH: 'Robin', I'm sorry, but the technology, just  
10 let us down a moment ago. You said one card was from  
11 Scotland Police and the other one?

12 A. Is Nottinghamshire CID.

13 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you very much.

14 A. And my father was questioned on five children regarding  
15 this case --

16 LADY SMITH: You say that's when you first talked to anybody  
17 about your experience in the care system?

18 A. Yes.

19 LADY SMITH: By then you must have been early 20s?

20 A. Late 20s and I was called a liar. I was called all  
21 these things in the past and it was the first time  
22 I felt secure enough to tell them about everything that  
23 happened to me in the care system as well.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 A. Because my dad was being questioned about the five

1 children and they said to me why haven't you said  
2 nothing before? I said because the same thing happened  
3 to me in the care system so what did you expect me to  
4 do? That's why I kept quiet because I thought all  
5 adults were the same.

6 MR SHELDON: Thanks --

7 A. But I found these cards and I'm so glad I did, because  
8 it proves that in 1990 something I mentioned all this.

9 Q. Good. We can't see those very well, 'Robin', over the  
10 link but we'll get copies of them and we'll certainly  
11 look at them afterwards.

12 A. It took me years to find these again. But I saved them  
13 for a reason.

14 Q. Good.

15 I think after that, you became involved with  
16 charities supporting survivors of abuse; is that right?

17 A. Yes. I have been working for years and years now,  
18 working against ... justice for victims in domestic  
19 abuse, sexual violence and just in the last couple of  
20 years I've managed to get an award from the police and  
21 crime commissioner of Nottingham, Caroline Henry, for  
22 helping to do the new start units, to stop  
23 re-traumatising the victims when they go through the  
24 trauma process, for giving all this stuff.

25 So we've made a new trauma-informed centre for the

1 SVS unit and it's the first time Nottinghamshire Police  
2 have used a service user involvement in that process.

3 Q. You tell us -- I'm jumping a little bit in your  
4 statement and I'll come back to the earlier paragraphs  
5 but at paragraph 111, page 22, that you've gone through  
6 a lot of psychological therapy and looked at reasons for  
7 anxiety, depression and behaviour issues, so really you  
8 will be very well aware of the trauma in your own life  
9 and the effect that trauma can have?

10 A. Oh, yes. I think because of that process of 40-odd  
11 years of not being dealt with and then finally at 48 you  
12 are finally getting a realisation that yes,  
13 I'm dyslexic/dyspraxic, yes, I've had all these issues,  
14 but what can I do to change things now? That is what  
15 I'm trying to do now.

16 I've actually written a book, part published a book  
17 with other survivors and I'm actually in the process of  
18 publishing my own autobiography at the moment, because  
19 my brother also went on to murder somebody [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] so this shows you how evil the family really was,  
21 that this has now happened years later.

22 Unfortunately, I've lost my son as well during  
23 lockdown as well.

24 Q. I'm very sorry to hear that.

25 The therapy that you've had and the work that you've

1 done around trauma and trauma-informed work, has that  
2 helped you to come to terms with what happened to you at  
3 a very young age?

4 A. It's helped me to come to terms with it, but I'm still  
5 finding it extremely difficult this day and age that  
6 some things still haven't changed.

7 Q. Perhaps I'll come back to that just in a moment in  
8 relation to the lessons that you think we should be  
9 taking from all this.

10 But if we can go back in your statement, it's  
11 paragraph 17, and you have quite a long passage on the  
12 impact that the abuse has had on you. But again could  
13 you just summarise for us, please, how all this made you  
14 feel and what effect it had on you?

15 LADY SMITH: I think you said paragraph 17.

16 MR SHELDON: I beg your pardon, it's page 17, my Lady, I'm  
17 so sorry.

18 A. You mean for the impact it's had on me for the feelings  
19 I feel?

20 Q. Yes.

21 A. Personally -- if I say it without even looking at that,  
22 I don't think I'll look at the paper, I felt a lot of  
23 disappointment with the system for many, many years.  
24 I felt -- and I can understand why a lot of people don't  
25 have trust in authority. It's took me a long, long,



1 long time to trust authority and to start working with  
2 them again and even then I still have reservations,  
3 because it's all right people saying, oh, yeah, we can  
4 tick boxes, tick boxes, tick boxes, but who's doing the  
5 checking up afterwards again, until we have another 20  
6 or 30 years for more damages to be done.

7 So my therapies and my learning of my own self  
8 took -- I done it myself. I didn't get any really --  
9 I had to look for the help, like Dr Michael Harris, the  
10 forensic psychiatrist, I seeked him out. I went to him  
11 and thought, 'Is it me that's crazy?'

12 And he says, 'No, GCQ, definitely not'.

13 So I've seeked it on my own help for myself and it's  
14 sad that I've had to do that, that I didn't get it from  
15 authorities. You know, I've had some help since  
16 I've been part of the Inquiry. I've had a lot of  
17 support. Technically and stuff like that, and  
18 emotionally I've had some support and that's about it.

19 Q. You have talked about difficulties that you've had in  
20 trusting people in authority, 'Robin'. What kinds of  
21 things do you think people in authority could do to help  
22 establish trust?

23 A. Have a lot more service-user involvement, because  
24 unless --

25 Q. Sorry, a lot more --

1 A. Service-user involvement. Find out from previous case  
2 studies. It's them people that you should be using to  
3 develop new strategies and implementing procedures and  
4 making sure those procedures are carried on with,  
5 because it's all right handing out the authorities, all  
6 these new things and giving them all these pots of  
7 money, but what are they actually doing there? Is  
8 anybody checking up on these institutions, or the care  
9 system, or the foster parents and agencies? Who is  
10 checking up on all these agencies that's all sprung up  
11 for the kids? It's a money -- children make money and  
12 to me there's a big issue there, because you can put in  
13 for a pot of funding and say I'm going to produce this,  
14 I'm going to do this better for the kids, but actually  
15 are you? Who's checking up on it?

16 Q. What sort of person, body or agency do you think is  
17 necessary to do that?

18 A. When a government or any Local Authority is given  
19 funding, there should be an independent party that's  
20 going round a year or two years later to make sure  
21 that's running smoothly and there's no misinterpretation  
22 of what the money should have been spent on.

23 Q. This is someone independent of the Local Authority?

24 A. Yes, because I've always said this about charities and  
25 I'm sick of seeing this in charities as well that set up

1 for trauma or for help and actually they are doing  
2 nothing and taking the money and not giving the support  
3 that they need. I've seen so many support for  
4 survivors' charities as well doing that. I'll get the  
5 notice and then don't help the people and leave them --  
6 I call it keeping adults like children, so when you're  
7 a child that's still in an adult body, who has been  
8 damaged, they like to keep you suppressed into that  
9 childlike body by not letting you recover, keeping you  
10 stagnant.

11 Q. Just asking you then about a slightly different but  
12 related topic. You talk in your statement about  
13 disclosing abuse and the difficulties that certainly you  
14 had and others have in disclosing abuse.

15 What kinds of things would make it easier, do you  
16 think, for children to disclose abuse? What would have  
17 made it easier for you?

18 A. To be honest, that's a hard one. That's a really hard  
19 one to say. There is nae right or wrong way, I don't  
20 suppose, I think better education, but also I think the  
21 biggest problem for us kids is the actual system itself,  
22 the Social Services itself.

23 And it's going to be hard for me to say this, but  
24 I just don't trust authorities now when anything happens  
25 within them, they don't like it being disclosed when

1 something goes wrong. The more transparency with  
2 authorities when they have messed up, because it all  
3 gets kept on the quiet, 'Oh, we don't do that, we never  
4 failed'.

5 I think they need to be -- all these children that  
6 keep dying and they've been in the system for ages, you  
7 see it all the time, the kids that's been failed. Why?  
8 They're doing the wrong thing.

9 Q. Sorry, I interrupted you.

10 A. We're taking the wrong kids into care and sometimes  
11 looking at the kids that are 'not needing care', but  
12 actually there are a lot of kids out there that do need  
13 care that you don't even look at. I just don't know  
14 about trusting the Social Services, I just don't know.  
15 Because something needs to change with Social Services  
16 completely.

17 Q. Something in the culture, is that really what you're  
18 meaning?

19 A. It's the culture and it's the authority that runs --  
20 I don't know, there's just something that's not right,  
21 I just can't put my finger on it. Always covered up if  
22 anything happens with them.

23 Q. Again, it's a related question, 'Robin'. You say, it's  
24 paragraph 131, you don't need to look at it now, that  
25 you think that the likes of social workers and doctors

1           need to be better at recognising when children are  
2           displaying signs of abuse. What kinds of things do you  
3           have in mind there?

4    A. Behaviours. A lot of kids do display behaviours that  
5           might not just be abuse, as in sexual, but the other  
6           abuses like physical, mental and emotional abuse.  
7           There's lots of different abuses, there's not just  
8           sexual. I'll get that one out the way, that kids are  
9           neglected on, you know. I know people that come from  
10          well-to-do families but they're still neglected  
11          emotionally, mentally, psychologically. There's a lot  
12          of things that is missed.

13                 Concentrate on the worst thing, the physical and the  
14                 sexual, that's it. But there's a lot more than that.

15   Q. Perhaps if you could just look at this passage, 'Robin',  
16          it's paragraph 133 in your statement, you say that  
17          people in agencies such as the police and prosecution  
18          service need to get a better understanding of the impact  
19          of childhood abuse and attitudes need to change.

20                 You tell us about an incident where you were  
21                 speaking to someone from the CPS, is that the Crown  
22                 Prosecution Service?

23   A. Right. What happened in my case with this one was --  
24          this is why I'm here today, if I'm being totally honest,  
25          this is why I'm here, because of the CPS failings.

1 I got into trouble. My partner of 17 years who  
2 I trusted, as you can imagine, it takes me a lot to  
3 trust anybody, I've never had a relationship that was so  
4 long, 17 years is a long time for me. That was all  
5 because of the trust factor.

6 I built up a trust with this person and I had told  
7 him about all my past, all my horrendous past, thinking  
8 it would make a difference and it did. And then  
9 17 years later this man begged me to give up my job  
10 because I was sick. I gave up my job. I have a child  
11 with this man. And this man used my past against me.

12 So what did I do? I put a piece of paper up and  
13 says to him, 'No, [REDACTED], I can't be like other people  
14 and go and do this with married men', I had to learn  
15 respect from my father. I was charged for that piece of  
16 paper with harassment, which led me to have a breakdown,  
17 and what my partner had said to me at the time, was when  
18 he came back and violated me was, it's okay, I should be  
19 grateful it wasn't my father.

20 That psychological damage to me, my head, tipped me  
21 over the edge and brought up all my child abuse,  
22 everything that I'd gone through, it brought it all back  
23 up. That was in 2014, David.

24 So the CPS failed me when I was having a cry for  
25 help with that piece of paper and I got charged for

1 harassment, so there I lost my house, because I found it  
2 after 17 years, my name wasn't on both mortgages, so  
3 I was back on that little doorstep with my little black  
4 bag, like I had left the care system once again, but  
5 I wasn't in the care system. I was in a much better  
6 place.

7 So I pulled myself back up and that was after  
8 17 years of trusting a man, that took me all those years  
9 to trust somebody for so long and I told him all about  
10 my past and it was all used against me, kicked in my  
11 face. CPS went, 'Yes, you're old man's right, you did  
12 deserve all that in your past'.

13 Q. I think you tell us that this individual said to you,  
14 'Can't you get over it?'

15 A. Yes. Can't you get over it? I've just said this to the  
16 ladies here today, that's the one thing I hate. I hate  
17 anybody saying to me, 'Can't you get over it?' Even  
18 after today, this might come to a closure today, but  
19 I will never ever, ever get over it.

20 There is days when I can be out there smiling, all  
21 of a sudden I burst out into tears and I can't tell you  
22 why. That's the effect it has on me.

23 I could be having a fantastic day with my family and  
24 all of a sudden one little spark and I'm all emotional,  
25 in tears. I cannot explain it. So that's the damage

1           it's done to me.

2   LADY SMITH: 'Robin', when you use that very powerful  
3           experience about people telling you to get over it.

4   A. Get over it.

5   LADY SMITH: What's in your mind as being the 'it'? What  
6           particularly is it --

7   A. You know something --

8   LADY SMITH: Do you understand what I'm interested -- hang  
9           on, don't talk at the same time as me, 'Robin'.

10           Do you understand what I'm interested in hearing  
11           a little more about? It's what is 'it' that enrages you  
12           about the 'it' that people seem to think you can get  
13           over when that's wholly unreasonable of them to think  
14           that? What is the 'it'?

15   A. All of that pain, all of that hurt and all that stuff  
16           that's -- they don't know what happened.

17   LADY SMITH: That dates back to your father?

18   A. Everything, he's my most severe --

19   LADY SMITH: And then people in authority not doing anything  
20           about it.

21   A. And tell me to get over it.

22   LADY SMITH: Yeah.

23   A. Yeah. Or I'm a liar, like my mum says, you know. Get  
24           over it. Can't you just leave it behind you? No, you  
25           can't.



1           Sorry, I said I wasn't going to cry.

2   LADY SMITH: There's nothing to say sorry for, 'Robin',  
3           that's because you're a human being and what you're  
4           talking about goes back to your childhood.

5   A. Yeah. Thank you.

6   LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

7   MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

8           'Robin', you've clearly done a lot of work, both for  
9           yourself and for other people, trying to understand and  
10          make things better in this area?

11 A. Yeah. Thank you. That's why I prefer to do things face  
12          to face, rather than hide behind paperwork or anything  
13          like that, because I'm a face-to-face person.

14 Q. Sure. When does your book come out?

15 A. I don't know, but it's called '██'  
16          ████████████████████'.

17 Q. We don't want to see that, 'Robin', but it's good to see  
18          it and it's good to know that that's going to be out  
19          soon.

20 LADY SMITH: 'Robin', when Mr Sheldon said we don't want to  
21          see it, it's not that we're not interested in it or its  
22          title, but you're known here as 'Robin'.

23          I just want to remind everybody, for those who  
24          spotted your name on that book, they're not to identify  
25          you outside this room. People know that's not allowed

1           and you're protected by an order I've made and so that's  
2           an end of your name.

3           But great news that your book is all ready to go,  
4           all ready to be out there in the public.

5   A. Thank you.

6   MR SHELDON: I don't think I have anything else for 'Robin',  
7           my Lady, unless there's anything else?

8   LADY SMITH: 'Robin', thank you so much for engaging with us  
9           and bearing with us and our questioning that's taken you  
10          on something of a whistle stop tour of your own life so  
11          far, which has had so much in it that is of relevance to  
12          the work that we're doing here.

13          I do see that it can't have been easy for you to go  
14          back to that, both for the purposes of your statement,  
15          which is already evidence in front of me, and for the  
16          purposes of talking to us so frankly and openly and in  
17          good humour today.

18          I suspect when we switch off and you draw breath the  
19          rest of the day is going to be utterly exhausting for  
20          you. But I hope you find something nice to do. Be good  
21          to yourself and do be clear that you go with my thanks  
22          for your engagement. All right.

23   A. Thank you very much.

24   LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25   A. I appreciate it. Thank you. (Pause).

1 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

2 MR SHELDON: My Lady, there is of course another oral  
3 witness this morning. I'm not sure whether the witness  
4 is here yet. I could certainly check.

5 LADY SMITH: I think we should break now and make these  
6 checks and unless anybody hears to the contrary we'll  
7 resume at the normal time of 11.45 am.

8 Thank you.

9 (11.16 am)

10 (A short break)

11 (11.45 am)

12 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon, I understand the next witness is  
13 here and ready to give evidence.

14 MR SHELDON: That's correct, my Lady.

15 The next witness has waived anonymity and is  
16 Angela Harkins, but is known as Angie.

17 Angela Harkins (affirmed)

18 LADY SMITH: Angie, first of all, thank you for agreeing to  
19 engage with us as you have done, providing your written  
20 statement -- which is already in evidence before the  
21 Inquiry -- and coming here this morning.

22 I do understand that this isn't an easy thing to do  
23 and we're going to be taking you back to various things  
24 that have happened in your life, and indeed [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED], that are bound to be difficult and upsetting

1 for you.

2 It's really important that you understand if you  
3 need a break at any time, whether just pausing where you  
4 are or leaving the room, that's perfectly okay by me.  
5 Just let me know. Or if there's anything else we can do  
6 to enable you to give your evidence as well as you can  
7 and as clearly as you can, do speak up and say. For  
8 example, sometimes we're really bad at asking questions  
9 and they don't make sense and if that's something you  
10 experience, just tell us. It's our fault not yours if  
11 you're not following what we're on about, as you might  
12 say.

13 A. Okay.

14 LADY SMITH: The red folder has your written statement in  
15 it, you might find that helpful. We can also bring the  
16 parts that we're looking at up on screen.

17 If you find that a distraction, you don't want it,  
18 just say. Some people don't. But some people find that  
19 really helpful, particularly because it's a nice big  
20 font that's not so much of a struggle to read as the  
21 print in the hard copy might be.

22 If you're ready, Angie, I'll hand over to Mr Sheldon  
23 and he'll take it from there. Is that okay?

24 A. Yes, I'm ready.

25 LADY SMITH: Good.

1 Mr Sheldon.

2 Questions by Mr Sheldon

3 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

4 Good morning, Angie.

5 Angie, you, I think, have your statement in front of  
6 you there. You can either look at it in the folder or  
7 on screen. But if you could look with me please at the  
8 last page of your statement, that is page 35.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Just the very last paragraph on the page. You say:

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

15 Is that all correct?

16 A. That's correct, yeah.

17 Q. Is that your signature at the foot of the page?

18 A. That's my signature, yeah.

19 Q. Thank you.

20 You don't need to worry about this, but just for our  
21 records your statement reference is WIT-1-000000906.

22 Angie, you've also given a statement, as Lady Smith  
23 mentioned, about [REDACTED].

24 A. That's correct, yeah.

25 Q. For technical reasons we can't use that statement in

1 full at this stage, but as I think I mentioned to you  
2 earlier on, we do have a summary of what [REDACTED]  
3 told you and I just propose to read that to you now and  
4 hopefully that is something which does fairly summarise  
5 what you've told us about KKR .

6 [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED] KKR was born in 1970 but very sadly  
9 has since passed away.

10 The parents had addiction issues and that led to [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED] being placed in a children's home  
12 initially, when KKR was only six months old. [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED] fostered [REDACTED] for about a year when he was five  
14 and he suffered physical abuse from the foster carer and  
15 another man.

16 [REDACTED] when  
17 [REDACTED] was age six. He kept running away  
18 as he wanted to see his mother and started to get into  
19 trouble.

20 There was some fighting with peers at school and  
21 smoking. [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED] . KKR then went to a different  
23 children's home and by that time he was sniffing glue,  
24 stealing and running away.

25 He was ultimately taken to Howdenhall

1 Assessment Centre and then to Dr Guthrie's, when he was  
2 aged 11 --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- and he stayed there until he was 15.

5 You have said that there was violence among the  
6 other boys and that meant that he had to fight. There  
7 was abuse from SNR and from staff. You've  
8 said that men from outside would come into Dr Guthrie's  
9 and sexually abuse and physically assault children at  
10 the swimming pool.

11 KKR was sexually abused and beaten hundreds of times  
12 by different men. He was threatened that he would end  
13 up in Dr Guthrie's grave or a plot at Liberton Cemetery  
14 if he didn't do what they were telling him to do, what  
15 they were making him do.

16 He had a fear of water from being nearly drowned in  
17 Dr Guthrie's pool and suffered long term from a sore  
18 back, because of being kicked by a member of staff.

19 He ran away constantly and would be caught by the  
20 police and taken back. He was addicted to drugs from  
21 age 14, sniffing glue and drinking initially, then as he  
22 got older he was taking heroin and methadone. He was in  
23 trouble and in and out of prison.

24 Ultimately, as I've said, he very tragically died of  
25 an overdose in 2023, aged 52.

1           You tell us that his time in care and especially his  
2           experiences at Dr Guthrie's led to a lifetime of  
3           addiction. Whenever he spoke about his abuse he would  
4           get suicidal.

5           Is that a fair summary of what you've told us about  
6           KKR ?

7           A. Yes, that's a fair summary, yeah.

8           Q. All right. Thank you.

9           Turning then to your own statement, and I don't need  
10          your date of birth -- I'm sorry, do you need to take  
11          a moment?

12          Are you all right?

13          A. Yeah, I'm fine.

14          Q. I don't need your date of birth, Angie, but I think you  
15          were born in 1967, is that right?

16          A. That's correct.

17          Q. You tell us a little bit about your early life with your  
18          family in Leith, but at a very young age of course you  
19          were taken into care and we have heard a bit about that,  
20          when you gave evidence as you did in foster care.

21          The transcript reference to Angie's evidence in  
22          foster care my Lady is TRN-10-000000042.

23          It is pages 69 to 122.

24          Angie, you already told us quite a lot about your  
25          early life, but I think, putting matters short, your



1 childhood was difficult, is that right?

2 A. Yeah, very difficult.

3 Q. You experienced abuse in foster care and in different  
4 children's homes; is that right?

5 A. Yeah, [REDACTED].

6 Q. [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]

8 A. [REDACTED]

9 Q. I'm not going to go into the details of what happened to  
10 you in foster care or children's homes today, Angie,  
11 because first of all you have given some evidence about  
12 that already, and also we're not looking at the  
13 children's homes in this chapter of the Inquiry.

14 But ultimately, after a number of different  
15 placements, you ended up at Dr Guthrie's School for  
16 Girls in Edinburgh?

17 A. Yes, I did, yeah.

18 Q. What age were you then?

19 A. I was -- I think I was either 13 or 14. I think --  
20 I think I was about 13, actually. 14.

21 Q. All right. So that would have been about 1981 or so?

22 A. Yes, that's correct. I got put in Dr Guthrie's Girls'  
23 School because I was absconding constantly before, from  
24 children's homes, from abuse really.

25 Q. I was just about to ask you that. You were running away



1 in Haddington I was very, very troubled with my life as  
2 a young girl.

3 Q. Would you have felt able to confide in people like the  
4 social workers that you had contact with?

5 A. Probably not, no. I mean, [REDACTED], adults  
6 weren't our friends, you know. Adults -- we saw them as  
7 adults punished us, abused us or physically abused us.

8 Q. Yes, so you weren't really able to trust --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- adults because of the experiences that you'd had?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. When you were placed in Dr Guthrie's, do you  
13 remember if there was a Children's Hearing?

14 A. Yes, there was. I do remember that very clearly,  
15 because I think ... feeling frightened, very frightened.  
16 I never felt like a bad person, but I felt at that  
17 hearing I had become a bad person.

18 Q. What gave you that impression? What were the Panel  
19 doing that made you feel like a bad person?

20 A. Because they were talking about everything, you know --  
21 it was almost like I had, even back then, two parts of  
22 me. I had nice friends, but I came from the home.  
23 I was in care. People didn't -- parents didn't really  
24 want their children associating with me because I was in  
25 care. So I always had a complex about, you know, trying

1           so hard to be good. Trying to fit in. Trying to have,  
2           you know, relationships with people. Even back then  
3           I was very aware of it.

4           ██████████ dipped in and out of good and bad,  
5           that's what it felt like. And there was no in between.

6   Q. It sounds like people's attitudes to you made it more  
7       difficult for you to fit in, to try to fit in?

8   A. Yeah, very much so.

9   Q. Just thinking still about the Children's Hearing,  
10       Children's Panel. Do you remember what it was like,  
11       what they actually did at the Panel?

12   A. I remember as -- I can't really remember a lot of what  
13       was being said, but I can remember it like yesterday.  
14       It was up at Southside and going into this meeting with  
15       all these adults and just being told because of my  
16       behaviour I was going to Dr Guthrie's.

17   Q. Did anyone ask you for your views on any of that?

18   A. Not that I can remember, no. Definitely not. No,  
19       I would remember that, because no one ever asked me  
20       anything.

21   Q. I was just going to say. Did anyone ask you anything at  
22       all?

23   A. No.

24   Q. This was something or felt like something that was done  
25       to you?

1 A. Yeah, a punishment. And boy was it a punishment. When  
2 I arrived in Dr Guthrie's it was like walking through  
3 the doors of hell.

4 Q. Yeah. I'll just come on to look at that just in  
5 a moment, Angie.

6 Just one more question about the Panel. Did you  
7 understand or did the adults there make it easy for you  
8 to understand what was going on?

9 A. No.

10 Q. What was the sort of language that they were using? Do  
11 you recall that? Was it language that you could  
12 understand, essentially?

13 A. Authoritarian, everything was authoritarian in my  
14 childhood.

15 Q. You've told us that you're sent to Dr Guthrie's. You're  
16 aged about 14. Did anyone tell you what sort of place  
17 Dr Guthrie's was before you went there?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Did anyone tell you anything about it?

20 A. No.

21 LADY SMITH: Had you heard of it, Angie?

22 A. No.

23 Q. You say in your statement, I'm looking at page 21 now,  
24 paragraph 98, that you found out later that Dr Guthrie's  
25 was a school for absconders. Did someone tell you that?

1 A. No. I knew I had to go to the Panel because I was  
2 running away from everything. I'd tried to take my own  
3 life when I was 13 or 14, and nearly succeeded, and  
4 I ended up in -- I'm sure the hospital was called  
5 Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
6 Secondary Institutions - to be published later then sort of from there  
7 I was put into Dr Guthrie's. So I remember thinking  
8 I was going there for running away and for trying to  
9 take my own life.

10 I think if I remember right, that's why I was going  
11 there.

12 Q. All right. You tell us a little bit in your statement  
13 about the layout of Dr Guthrie's. You say there were  
14 different houses?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. I think we understand that these were just different  
17 parts of the school, different wings of the school, is  
18 that how it worked?

19 A. Yeah. There was a lovely reception, if I remember  
20 right, when you first went in. And then there was  
21 houses. I was Brechin House. Then there was another  
22 house through my house. Then there was a house up the  
23 stairs where the cells were. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay.

25 How many girls were in each house roughly?

1 A. Probably about ten.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Maybe more, but I think about ten.

4 Q. All right. Were they all roughly the same age or were  
5 they different ages?

6 A. Roughly about the same age. Maybe a bit older, but  
7 roughly all about -- I was one of the younger ones and  
8 then older.

9 Q. Sure. Were the different houses, as it were, arranged  
10 by age? Was that perhaps how it was done?

11 A. No, no, there was just a mixture of girls in all the  
12 houses.

13 Q. You mention the reception area. When you first arrived  
14 at Dr Guthrie's, did anyone come to greet you or explain  
15 to you how things were going to work?

16 A. I just remember meeting this woman who was off and  
17 started shouting at me, gave me a pair of Jesus sandals  
18 and took me through to the house. That's all  
19 I remember, was these Jesus sandals.

20 Q. What sort of things was she shouting at you?

21 A. Barking at me -- I mean, I know she was barking at me  
22 because that's the way she always was. She didn't speak  
23 to you. She barked at you.

24 Q. Do you recall this person's name?

25 A. Ms EQE .

1 Q. You say that you couldn't get out of Dr Guthrie's  
2 because you were locked up wherever you went. You  
3 always had staff with you. Especially you, because you  
4 were an absconder. Did you think you were being treated  
5 differently to other girls in the school or was the way  
6 that staff treated you similar across the board?

7 A. I think everyone was treated appallingly.

8 Q. Okay.

9 At paragraph 101 you give us some details about the  
10 staff. You say Mr MTA was SNR . The staff  
11 were Mrs EQE , who you just mentioned, and EQL . Do you  
12 recall EQL second name at all?

13 A. I don't ... I didn't ... you had nothing personal to do  
14 with any of these people. You know, you knew their name  
15 and that was it.

16 Q. Right. You tell us that as far as you were concerned  
17 they were terrifying. Why were they terrifying?

18 A. I was quite a mixture of a young girl, so I had been  
19 brought up in St Helen's Secondary Institutions - to be published later

20 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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24 Secondary Institutions - to be published

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but when I walked into  
Dr Guthrie's I probably came across as quite naive,  
compared to a lot of the girls. And the only real thing



1 I ever was trying to do was end my life and run away  
2 from my life, yeah. So for me it was a real culture  
3 shock going into Dr Guthrie's and it was the only way  
4 I can describe it at the time was: hell.

5 I felt I'd been punished. I was being punished and  
6 I didn't understand why, because I was never ever like a  
7 bad, bad, bad child. I was always just running away not  
8 to be hurt.

9 Q. Sure. Did it feel then significantly different to the  
10 other places that you've --

11 A. Very, very, very different, yeah.

12 Q. You have told us a little bit about that, but in what  
13 way different?

14 A. There was aggression.

15 Q. From staff, from pupils?

16 A. From staff.

17 Q. How bad --

18 A. Other girls were aggressive. It was very hostile, very  
19 aggressive. There was nothing to do. It was like you  
20 were in a waiting room, just waiting, waiting, waiting  
21 for nothing.

22 Q. Okay. You tell us over the page, paragraph 103,  
23 'Dr Guthrie's wasn't a place for a child to be'. Can  
24 you tell us a little bit more about that, please?

25 A. Well, obviously I'd been in care since a young child and

1 I'd seen a lot and stuff like that, but I'd never  
2 experienced just such hostility. There was no joy.  
3 There was no happiness. There was no laughter.  
4 Everything was so strict to rules. All you done was  
5 clean. My education, I had no education when I arrived  
6 there. There was classes that were absolutely chaos.  
7 I think all I ever done in Dr Guthrie's was clean and  
8 bake cakes.

9 Q. How long in a day would you spend cleaning?

10 A. Well, it depends if you were being punished as well.  
11 I was punished a lot because I wet the bed and  
12 I constantly tried to escape from the place. So I was  
13 always cleaning and I was always washing my laundry  
14 because I wet the bed and I had to clean my own laundry.

15 Q. You talk a little bit about that in paragraph 105, that  
16 Mrs EQE took a dislike to the fact that you were  
17 wetting the bed and treated you in a particular way?

18 A. Yeah, she did.

19 Q. Do you feel able to tell us about that, Angie?

20 A. She just picked on me because I wet the bed. She would  
21 call me names, because I wet the bed. She would rub my  
22 face in the wet sheets. She dragged me down to the  
23 laundry by the hair to wash my wet sheets. I wouldn't  
24 get weekend leave because I had nowhere to go to anyway,  
25 but because of my bed wetting.

1 Q. Just on a slightly different topic and going back in  
2 your statement a little, you say in paragraph 103 that  
3 you were forced to wear Jesus sandals because you were  
4 an absconder. Can you tell us what the sandals were  
5 like?

6 A. No, I think I have got a bit mixed up with that  
7 actually. The whole -- the whole school was made to  
8 wear Jesus sandals to make sure we didn't run away,  
9 anybody run away.

10 Q. Why was that? Did the Jesus sandals make it difficult  
11 physically to run?

12 A. No. I think they were because no one would go out in  
13 them. We were young girls. We wanted to look nice and  
14 we were made to wear these Jesus sandals. But  
15 I think -- I don't think -- I know it wasn't just me.  
16 Everybody had to wear Jesus sandals. It was  
17 a deterrent, I believe, if I remember right, for people  
18 not to run away. You wouldn't be seen dead with these  
19 Jesus sandals, although when I did run away I would run  
20 away in them. They didn't deter me.

21 Q. You've told us that there were some classes, lessons,  
22 but that they were chaotic. Again, could you tell us  
23 a bit more about that, please?

24 A. School -- there was no such thing as school. You  
25 were -- in the morning, you were made to get up, made

1 to -- like -- well, I was always dragged to the laundry  
2 with my wet bed or flung in the shower. You were made  
3 to go to school and sit in a room, and there was no  
4 education.

5 Q. You had a particular difficulty I think because your  
6 eyesight at that time was a difficulty?

7 A. Yeah, I always had bad eyesight.

8 Q. And nothing was done about that?

9 A. No.

10 Q.

11

12 A.

13 Q.

14

15 A.

16 Q. You tell us essentially that you tried to abscond  
17 whenever you could?

18 A. That's correct, yeah.

19 Q. When that happened, you were brought back and put in  
20 a cell. On page 23 you tell us a little bit about the  
21 cell. Perhaps you could just tell us in your own words,  
22 please, what the cell was like?

23 A. It was just a tiny little room with a bed in it.

24 Q. Was there a toilet?

25 A. No, you got taken to the toilet.

1 Q. Right. Okay.

2 A. But then if they didn't hear you -- because the cells  
3 were away at the top of the building, if they didn't  
4 hear you, you were just left to wet yourself.

5 Q. I was just going to ask you about that, how were you  
6 expected to get in contact with staff to let them know  
7 that you needed to go?

8 A. We used to shout.

9 Q. If no one was about, then you were just left there?

10 A. Yeah. I was even left there without food. You just  
11 never knew when you were going to get out of the cell.

12 Q. How long typically would you be kept in the cell?

13 A. It depended on your behaviour. So I used to self-harm  
14 as well. So I was always kept in longer if I'd been  
15 self-harming or if I'd wet the bed. I got beaten up in  
16 the cells for wetting the bed.

17 Q. Who beat you up in the cells?

18 A. Ms EQE .

19 Q. Right. What sorts of things did she do?

20 A. Grabbing my hair, punching me, hitting me against the  
21 walls, slamming me against doors, tripping me up as  
22 well. Just all different things. It used to vary.

23 Q. You then go on to talk a little bit about abuse,  
24 although you've told us a bit about abuse from Mrs EQE  
25 just there.

1           You say very graphically at paragraph 113 that  
2           Dr Guthrie's was hell. Why do you say that?  
3       A. I was already an extremely troubled child, extremely  
4           troubled young person, due to being in care since I was  
5           three, [REDACTED],  
6           not -- because I was already in care before I went into  
7           Dr Guthrie's there was nowhere for me to go on day  
8           release or weekend release, like a lot of the girls used  
9           to have. I was just kept in there constantly.

10           Sometimes I was allowed to go out and visit my nana,  
11           but obviously due to my absconding that got stopped as  
12           well. Not ever wanting to go back into the building.  
13           I mean, even to this day, if I'm up in that area,  
14           I can't drive down Gilmerton Road and look at that  
15           building. It still has so much fear for me inside me  
16           and so much hurt and confusing -- confusion and horror  
17           inside me.

18           So if I have to go up to Dobbies or somewhere for  
19           soil or plants, I will avoid it and go another way,  
20           because that building still puts the horrors in me.

21       Q. You say in that paragraph that you felt there was  
22           madness and fear in the place, is that how --

23       A. Constantly fear, there was constant fear in  
24           Dr Guthrie's.

25       Q. Fear of staff? Fear of other --

1 A. Fear of staff, fear of other pupils. Just fear,  
2 constant fear.

3 Q. You said there was violence among the other girls?

4 A. Yeah, there could be quite bad violence between other  
5 girls. I didn't experience that, but there could be --  
6 it was horrible to watch.

7 Q. What kinds of things did you witness?

8 A. Just fighting.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. As you can imagine, girls of that age growing up,  
11 there's lots of, you know, hormones and, you know,  
12 nothing like that was looked after. There was a lot of  
13 nastiness. There was a lot of -- there was just a lot  
14 of young girls confused in Dr Guthrie's. Very confused  
15 and unable to deal with life.

16 Q. But you didn't, yourself, experience any violence from  
17 other pupils?

18 A. No, not really. No, I wouldn't say I did.

19 Q. But some girls clearly did, is that right?

20 A. There was, yeah. Quite a lot of in-fighting, yeah.

21 Q. Over the page, paragraph 114, you say that you were  
22 always being punished and there was a lot of violence  
23 towards you. Did you understand why you were being  
24 punished?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Did anyone speak to you about whatever behaviours it was  
2 that may have led to you being punished?

3 A. It was always -- I felt -- are we talking about  
4 Dr Guthrie's or through life?

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. Right, in Dr Guthrie's, my main situation was bed  
7 wetting and not being able to apply to the school. My  
8 constant fear of needing to get out that place as well  
9 led me to abscond and get away from the violence.

10 Q. Yeah. You talk about a particular member of staff who  
11 was violent towards you. Do you feel able to tell us  
12 more about that?

13 A. It was Ms EQE who was always violent to me.

14 Q. You also --

15 A. EQL was also violent towards me as well. Where he --  
16 I saw him, you know, beat up other girls in that school  
17 and he also beat me up. EQL had more to do with the  
18 cells, if I remember right.

19 Q. I was just going to ask you what his role was, what his  
20 function was?

21 A. I don't know what his function was. I don't think he  
22 was a teacher, but I just -- always remember EQL  
23 being -- you know, if you were in the cells you dealt  
24 with EQL.

25 Q. Right. When you were in the cells, was EQL violent to



1           you there?

2    A.  Oh, numerous times, yeah.

3    Q.  You say that he punched you in the face flat on?

4    A.  Yeah, I remember being in Dr Guthrie's.  I remember

5           a great big bruise on my back.  I remember this massive

6           big bruise and I can't remember where I got it from, but

7           I remember it was so black, you know, I remember having

8           black eyes in Dr Guthrie's.  I remember having a sore

9           ear in Dr Guthrie's from being punched as well by **EQL**.

10          I remember just being hit quite a lot.

11   Q.  Did any of the other staff comment on this?  Did any of

12          them ask you what had happened?

13   A.  In the house, there was always -- the house was

14          better -- when you finally got back to the house it's

15          all I used to live for, was getting back to my house and

16          to my room, yeah.  There was a few house -- I don't know

17          what they were called, housemistresses maybe, I don't

18          know what these people were called that just worked in

19          the house, they were a bit better.

20   Q.  Okay.

21   A.  Not much, but a bit better.  But they knew what was

22          going on.  They couldn't have not known what was going

23          on.

24   LADY SMITH:  When you talk about living for getting back to

25          your house, you mean the house you were in at

1 Dr Guthrie's?

2 A. Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: I think there were four houses altogether: is  
4 that correct?

5 A. There was Brechin, I think there was Ogilvie House as  
6 well if I remember right, there was Angus House and  
7 I'm not sure of the other one. I think there was either  
8 three or four.

9 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you. That's helpful, Angie.

10 MR SHELDON: Should we understand then that your house felt  
11 like a relatively safe place for you within  
12 Dr Guthrie's?

13 A. I wouldn't say 'safe', but it was better than being  
14 anywhere near EQL or Ms EQE or Mr MTA .

15 Q. Sure. Did you have your own room or were you sharing  
16 a room with other girls?

17 A. I used to have my own room, because I wet the bed.

18 Q. You eventually are able to I think leave Dr Guthrie's,  
19 because of your social worker, who seems to have helped  
20 you a bit in that respect, is that right?

21 A. Yeah, I got to -- I stopped running away -- I think they  
22 had just beaten me enough and I had stopped running away  
23 and I got the chance to -- because I couldn't get out at  
24 weekends, I had nowhere to go -- I got the chance to go  
25 to community carers.

1 Q. I think you were with them for a while after  
2 Dr Guthrie's; is that right?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. That was a relatively okay experience?

5 A. Anything was better than Dr Guthrie's so, no, it wasn't  
6 great, but compared to Dr Guthrie's, yeah, it was almost  
7 like you became human again. I became -- I think  
8 I started feeling like a human being again.

9 Q. Angie, you have told us previously in the Foster Care  
10 case study about your life after being in care and  
11 there's some information about that in your statement.  
12 At paragraph 138, you talk about impact and again  
13 you have told us a little bit about that previously.  
14 Thinking perhaps particularly about your experiences at  
15 Dr Guthrie's, can you help us with what effect that had  
16 on you longer term or is it difficult to separate that  
17 out from your other experiences?

18 A. Yeah, that's quite interesting what you said. It is  
19 difficult. However, I felt in Dr Guthrie's they were  
20 going to murder me. I felt I was going die in  
21 Dr Guthrie's. Dr Guthrie's put so much fear and brought  
22 so much violence into my life that --

23 Q. It's all right, take your time.

24 A. I think, you know, I'm 57 now and I've never felt fear  
25 the way I felt in Dr Guthrie's since, through all my

1           life I've never felt the fear that I felt in  
2           Dr Guthrie's.

3   Q.   Is there a place now where you can feel safe or safer?

4   A.   I feel safer in myself.  I give that to myself now  
5           through my -- through the human being I've become  
6           through life, but the most frightening part of my life  
7           was in foster care and Dr Guthrie's.  I've never felt  
8           fear like it since and I hope to God I never do again.

9   Q.   Right.

10           Still just thinking about Dr Guthrie's and that  
11           period in your life, that difficult period, looking back  
12           now, what do you think can be done or should be done to  
13           make experiences in residential care like that better  
14           for children, as you once were?

15   A.   Compassion of -- I mean, I -- I mean, I look back and  
16           I see myself as, you know, a wee bit child ... probably  
17           the most vulnerable in society, that was allowed to be  
18           abused to the way I was.  So I feel children that  
19           unfortunately find themselves in care through no fault  
20           of their own, because suffer I did in the Scottish care  
21           system ...

22   Q.   Angie --

23   A.   Compassion.  I mean, you can't force someone to love  
24           you, but compassion, empathy, understanding of the  
25           trauma, the loneliness, the fear of, you know, having

1 strangers in your life at such a young age, to safeguard  
2 us against, you know, monsters, because a lot of the  
3 adults I had to deal with as a child were monsters.

4 Q. Just thinking about that, and particularly about  
5 Dr Guthrie's, looking back now, do you feel that the  
6 staff members that you dealt with there were at all  
7 suitable to work with children?

8 A. Not one single one of them were fit for purpose, no. It  
9 was pretty evident, you know, in the state of the girls  
10 in the school.

11 Q. Angie, at paragraph 156 of your statement, you are  
12 really talking about foster care in that paragraph, but  
13 just at the last line you say that you've been able to  
14 take back your own life and you can lead your own life  
15 now:

16 'On my terms and for myself.'

17 Is that how you feel now, Angie?

18 A. Yeah. [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

21 KKR [REDACTED] to say [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED], 'Hand the shame back to the monsters, it's their  
23 shame, [REDACTED], and I done that, I handed  
24 the shame back to them. It's not my shame to carry,  
25 it's their shame.

1 I didn't do anything wrong as a child.

2 Q. Indeed.

3 A. [REDACTED]

4 MR SHELDON: My Lady, I have nothing further for Angie.

5 A. Thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: Angie, I have no further questions either.

7 I just want to say again that I'm very grateful to you  
8 for coming here today.

9 Thank you so much for being able to do that. It has  
10 really helped me to understand fully the evidence that  
11 we have from you.

12 I hope, as you go today, you realise that you have  
13 added something of real value to the work that we're  
14 doing here. Thank you for that.

15 A. Thank you.

16 (The witness withdrew)

17 LADY SMITH: Just before we move on, some names mentioned by  
18 that witness. A Ms or Mrs **EQE**, **EQL** and a Mr **MTA**.  
19 The identities of these people are all protected by my  
20 General Restriction Order and they mustn't be identified  
21 outside this room.

22 Mr Sheldon.

23 MR SHELDON: My Lady, Ms Forbes has a read-in.

24 While she's attending to that, I might --

25 LADY SMITH: Certainly, do.

1 (Pause)

2 'Louise' (read)

3 MS FORBES: My Lady, the read-in I have next relates to  
4 an applicant who is anonymous and is known as 'Louise'.  
5 The reference for her statement is WIT.001.001.5534.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 MS FORBES: My Lady, 'Louise' was born in 1958 and she tells  
8 us about her background and life before care from  
9 paragraph 2 onwards. She says that her parents  
10 separated when she was about two years old. She  
11 initially stayed with her mum and they moved around  
12 a lot.

13 Her father used to get to her for a couple of hours  
14 on Saturday and during one visit, when she was about  
15 two years old, he just took her and kept her. She says  
16 that her father was a trawler fisherman, was away a lot,  
17 so she was sent to stay at his mum's, her granny's, and  
18 then she was sent to stay at her dad's sister's house.

19 'Louise' describes being passed then around her  
20 father's family for about two years, before she was sent  
21 back to her mum when she was about four.

22 She doesn't remember if she had a bad experience  
23 with her dad's family, but she says that she used to  
24 shout and scream if she saw any of his family in the  
25 street.

1           She does have a memory of her grandfather and seeing  
2           him in a state of undress when she was about six years  
3           old in a bedroom and she says that she doesn't know if  
4           something happened after that, but she does remember  
5           another occasion when she was chased down street by her  
6           aunty in the car.

7           After being reunited with her mother, 'Louise' says  
8           they lived in Pilton in Edinburgh and she lived with her  
9           mother and her stepfather and they had a daughter when  
10          she was five years old, so she had a half sister. She  
11          also had an older sister, but she was older and didn't  
12          live with them.

13          She says she went to Craigmuir Primary School and  
14          then there was a time when her grandmother moved into  
15          a children's home to work and she was the cook there and  
16          lived in a cottage at the back of the home along with  
17          her grandfather.

18          She says that they would go to the home, the  
19          children's home, and stay with her grandparents at the  
20          weekends and during holidays.

21          She then talks about that children's home from

22          paragraph 9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

23          Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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She goes on to tell us about life before going into care from paragraphs 46. She says she went to secondary school, but found it difficult to cope. She had a lot of anxiety and stress. There were too many people there, so she just didn't go.

'Louise' ended up before Children's Panels for not going to school and then one day at a Panel her mum was told that they'd have to take her to Dr Guthrie's to have a look around.

1           But when they took her there, they never let her out  
2           after that. She thought she was going for a visit, but  
3           she was admitted.

4   LADY SMITH: This isn't the first person we have heard that  
5           tactic used for, so far as the boys' home was concerned.  
6           This is the first time it relates to the girls' school.

7   MS FORBES: Yes.

8           'Louise' says she was 13-and-a-half when she went  
9           into Dr Guthrie's and she then goes on to tell us about  
10          that from paragraph 49. I'll just read from there:

11          'When I went into Dr Guthrie's I wasn't allowed to  
12          see my mum for three months. That was a rule when you  
13          went in. Maybe this was to let you settle in. SNR  
14          SNR in the school was called Mr MTA. SNR  
15          SNR was called Mrs EQE. Mrs Pontins was the  
16          sewing teacher, Mrs McLennan, Mr Currie and Mr HSB  
17          were members of staff in the school. I think the staff  
18          found Mr HSB intimidating.

19          I couldn't believe my mum had went away and left me.  
20          I also had a lot of anxiety and stress from being around  
21          people I didn't know. It was horrible.

22          I remember SNR, Mr MTA, saying that  
23          I was to give him any cigarettes if I had any and that  
24          the school would issue them back to us. I was stupid  
25          and gave him my cigarettes and he kept them. You

1 weren't allowed to smoke in the school.

2 You also got debugged when you got into the school.  
3 This meant a member of staff would put you in a bath and  
4 put stuff in your hair to make sure you didn't bring  
5 lice or bugs into the school. The stuff stank to high  
6 heaven. I can't remember who did it. That happened to  
7 everyone when they came in.

8 There were maybe about 40 girls in the school.  
9 There were two separate floors for all the girls and  
10 about 20 girls on each floor. I think there were about  
11 six bedrooms on each floor and two or three beds in each  
12 room.

13 My room had three beds in it. Nobody had a room to  
14 themself.'

15 Then she compares it to the children's home and says  
16 it wasn't like the dormitories there.

17 She goes on at paragraph 56 to talk about the daily  
18 routine and says:

19 'The staff would get us up in the morning and we'd  
20 go and have breakfast. There was no education. I could  
21 never understand why they put me in there for not going  
22 to school, but never educated me in there. It doesn't  
23 make any sense.

24 We would be allocated jobs like kitchen work,  
25 working in the sewing room or cleaning. We had to clean

1       our own rooms. I remember cleaning the corridors,  
2       sitting rooms and the kitchens. We just spent the whole  
3       day cleaning. There was no cleaner. It was all done by  
4       the children. The staff would just patrol the place and  
5       make sure everything was clean. I think we were just  
6       taken in as cleaners.

7               We had to make our own uniforms, which I quite  
8       enjoyed. The uniform was a green blazer and a green  
9       shirt, which we wore with a white polo shirt. I made  
10      the skirt and blazer. I ended up becoming the head  
11      sewing girl and helped out the sewing teacher,  
12      Mrs Pontins. I would help her to make clothes for the  
13      other girls. We also had everyday clothes, which were  
14      provided by the home. I made some of them too.

15             Staff would stay overnight. It would be different  
16      people, depending on who was on duty. There would be  
17      two members of staff on duty at a time.

18             The rooms wouldn't be locked at night, but the  
19      corridor doors were locked. We had access to the toilet  
20      in the corridor at night.

21             Bath times were horrendous. You had to put your  
22      name down if you wanted a bath, because there were only  
23      a couple of bathrooms and lots of girls. None of the  
24      girls would put their names down when Mr HSB was  
25      on duty.

1           Mr HSB was an evil, horrible man. He used to  
2 walk into the girls' bathroom when we were having  
3 a bath. There was no lock on the door. He used to come  
4 in and start grinning at the girls in the bath and  
5 puckering his lips at us, which is why we called him  
6 HSB.

7           Every day was the same in there. The only change  
8 was on a Sunday, when we went to the church just behind  
9 Dr Guthrie's. I remember the people looking at us like  
10 we were the bad girls when we went in.

11           The minister would come to the school on a Sunday  
12 for Bible reading. I got a certificate for Bible  
13 reading. We only went because we were bored.

14           Sometimes the food was okay and other times it was  
15 horrible. If you didn't like the food, you just had to  
16 take it or leave it. You didn't get anything else. We  
17 were allowed to talk during meal times.

18           I remember going on hunger strike once because  
19 I thought the food was bad. The staff would put the  
20 food down in front of me and I wouldn't eat it. They  
21 would tell me that I would sit there until I ate it.  
22 I could be sitting there for hours, but I wouldn't eat  
23 it. This was for all three meals in the day. I did  
24 this for three days.

25           My mum was called in. The headmaster said to her,

1 "I believe your dog gets fed better than your daughter".  
2 This is what I had said to him when I went on the hunger  
3 strike. I can't remember what my punishment was.  
4 I probably didn't get to go home that weekend.

5 I eventually gave up the hunger strike after three  
6 days. I thought that because everybody else was eating  
7 it, I may as well eat it too.

8 We used to go to the boys' school for swimming.  
9 I used to have blackouts, so I was scared to go into the  
10 water in case I had a blackout. I was also petrified of  
11 water because I had fallen into the water in Inverleith  
12 Park when I was three or four years old and my grandad  
13 had got me out. Mr HSB used to make us go and get  
14 our swimming costumes on whether we were sick or not.  
15 I think he enjoyed seeing the girls in their costumes.

16 We spent our leisure time just sitting in the  
17 sitting room and listening to records or watching  
18 television. We used to watch "Prisoner Cell Block H".  
19 We were never allowed out. Every door was locked behind  
20 us like we were in a prison. There was no freedom in  
21 the place.

22 I made friends in the school. Most of the girls  
23 were in there for staying off school. But there were  
24 girls in there for all sorts of reasons. There was one  
25 girl in there who was made pregnant by her dad and she

1 was waiting to be put into an unmarried mothers' home.'

2 She mentions another girl who was in there by name  
3 and she says she was in the school for breaking into  
4 a jewellers in Tollcross.

5 'Louise' talks about punishments from paragraph 72:

6 'I remember somebody setting a fire once under one  
7 of the girl's beds. It was a joke that went too far.  
8 I think we were bored. We talked about lighting a fire  
9 under her bed to see if it would wake her. We started  
10 a fire with a match. We were smokers so had matches.  
11 The whole place burned down. We had to be moved to  
12 another wing until the place got refurbished.

13 I think the punishment was not being allowed to go  
14 home and not getting any visitors. We all got punished  
15 because nobody would own up to doing it. It was  
16 probably me who had done it. We didn't mean to do it,  
17 we just thought she would feel the heat and wake up.  
18 The things we done just for fun.

19 I once took keys from a staff member and hid them in  
20 the food mixer. She was hunting high and low for her  
21 keys. The girls also used to play tricks on each other  
22 because they were bored. Sometimes you would wake up  
23 with toothpaste all over your face, but that was just  
24 kids being kids.

25 There were a few fights between the girls, but we

1 all got on okay. I think I only had one fight when  
2 I was in there.'

3 She names a girl she shared a room with and said she  
4 shared a room with her and another girl from Glasgow:

5 'I was sitting on my bed arguing ...'

6 She names the girl:

7 '... and then the other girl jumped off her bed and  
8 went crazy. She ripped the hair out of my head.  
9 I ended up in detention for that, even though I didn't  
10 do anything. The girl ran away after that, but was  
11 caught and brought back. The other girls wouldn't talk  
12 to her after that.

13 The kind of things you were punished for was if they  
14 thought you had given them cheek or if you didn't eat  
15 your dinner. You weren't allowed to smoke in the school  
16 and that was another thing they punished you for.

17 I remember sewing cigarettes into the hem of my skirt.  
18 I also hid some in a bag in the bottom of a talc powder  
19 tub. We used to smoke tea leaves if we didn't have  
20 cigarettes. You would not be allowed to go home or get  
21 visitors if you were caught.

22 There used to be a disco that only six or seven  
23 girls were allowed to go to. Only the best behaved  
24 girls got to go. You would not be allowed to go to the  
25 disco as a punishment for misbehaving.



1 Miss McLennan used to tell me to wind up SNR  
2 SNR for a laugh and I stupidly used to do it.  
3 That was another reason I was always being punished.

4 We didn't have any holidays away while we were in  
5 Dr Guthrie's.

6 Kids were allowed to go home at weekends if you were  
7 well behaved. You were not allowed to go home if you  
8 were badly behaved. That was the punishment.

9 I was only allowed home for two weekends in the  
10 three years I was in the school. Sometimes the school  
11 would say that I could go home for the weekend but would  
12 turn my mum away after she had driven all the way to  
13 pick me up. This happened too often.

14 Mr MTA or Mrs EQE made the decision about who  
15 got to go home and who was allowed visitors. It  
16 depended who was on duty at the time.

17 I remember we had an open day and got to bake cakes  
18 and we made eclairs. I think that was just to impress  
19 the people who were coming. It was the parents of the  
20 children who came. I can't remember if my mum came.

21 My mother would sometimes come to visit me and not  
22 even be allowed to see me. My sister and brother-in-law  
23 came to visit me once and wanted to take me out to the  
24 cafe. They were told that I wasn't allowed visitors  
25 because I had been misbehaving. They stopped you having

1 visitors as a punishment.

2 I never saw either of my two sisters the entire time  
3 I was in Dr Guthrie's. They both got to go to school.

4 A social worker visited me about twice in the three  
5 years I was there. I don't remember her name and only  
6 vaguely remember speaking to her. I think she asked how  
7 I was settling in. I remember seeing her quite early on  
8 and then she disappeared. I remember some girls in the  
9 home getting visits from social workers but not very  
10 often.

11 I ran away during my first Christmas time in the  
12 school. There were only three kids left in the school.  
13 Other kids had all been allowed to go home but I was  
14 kept in because I hadn't been in the home long.

15 I smashed a window during the day on that first  
16 Christmas in preparation for running away. Then late at  
17 night I threw a mattress out of the window. Two of us  
18 jumped out and landed on the mattress. I remember  
19 seeing Mrs Pontins through the window. She was lying in  
20 her bed in the room next to us, reading a book. The  
21 third girl jumped out and landed on her knee on the  
22 ground. We had to just leave her there and run. She  
23 was there all night. She had to have an operation on  
24 her knee.

25 I got home for one Christmas out of the three that

1 I was there. They made me stay in the school until  
2 midnight and my mum had to come up to the school to  
3 collect me. She had to bring me back to the school at  
4 9.00 pm the next day.

5 I don't remember getting any presents from the  
6 school at Christmas time.

7 I remember my 16th birthday. My gran came in with  
8 a cake because I wasn't allowed out. Birthdays weren't  
9 celebrated by anybody in the school. They maybe just  
10 said "happy birthday". There were no gifts or anything  
11 from the school.

12 I think the girl who ran away with me at Christmas  
13 time was called [then she names her]. After we ran  
14 away, we went down the road and saw a man on the street.  
15 She asked the man if he had any change. He put his hand  
16 in his pocket and when he took it out she snatched  
17 everything he had and we ran away.

18 We got a bus to Glasgow, which was where she was  
19 from. We stayed in a derelict flat in a tenement. We  
20 were away for about four days. We heard the police  
21 coming so we climbed up these ladders to the attic. The  
22 boards were all rotten so I fell through a hole and peed  
23 myself with fright. I was wearing about 15 pairs of  
24 knickers because I had put everything on so I wouldn't  
25 have to carry a backpack.

1           We were caught by the police and taken to the police  
2           station. It was good because we got fish and chips. We  
3           were kept in overnight by the police and then they drove  
4           us back to Dr Guthrie's.

5           The second time I ran away me and my friend went to  
6           my friend's uncle's house. He went out and locked us in  
7           the house when he went on nightshift. My friend took  
8           a hammer to his gas meter and stole all the money. Then  
9           we went to stay at her friend's house. That time I got  
10          her to phone the police because we were starving.

11          We got debugged by a female member of staff when we  
12          got back to the school. This happened both times I ran  
13          away. I remember Mrs Pontins being there one of the  
14          times. She said she was very disappointed in me.

15          My punishment for running away was being locked in  
16          the detention cell for four days. The detention cell  
17          was a bare room with a mattress on the floor. There was  
18          more than one detention cell, so the girl I ran away  
19          with got the same treatment.

20          I can't remember what I did to go to the toilet.  
21          There must have been a toilet in there, but I don't  
22          remember. Meals were brought up to me. I remember  
23          other girls shouting through the door and asking me if  
24          I was okay. It was horrible and scary in there.

25          There was a doctor that we had to see when we were

1 in Guthrie's. We would be taken out of the home to see  
2 him. I started to get really bad period pains while  
3 I was in there and I went to see him about it. I think  
4 he thought it was all in my head and just dismissed it.  
5 He maybe thought I was making it up to get out of the  
6 home for half an hour.'.

7 'Louise' then talks about abuse at Dr Guthrie's from  
8 paragraph 100:

9 'It was considered bad behaviour if you answered  
10 back to staff or if you were told to do something and  
11 didn't do it. I remember I was asked to pick up milk  
12 bottles and take them to the front door. I said I would  
13 do it in a minute. Mr HSB grabbed me by the hair  
14 and forced me down to pick the bottles up. Then he  
15 pulled me along the corridor by my hair to make me take  
16 them to the front door. He pulled the hair right out of  
17 my head. The sewing room teacher, Mrs Pontins, told my  
18 mum. My mum went to see Mr HSB. She was told  
19 that if there was any more nonsense, I wouldn't get out  
20 at the weekend.

21 Mr HSB beat me up about four or five times  
22 during the three years I was in the school. He would  
23 just lash out. I think he liked to show authority.  
24 Even a little bit of cheek would set him off. I don't  
25 think he was sexually abusive. He was just good with

1 his hands at battering people.'

2 Then she says she remembers a girl, and names her,  
3 and she says at paragraph 102:

4 'Mr HSB [REDACTED] gave her a right doing in the sitting  
5 room in front of everybody. I don't know what she had  
6 done. I don't remember her doing anything bad, but he  
7 started punching and kicking her. The girls were all  
8 petrified of him.

9 Mr HSB [REDACTED] was the only one like that. The rest  
10 of the staff were all really nice. If you told the  
11 other staff that you'd do something in a minute, they  
12 wouldn't mind as long as you did it.

13 The other staff would never lift their hand to you,  
14 but they would punish you by taking away privileges like  
15 going home or getting visitors. Mr HSB [REDACTED] would beat  
16 you up and then take away your privileges as well. You  
17 got punished twice from him. I think he was in 50s.

18 I was 16-and-a-half when I left Dr Guthrie's.  
19 People were coming and going from the school. But I was  
20 over 16 and still there. I had never gone to  
21 a Children's Panel again since I got into the school and  
22 I thought that they must have forgotten about me.

23 One of the girls in the school was allowed to go out  
24 and work because she was well behaved. She worked in  
25 Liberton Hospital. I gave her a letter to post to the

1 Children's Panel on her way to work. In the letter,  
2 I asked them if they had forgotten about me because  
3 everybody else was coming and going out of the school.

4 The Children's Panel then contacted SNR  
5 at the school to say that they had received a letter  
6 from me. He went mental. Usually letters were read by  
7 the school before they were sent out and when they came  
8 in.

9 I remember SNR coming to tell me that  
10 a Panel had been fixed to decide if I was getting out.  
11 You had to have a job before you were allowed to get out  
12 of the school, so I had to go to the job centre.  
13 Somebody must have gone with me.'

14 Then she says she got a job as a wig maker.

15 She goes on:

16 'I was told to take all my stuff with me to the  
17 Panel. I remember everybody sitting around the table.  
18 I think they asked me if I had learned my lesson and  
19 that was it. I was free. I didn't go back to the  
20 school to say bye to everyone. I think I would have  
21 liked to have said goodbye. I had been living with  
22 those people for three years.'

23 She then talks about reporting of abuse and from  
24 paragraph 114 she says:

25 'The minister who came for Bible studies on a Sunday

1 was a friendly person, I told him about Mr HSB  
2 beating me and watching us in the showers. He never  
3 said anything. The girls used to sit and tell him our  
4 problems. He never said anything. He just used to  
5 laugh. He must have just thought we were a bunch of  
6 nutcases.

7 When the police caught us after running away, we  
8 told them why we had run away. We told them that it was  
9 because Mr HSB was beating us and that we didn't  
10 want to be the only three girls in the school with him  
11 over Christmas. We also told them that he would watch  
12 us when we were in the bath. I think they just thought  
13 we were troublemakers. A lot of people wouldn't believe  
14 us when we told them anything and it would just be our  
15 fault.

16 I would like to think that a report would have been  
17 filed when Mr HSB was seen by other staff dragging  
18 me through the school and battering me. Mrs Pontins  
19 told my mum, who had come in to speak to him about it.  
20 I don't know if it was reported to anyone else, but all  
21 the same staff were still at Dr Guthrie's when I left.'

22 She then talks about her life after care from  
23 paragraph 117. She says that during the time she was at  
24 Dr Guthrie's her grandmother Secondary Institutions - to be published  
25 Secondary Ins moved to Wester Hailes and that her mum then



1 had left Pilton and moved [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED].

4 She then moved into the cottage with her mum and  
5 step-dad.

6 She talks about a girl from Dr Guthrie's who ran  
7 away and came to find her after she moved into the  
8 cottage and wanted money to go to Glasgow and she says  
9 she got money from her mum and gave it to her and that  
10 she stayed in touch with her for about six months.

11 She also kept in touch with Mrs Pontins, the sewing  
12 teacher and visited her a few times.

13 Her mum separated from her step-dad whilst she was  
14 in the home, I think that's why her mum was staying in  
15 [REDACTED]. He stayed in the cottage and she  
16 went to stay in [REDACTED] and then 'Louise' says  
17 that she went to stay with her gran in Wester Hailes in  
18 Edinburgh.

19 She got a new doctor when she moved to Wester  
20 Hailes, who sent her to hospital to be checked. At  
21 paragraph 123 she says:

22 'They said my insides were all stuck together like a  
23 tennis ball, my bowel was stuck to my fallopian tubes  
24 and ovaries, I had to have a hysterectomy.'

25 She then says she left her work with the wig makers

1 after three years and started working in the laundry [REDACTED]  
2 [REDACTED] and that she was about 19 or  
3 20 years old at the time and that she would be  
4 downstairs doing the ironing and washing and she stayed  
5 there working for about two years.

6 She then met her husband when she was 19 years old  
7 and she got married and they never had any children  
8 because of her difficulties and having had  
9 a hysterectomy.

10 She then worked at a chemist, butchers and shoe  
11 repair place and got a job in a shop and became  
12 a manager there until 2005.

13 'Louise' says she has problems with anxiety and low  
14 self-confidence as an adult, but her husband really  
15 helped her but sadly he died of cancer in 2005 and then  
16 her anxiety increased after he died and she was  
17 diagnosed with anxiety, depression and stress. She was  
18 appointed a community psychiatric nurse and she talked  
19 with that nurse about her childhood and she was told  
20 that her anxiety and stress came from her dad taking her  
21 from her mum when she was two years old and keeping her  
22 for two years.

23 In relation to impact, she talks about that from  
24 paragraph 131 and says:

25 'I could never understand sending girls to

1 Dr Guthrie's for not going to school and then not  
2 educating them. It had a huge effect on me. I could  
3 have had a better job as an adult if I had been  
4 educated.

5 I never liked to meet people and get into  
6 conversations with them in case they thought I was  
7 stupid. I was afraid that they would ask me questions  
8 and I wouldn't know the answers. I can read but I don't  
9 know anything to do with history, geography or maths.  
10 It made me really self-conscious as an adult. I think  
11 I lost all of my confidence.

12 I've always been very anxious. I can't even get on  
13 a bus if it is busy. I can't bear to have doors locked  
14 behind me. I don't even lock my bathroom door. This  
15 still affects me.'

16 She talks about seeing the nurse every two weeks and  
17 talks about passing out sometimes.

18 At paragraph 135 she says:

19 'I have never been able to have a family because the  
20 doctor in Dr Guthrie's School didn't take my condition  
21 seriously when I complained of period pains.'

22 Then she talks about another doctor not taking it  
23 seriously either when she came out of the school.

24 She goes on to say:

25 'This meant by the time I was seen by another doctor

1 and sent to hospital the damage was done.'

2 'Louise' says she doesn't work now because of her  
3 problems and that she has difficulty sleeping. She has  
4 osteoporosis and can't sleep with the pain and has been  
5 diagnosed with depression and takes anti-depressants.  
6 She has also been diagnosed with emphysema, asthma and  
7 bronchiectasis.

8 In relation to other information at paragraph 139  
9 she says:

10 'I want kids who were treated wrong in care to have  
11 a voice now. Too much was swept under the carpet when  
12 I was in care. Kids don't need to be hurt if you want  
13 to punish them, you can do other things like take away  
14 their pocket money. I don't think there should have  
15 been male staff at Dr Guthrie's when it was  
16 an all-girls' school, I don't think male staff should be  
17 looking after a group of girls.'

18 My Lady, she has made the usual declaration at  
19 paragraph 140 and she has signed that and it's dated  
20 30 November 2017.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

22 It's just after 1 o'clock so I'm going to stop now  
23 for the lunch break.

24 Before I rise, one other name of a person who can't  
25 be identified outside this room and that's Mr HSB .

1 Thank you. I'll sit again at 2 o'clock.

2 (1.03 pm)

3 (The luncheon adjournment)

4 (2.00 pm)

5 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

6 MR SHELDON: Good afternoon, my Lady.

7 Continuing this afternoon with read-ins, the first  
8 one will be by Ms Forbes.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

10 'Liz' (read)

11 MS FORBES: My Lady, the next read-in is from an applicant  
12 who is anonymous and known as 'Liz'. The reference for  
13 her statement is WIT-1-000000750.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 MS FORBES: My Lady, 'Liz' was born in 1962 and she talks  
16 about her life before going into care from paragraph 2.

17 She says she was brought up in Lanark and she lived  
18 with her parents. She had two brothers and two sisters,  
19 but there was less than a year between her brother and  
20 herself.

21 When she was young her dad wasn't there a lot of the  
22 time, as he was in and out of a psychiatric hospital and  
23 she thinks he was schizophrenic.

24 When she was growing up, she always thought she'd  
25 been adopted because she didn't seem to be treated the

1 same as her brothers and sisters and her parents had  
2 very little time for her.

3 As she got older she wasn't treated like she was  
4 their child and her mum told her at one point that her  
5 dad was angry because she'd been born so quickly after  
6 her brother.

7 The social work department were involved with her  
8 family from a very young age and were regularly at the  
9 house. There was physical abuse from her dad towards  
10 her mum and herself. When he was drunk her father was  
11 violent, but it was completely different when he was  
12 sober and she never saw him hit her brothers or sisters.

13 At the age of ten she was sent to live with a couple  
14 and her dad was in the psychiatric hospital at that time  
15 and her mum was going into hospital to have  
16 a hysterectomy. The couple were friends of her mother  
17 and this was all arranged through the social work  
18 department.

19 She lived with that couple for about six months  
20 until her mum left the hospital and everything was good  
21 with them. She went home again but nothing had changed.  
22 She went to primary school but didn't recall going very  
23 often.

24 Part of that reason was because her father would  
25 regularly beat her and one time he threw her down the

1 stairs and broke her arm and the police were often at  
2 her house and her father would be taken away.

3 'Liz' says at paragraph 7 that things got so bad  
4 that she tried to kill herself and her social worker,  
5 she mentions him a lot so I'll just use his name,  
6 Duncan Gray, came to the house and he thought it would  
7 be better for everyone if she went into care for  
8 a while.

9 She went to a Children's Panel when she was about 11  
10 and she was there with her mum and Duncan Gray and her  
11 dad wasn't allowed into the hearing room because of his  
12 bad temper.

13 The police were at the hearings too and it was  
14 decided that she be placed in care and she was sent to  
15 a children's home in Crosshouse. She remembers getting  
16 taken away by the social worker in his car and her dad  
17 jumping on the bonnet trying to stop them. 'Liz'  
18 comments that that made her think that her dad actually  
19 loved her and the police took him away.

20 She went straight from that Panel to the children's  
21 home and at that time she said she felt happy that she  
22 was leaving her home and going somewhere that she was  
23 going to be safe.

24 She then says she went to a children's home in  
25 Kilmarnock and she can't remember anything about her

1 stay there, which was for about two months, but it seems  
2 that that was too far away for her parents to visit so  
3 she was moved to another children's home and she would  
4 have been still 11 at that time.

5 She talks about that children's home from

6 paragraph 11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

7 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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11

12 But it was decided that she couldn't go back to her  
13 family because her social worker told her that her mum  
14 and dad were not fit to look after her and it wasn't  
15 safe.

16 She thinks she was at that second children's home

17 for about six months Secondary Institutions - to be published later

18 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

19

20 Secondary Institutions - to be published later and she went to another

21 Children's Panel.

22 At that hearing it was decided she would go to the  
23 Good Shepherd in Bishopton and she talks about the Good  
24 Shepherd between paragraphs 22 and 47 of her statement.  
25 She says she was in there about three occasions and she



1 doesn't know exactly when she went in or for how long  
2 each stay was, but she was possibly 12 or 13 the first  
3 time she was in there.

4 She tells us that while she was in that home she ran  
5 away. She talks about that from paragraph 38. She had  
6 only been there about a month when she started to run  
7 away and was doing that frequently.

8 She then says there was abuse whilst she was there  
9 and she talks about that from paragraph 39. There was  
10 force feeding. She was assaulted by staff. She was put  
11 into a punishment room, sometimes for a week at a time.  
12 She was assaulted by staff for wetting the bed and put  
13 into a punishment room or given chores to do, like  
14 scrubbing the floor.

15 She saw other girls having their faces rubbed in  
16 wet, dirty sheets and there is other abuse -- that 'Liz'  
17 says she's not ready to talk about -- that happened  
18 there. It was a place she says she felt sad and lonely  
19 there all the time.

20 She told her social worker about what was happening  
21 at Good Shepherd, including the punishment room, and he  
22 said that she couldn't go back to her family, but  
23 I think in between these times, between running away and  
24 the Good Shepherd not wanting to take her back, she  
25 ended up going to Calder House, which she says at that

1 time was a remand home.

2 She thinks she was at the Good Shepherd the first  
3 time for least eight months and then she was at  
4 Calder House -- she talks about that between  
5 paragraphs 48 and 68 -- twice in between her three times  
6 at the Good Shepherd. First for a week and then the  
7 second time for about nine months. She would have been  
8 14.

9 She talks about abuse at Calder House from  
10 paragraph 65 onwards and she says that she was shouted  
11 at there. There was emotional abuse from staff. She  
12 was made to scrub the floor of a sport barn with  
13 a toothbrush after running away and she was made to  
14 stand for hours and if you moved she was hit with  
15 a cane. She was put into a cell like a prison cell and  
16 she was in there a few times.

17 Again, she says she's not sure if she told her  
18 social worker, Duncan Gray, about having to scrub the  
19 barn floor, but he definitely knew she wasn't happy and  
20 wanted to go home, so this second time she was in  
21 Calder House she didn't go to a Children's Panel, but  
22 she was told that she would be leaving to go somewhere  
23 else and that it would be Dr Guthrie's School for Girls.  
24 She'd never heard of it before.

25 Two social workers then arrived in a car and took

1 her to Dr Guthrie's and she didn't know who these social  
2 workers were and she was about 14 at the time.

3 She then talks about Dr Guthrie's from paragraph 70  
4 on to paragraph 89 and I think the records that we have,  
5 my Lady, show that 'Liz' was there in 1977, so whilst  
6 she was 14/15 years old, because her birthday is in the  
7 earlier part of the year.

8 She talks about Dr Guthrie's then from paragraph 70  
9 and says:

10 'Dr Guthrie's was in Gilmerton Road in Edinburgh.  
11 It was split into two. Dr Guthrie's School for Boys was  
12 next door. I was never in the boys part of the building  
13 and never really had any interaction with them. There  
14 were about 30 girls altogether.

15 It was an old building on three floors. The  
16 headmaster's room was just inside the front door. The  
17 classrooms were on the ground level round to the right.  
18 On left, was cell number one. There was a sewing room  
19 at the top of the stairs and that was where cell number  
20 two was. The bedrooms were on the second floor.

21 SNR [REDACTED] name may have been Mr MTA [REDACTED], but  
22 I am not sure. There was another member of staff that  
23 I recall but I can't remember his name. He showed me  
24 around on my first day. There was a female teacher and  
25 she was foreign and was very strict. Her name may have

1           been Mrs Guthrie.

2           I was in a bedroom with two other girls, they were  
3 both about 15 or 16.'

4           She names one of the girls and says she can't  
5 remember the name of the other girl:

6           'My room was tiny and the three beds were around the  
7 walls. Some of the other rooms were single rooms.'

8           'Liz' then talks about the routine at Dr Guthrie's  
9 from paragraph 74:

10          'When we arrived we met a man and he showed me  
11 around the classrooms and the building. Usually in the  
12 morning the staff would wake us up and we were left to  
13 get ourselves ready to go for breakfast. The food must  
14 have been okay and I don't remember there being any  
15 incidents where girls didn't eat their food. We had  
16 baths but I am not sure what the routine was. Two  
17 female teachers would occasionally come into the  
18 bathroom and check up on us. There was a games room but  
19 I am not sure what was all there. In the time that  
20 I was at Dr Guthrie's, I don't ever recall going on any  
21 trips or day excursions.

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

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

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

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

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

21 If you did something wrong you were sent to  
22 Mr MTA, SNR. If you had been fighting or  
23 something like that, you would be put into one of the  
24 two cells. I was only in a cell once. Anyone that was  
25 put in a cell had to strip down to their pants and vest.

1           The cells were bare rooms but they weren't as prison  
2           like as the rooms they had in Calder House. The door  
3           was sturdy with big hinges but there weren't any hatches  
4           for things to be passed in. If staff wanted to speak,  
5           they had to open the door.'

6           'Liz' then talks about abuse at Dr Guthrie's from  
7           paragraph 82:

8           'I would have been 15, nearly 16, when there was  
9           an incident in the bedroom and I was assaulted by the  
10          two girls who shared the bedroom with me. I didn't  
11          really have very much to do with the girls up until then  
12          because I kept myself to myself. When it started  
13          I tried to leave the bedroom but there was someone on  
14          the other side holding the door from the outside. The  
15          girls grabbed me and threw me on the bed. One of them  
16          lay on top of me holding my arms. The other forced  
17          a Johnson's talcum powder container up inside my vagina.  
18          This lasted about half an hour and they were talking  
19          dirty when they were doing this. I was screaming from  
20          the pain and I was crying. I begged them to stop but  
21          they were both laughing at me. I am not sure what made  
22          them stop.

23          It was incredibly painful and afterwards I was  
24          bleeding. When they stopped I went back to the door and  
25          it was still being held shut. I pulled and pulled and

1 managed to open it and the male member of staff, whose  
2 name I can't remember, was standing there. I told him  
3 what the girls had done to me but he just said I was  
4 lying. He said that because I was lying I was getting  
5 put in a cell. I demanded to see SNR [REDACTED] but he  
6 refused to let me. He took me to the cell and told me  
7 to strip. He watched as I got stripped down to my vest  
8 and pants. He took my clothes from me then shut and  
9 locked the door.

10 There is no doubt in my mind that this man  
11 definitely knew what was going on in that room and he  
12 was stopping me from leaving by holding the handle.  
13 I needed medical attention after the girls assaulted me.  
14 I went to the man who was holding the door shut when  
15 I was being assaulted and told him I was injured and  
16 bleeding from my private area and needed sanitary  
17 towels. He told me that if I wanted any products I had  
18 to do some chores to earn them. I had to use toilet  
19 paper. After that, I was frightened to ever be alone  
20 with him and I always tried to make sure someone else  
21 was with me when I was near him.

22 I didn't get any food when I was in the cell on the  
23 first day, but I was given food the next day. No one  
24 came to check up on me at any time to make sure I was  
25 okay. I was in the cell for two days.

1           After I got out the cell, I had to go back and  
2           continue sharing the bedroom with these two girls. One  
3           of the girls left about a month after this incident.  
4           All the other girls were making fun of me about the  
5           talcum powder incident. They made up a name for me that  
6           had something to do with talcum powder. This really  
7           upset me and after that I stayed away from all the other  
8           girls and hardly ever came out of my bedroom and just  
9           stayed in my bed.

10           In my time at Dr Guthrie's, I saw other girls being  
11           put in the cells. They were sometimes in there for  
12           days.

13           When I was taken out the cell, I asked and was taken  
14           to see SNR [REDACTED], Mr MTA [REDACTED]. I told him what the  
15           girls had done to me in the room and he just told me  
16           I was a liar. He then told me that my father had fallen  
17           into a fire and that he was seriously ill. I asked if  
18           I could go home to see him. He told me that I would be  
19           lucky if I got out of care at 18, never mind 16.

20           It must have been when I was approaching 16 in 1978  
21           when I was told that my dad had come home drunk and had  
22           fallen into the fire within our house and had sustained  
23           burn injuries. He was basically sent home to die.

24           Mr MTA [REDACTED] refused to let me out. I eventually contacted  
25           Duncan Gray and within the hour he arranged for me to



1 leave Dr Guthrie's and spend time at home with my dad  
2 before he died. They gave me two weeks' leave but  
3 I never went back.'

4 My Lady, we do have a record from Dr Guthrie's  
5 showing that she went home on [REDACTED] 1978 to help  
6 her mother and visit her sick father and he did indeed  
7 die in 1978 in his early 40s.

8 She goes on then to say in paragraph 90:

9 'I got home to see my dad before he died. He died  
10 only a few days after I got home. I met my first  
11 husband within a few months and married him quickly so  
12 they couldn't put me back in care. I was still 16 and  
13 I had my first child at 17. My husband was about nine  
14 years older than me and he was violent and nearly killed  
15 me. He ended up in the jail. A year later, he got out  
16 of jail and I took him back. I had another child to him  
17 but the marriage didn't last.'

18 She then goes on to continue to talk about her life  
19 after being in care in the paragraphs following from 91  
20 and she says that her social worker, Duncan Gray,  
21 continued to visit her after she left care. And he knew  
22 that she wanted to be a support worker for children who  
23 were in care and he helped her get a place at college to  
24 do a certified carers course, but one time she turned up  
25 with black eyes that her violent partner had given her

1 and was asked if she wanted to take a few months out of  
2 the course and despite what was going on at home she  
3 completed and passed the National Certificate course and  
4 started the course for her Higher National Certificate,  
5 but because of things that were happening at home she  
6 didn't complete that course.

7 She later met another man, but again this too was  
8 a violent and abusive relationship and she stayed with  
9 him for quite a long time.

10 'Liz' talks about working at a couple of job centres  
11 and doing accounts [REDACTED] and 'Liz' says that  
12 when she was about 34 she met her husband, who she's  
13 still married to.

14 Around the year 2000 her health deteriorated and she  
15 was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, COPD and  
16 osteoporosis and she had to stop working. There have  
17 been times where she has developed pneumonia and  
18 developed delirium and was close to dying.

19 She talks about the impact of her time in care  
20 between paragraphs 94 and 101 and she says that it was  
21 when she was at the Good Shepherd the third time that  
22 she started trying to kill herself. She would have been  
23 14. She goes on to say that she's tried to take her own  
24 life on a number of occasions. That continued into her  
25 adult life and this all stems back to her unhappy time

1 in care.

2 At paragraph 95 'Liz' says that if she had been  
3 given a better education she thinks she would have  
4 achieved more and probably would have worked with the  
5 social work department, especially with children who  
6 were in care. She has found it hard to trust people  
7 because of her time in care and when she went home at 16  
8 she felt very strange. Her two sisters were very close  
9 to one another and did everything together and she  
10 didn't feel like part of the family.

11 She turned to alcohol more or less as soon as she  
12 came out of care and she thinks that was probably to  
13 block out her bad memories, in that she regularly thinks  
14 about her time in care.

15 'Liz' talks about treatment and support between  
16 paragraphs 102 and 105 and she says that she has  
17 received some counselling and because of her delirium  
18 she was having hallucinations for a while. She started  
19 getting help for her mental health at about 18 and she's  
20 been in hospital on a number of occasions.

21 She's on various medications for depression,  
22 anti-psychotic medication and for anxiety. She's been  
23 diagnosed with PTSD and she has been told that that's  
24 a result of her time in care.

25 She has been in touch with Future Pathways and

1           they've referred her to a PTSD clinic in Glasgow.

2           In relation to reporting abuse, 'Liz' says that  
3 she's never reported anything that happened to her to  
4 the police and that she wouldn't feel comfortable  
5 telling them about her time in care if she wasn't sure  
6 when she was there and she might do that after she had  
7 seen her social work records.

8           'Liz' says her husband knows about everything that  
9 happened to her when she was in care and her own  
10 children know she was in care but they don't know  
11 anything about how she was treated.

12           She talks about Future Pathways currently trying to  
13 help her get her records through Birth-Link.

14           In relation to lessons to be learned, 'Liz' says  
15 between paragraphs 109 and 111 that she feels she should  
16 have been looked after better in the places she was in  
17 care.

18           She says at 109:

19           'There should have been more love, affection and  
20 compassion.'

21           She goes on to say:

22           'There should have been someone sitting down with me  
23 after I had run away to ask me why I was running away.'

24           'Liz' then talks about more checks should be done to  
25 make sure that staff are qualified and capable of

1 working with children and she hopes that by coming  
2 forward it will be shown that she was telling the truth  
3 and that abuse did go on in these places where she was  
4 in care and it will give her some closure.

5 She also mentioned at paragraph 112 that her social  
6 worker, Duncan Gray, was brilliant with her and was the  
7 only one who regularly visited her and he even came to  
8 some of the homes and took her to church with his wife  
9 and kids.

10 'Liz' says she's joined a Dr Guthrie's survivor  
11 group on the internet and that someone with a particular  
12 name joined at one stage and she was afraid that this  
13 may have been one of the girls who abused her, so she  
14 left the group.

15 'Liz' says at paragraph 114 that she contacted the  
16 Inquiry after she read the story about the two young  
17 girls who had been in care and who jumped off the  
18 Erskine bridge. At that time she says Good Shepherd  
19 were denying they had a punishment room and this made  
20 her want to come forward to confirm they did.

21 She has made the usual declaration at paragraph 115  
22 and it's signed and dated 9 July 2021.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

24 MS FORBES: My Lady, Mr Sheldon will now do a read-in.

25 LADY SMITH: When you are ready, Mr Sheldon.

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'Duncan' (read)

MR SHELDON: My Lady, this is the statement of 'Duncan', who has given us a statement about his older brother, who was at Dr Guthrie's Boys in the late 1960s. The statement reference is WIT-1-000001113.

'Duncan' was born in 1957. At page 1 of the statement he gives some details about his young life and about his older brother and his other siblings.

He says in paragraph 6, page 2, that in 1972 or 1973:

'My father went to the Children's Panel to see what was happening with my brother.'

Then his brother was away.

I think 'Duncan' may be mistaken about dates, my Lady, because he consistently says that the period in care was later than the records suggest that he was, but I'll come back to that. There is another reference to that later.

'Duncan' says he had a good relationship with his brother. He's not sure why his brother was taken into care, but thinks it may have been because he was running away, and not sure why his brother was running away.

At paragraph 7 'Duncan' says:

'My brother didn't tell me anything about the routine at Dr Guthrie's back then. He told me they

1       slept in dormitories and that there were other people  
2       like him inside, bad boys. My brother wore a uniform  
3       that was a grey jumper and trousers. Everything was  
4       black and grey back in those days. All the boys wore the  
5       same. I don't think they had any toys.'

6               'Duncan' says he doesn't know if his brother went to  
7       church during his time at Dr Guthrie's.

8               He says:

9               'My brother ran away from a home visit to try to get  
10       away from the place, he didn't get off the bus at  
11       Dr Guthrie's and didn't turn up. I found out after  
12       that, that my brother ran away to my mother's. That was  
13       the second time I remember him running away. He ran  
14       away two or three times that I'm aware of. He didn't  
15       like going back there. I think he was more frightened  
16       to go back than anything. The police collected him from  
17       my mother's and took him back. He was punished for  
18       running away, but I don't know what happened. My  
19       brother wasn't allowed home for a while and me and my  
20       father went to see him more frequently.

21               I went to Dr Guthrie's about once a month with my  
22       dad. It was always just me and my siblings didn't go.  
23       The visit was always on a Sunday afternoon. Dad bought  
24       me a little suit with short trousers and a jacket.  
25       I had a pair of shoes that we got from the priest up the

1 High Street once a year and a pair of socks. The only  
2 time I got to wear the suit was when we went up to  
3 Dr Guthrie's to be all smart when we went there. After  
4 the visit, the suit was hung up in the wardrobe until  
5 the next time.

6 The first time I visited I was scared. My father  
7 said that if I didn't behave myself then I would end up  
8 in a place like Dr Guthrie's. Me and my dad went on the  
9 bus. It was a nice bus journey.'

10 He notes that a famous footballer lived on the bus  
11 route to get there.

12 Paragraph 12:

13 'I didn't see much of the place but it looked big to  
14 me. Dr Guthrie's was a nice old building in nice big  
15 grounds. There was a football pitch. You didn't see  
16 any activities or children playing. You didn't see  
17 a lot of children, but you saw a lot of adults going  
18 about.'

19 He thinks they were probably parents visiting:

20 'I don't know how many children were in  
21 Dr Guthrie's.

22 Dad and I went into an annexe. There was a big  
23 assembly hall with a lot of tables and we sat there.  
24 The annex was separate from the main building. A male  
25 teacher or a guard showed you in. I can't remember



1        seeing any females. There were six or seven boys in the  
2        assembly hall having a visit.

3                The staff got my brother and brought him in and then  
4        took him away after the visit. Staff walked around and  
5        kept an eye on everything. When I first started going,  
6        I was excited to see my brother and time flew. On the  
7        first visit, my brother looked scraggy. He's always  
8        looked scraggy to me. My brother didn't look happy and  
9        wasn't his normal self. At home he was bubbly and  
10       always up to his little tricks. At Dr Guthrie's he was  
11       downbeat.

12               I couldn't really speak freely to my brother because  
13       my dad was there limiting what we were saying. My  
14       father talked more to my brother. My brother said he  
15       hated it at Dr Guthrie's. He didn't say why. The visit  
16       was always brief by the time you got in, sat down and my  
17       brother came through. You didn't get a cup of anything  
18       to drink. My father said I wasn't allowed to take any  
19       toy cars or anything in for my brother and he didn't  
20       bring anything in for him either.

21               My brother got home for a visit now and again after  
22       he'd been in Dr Guthrie's for about a year. He'd go to  
23       my mother's for a weekend and my father's for a weekend.  
24       They split it up for some reason. He came home on  
25       Friday and went back on Sunday night. Dr Guthrie's put

1 him on a bus and my father collected him at the bus  
2 stop. My father put him on a bus after his home visit  
3 and used the neighbour's phone to phone Dr Guthrie's to  
4 make sure that my brother arrived back.

5 My father told us when my brother was coming home.  
6 Sometimes I felt excited to see my brother. After  
7 a long time, I thought he's coming home and that was it.  
8 When he came home he had anger issues and he took it out  
9 on me a lot. I couldn't figure out why until years  
10 later when I found out about Dr Guthrie's. Me and my  
11 father carried on visiting my brother at Dr Guthrie's  
12 until he got freed.'

13 Under the heading of 'Abuse' 'Duncan' says:

14 'At the time my brother told me he was getting  
15 picked on a lot and getting into a lot of fights and  
16 scrapes with other boys. He told me that the teachers  
17 were horrible to him and he was having disagreements  
18 with the teachers or wardens. My father would come home  
19 and say that my brother was in trouble again and he'd  
20 have to go and see him at the weekend. Dad asked if  
21 I was coming or not and said to get my suit ready. Dad  
22 got the phone calls to our neighbour's house. There was  
23 only one phone in the street in those days.

24 My brother said he tried to complain to someone but  
25 no one would listen to him. He reported a member of

1 staff to the head but he was brushed off. He was given  
2 a beating by another member of staff for doing that. We  
3 were told my brother was coming home to stay the next  
4 week and that was him finished with Dr Guthrie's. His  
5 time was up and he'd come of an age. My brother was 14  
6 or 15 years old when he came out of Dr Guthrie's. My  
7 father went to collect him. My brother was happy to be  
8 home, but he was straight in and straight out. He had  
9 a bag of clothes with him and nothing different to what  
10 everyone else had.'

11 'Duncan' then talks about life after his brother  
12 being in care and says:

13 'My brother went to [a particular school in the  
14 north of Edinburgh] and was a few years above me. I was  
15 just starting at [the same school]. He had a year at  
16 school and after that he started working. He was more  
17 relaxed and more himself. He wasn't picking on me but  
18 was out and about doing his own thing. I hardly saw  
19 him. At that age, he was a modern day Robin Hood who  
20 stole from the rich and gave to us. He started working  
21 and then when he was 16 or 17 he was put into a borstal  
22 for stealing. He was in for about a year but I didn't  
23 go to see him. He left home after that and did his own  
24 thing.

25 After my brother left home, I never saw him for

1           about 20 years although we kept in touch. Five years  
2           ago, he was looking for somewhere to stay after he came  
3           out of prison and I asked him to come and stay with me.  
4           I said my wife and I would take care of him. He helped  
5           me with the house. There was a lot of work to be done  
6           on it. Then he got the house in front of ours and he's  
7           now our neighbour.

8           When my brother got out of Dr Guthrie's, I was given  
9           freedom as well. I was allowed to do my own thing  
10          instead of being stuck in the house. I left school when  
11          I was 14 and my dad got me a job as a commis chef in the  
12          hotel where he worked, I didn't like it. I did it for  
13          a couple of years but it wasn't me. I got a job in  
14          England working on lifts and went to engineering  
15          training. I've worked all over the world.

16          About eight or ten years ago, my sister told me  
17          everything about my brother. She knew the Inquiry was  
18          coming up. She told me my brother was abused by members  
19          of staff and he went through beatings at Dr Guthrie's.  
20          She said that our mother wanting to take him was  
21          confusing him. She said that was probably why he was  
22          the way he was. In my mind, that made sense.

23          My sister knew about my brother because she was in  
24          the front line and was being the mother. She had to  
25          know everything that was going on and she had a close

1 relationship with my brother. I don't know if she knew  
2 about the abuse at the time that he was in Dr Guthrie's  
3 or later.

4 I've asked my brother but he didn't tell me  
5 everything. We were sitting one night and I asked if he  
6 got abused, touched up and things. I asked if that was  
7 why he got angry with me. He didn't go into the detail  
8 but told me that some staff members came in at night and  
9 tried to touch him up. He didn't say who. He said he  
10 got into fights quite often with guys and he got  
11 punished by staff for no reason. He didn't say how he  
12 was punished. He said he hated Dr Guthrie's and so he  
13 ran away.

14 I didn't want to go too much into personal details  
15 and push it, because I could see he was upset and it was  
16 bothering him. My brother has his memories to live with  
17 and I don't want them in my memories. He had a tear in  
18 his eye. I guess he regretted running away. When he  
19 talks about things it takes him back to a place in his  
20 life where he doesn't want to be. He explained my  
21 mother had confused him with wanting to take him away  
22 from me.

23 The day my brother went to that place, my life  
24 changed for the worse. My sister was given charge of  
25 the house and I was imprisoned in a sense, she was very

1 strict. I had to leave for school and come straight  
2 home. I wasn't allowed to go out after I was home.  
3 I could see my friends outside in the gardens playing.  
4 My father told her not to let me do anything that my  
5 brother had done. Another brother was away playing, but  
6 because I was youngest brother I was told to stay in or  
7 I'd end up like my older brother.

8         There has been an impact on me. I have working  
9 associates and my brother but I don't have any friends.  
10 I find it hard to make friends and get close to people,  
11 that's because I was isolated. I like to be on my own  
12 because I was on my own most of the time as a child.

13         I spoke to my sister later about that, but she said  
14 she only did what she was ordered to do by my father.  
15 My father was worried and he didn't want the same thing  
16 to happen to me. There was gossip and people said my  
17 father had a son in a home. My father wouldn't want  
18 people saying his other son was just as bad.

19         My brother's time in Dr Guthrie's had an impact on  
20 him and he totally changed in there. He was a totally  
21 different guy. I didn't know why back then, but now  
22 I have an idea, because I know what he went through. He  
23 took out his anger and pent-up frustration on me,  
24 because I was the younger brother. He beat me up and  
25 I tried to keep out of the way. In the end, I was being

1           forced to go and see him against my will.

2           He says:

3           'When my brother came home on a visit he was out of  
4           the house. At the time I thought it was part of growing  
5           up and he wanted his freedom. He lost interest in me as  
6           a brother. He was more interested in getting out and  
7           seeing other people. I wasn't concerned because I was  
8           a young boy and I had my own life.

9           I think my brother used to go and steal things. He  
10          learned that from Dr Guthrie's because he wasn't like  
11          that before. His attitude changed and he became more  
12          dishonest. Sometimes he'd come back with a bicycle.  
13          For me it was great, because I had a bicycle when he was  
14          away. It was a fun time for me, but it was the wrong  
15          thing to do. If my father sent my brother to the shop  
16          for onions then he'd steal them from someone's garden  
17          and keep the money for himself. If he was in a good  
18          mood then he would share half a toffee with me.

19          My brother has had a problem with people in  
20          authority ever since he was in Dr Guthrie's. He's  
21          argumentative. He'll pick an argument over anything and  
22          won't let go.

23          Since he came to stay with me he has changed. He's  
24          reverted back to the old brother I knew and he is more  
25          mellow. We're close now. I think that's because

1 I've opened my arms to him and helped him out. Since  
2 I asked him about his experiences at Dr Guthrie's, he's  
3 come more to terms with it. I hope so anyway. There  
4 was an impact on his relationship with my sisters and he  
5 doesn't get on with them to this day. Dr Guthrie's  
6 turned my brother into something he wasn't. It changed  
7 him. He was very confused and angry.'

8 Under the heading 'Lessons to be learned', 'Duncan'  
9 says:

10 'I don't think there were enough checks in the past.  
11 Nowadays society has got round to fixing these things  
12 and has learned from the past. For example, if I have  
13 to go into schools and hospitals for work, then I have  
14 to have a certificate with me that shows I have no  
15 convictions and I haven't been in trouble with the  
16 police. Most people ask for those.

17 Children should be listened to and should be  
18 listened to more. They should be allowed to speak for  
19 themselves and should be believed. I hope the mistakes  
20 of the past can be rectified. Prevention is better than  
21 cure.'

22 'Duncan' has made the usual standard declaration and  
23 signed his statement, my Lady.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

25 MR SHELDON: Ms Forbes will do another read in.



1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 'Patricia' (read)

3 MS FORBES: My Lady, the next statement is from an applicant  
4 who is anonymous and is known as 'Patricia'.

5 The reference for 'Patricia's' statement is  
6 WIT.001.002.5045.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 MS FORBES: My Lady, 'Patricia' says she was born in 1965  
9 and talks about her life before going into care between  
10 paragraphs 2 and 8. She lived with her parents in  
11 Glasgow and she tells us that she had three sisters and  
12 a brother, she also had a twin brother, who was adopted  
13 and she never met him. She was only told about him as  
14 an adult.

15 'Patricia' says that they were a Roman Catholic  
16 family and her brother had an Irish baptism in 1971 when  
17 he was a baby, she was six or seven years old at the  
18 time, but during the day of the baptism her parents were  
19 supposed to dance together but her mother refused to  
20 dance with her father and danced with another man.

21 'Patricia' says at paragraph 4 that her dad put  
22 a hatchet over her mum's head while the whole family  
23 were sitting there and the place was covered in blood.

24 Her dad was taken to police cells but she says from  
25 her account he seemed to get away with it and came home

1 a few days later, but her mum never came back and at  
2 that time 'Patricia' and her siblings were told that  
3 their mum was dead.

4 Her dad went back to work and her older sister and  
5 her were left to look after the three younger children  
6 in nappies. Her sister was 11 years old at that time  
7 and she was six or seven and they would take turns  
8 caring for them.

9 'Patricia' says the Glasgow Corporation became  
10 involved, somebody smashed the windows of their house  
11 and they left the house and there was a time when they  
12 went to Ireland because her dad was on the run from the  
13 Corporation. But then she remembers being in Drumchapel  
14 and social workers visiting them.

15 'Patricia' says she was coming home from school  
16 every day and sorting everything out, making the tea for  
17 her dad, that her younger siblings were calling her  
18 'mum' and then she says that her younger sister had been  
19 stolen by her mum from school while the rest of them  
20 were at the dentist one day and that's when she says her  
21 mum obviously wasn't dead.

22 Her older sister ran away because her dad hit her  
23 with a chip pan and she ran away and got married.

24 The first time 'Patricia' says they were taken into  
25 care when her father got lifted for shoplifting and they

1 were sent to a children's home in Glasgow. She talks  
2 about that between paragraphs 10 and 28. Secondary Institutions - to

3 Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
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19 She talks about life back at home from paragraph 29  
20 onwards. She says that her dad was not working by this  
21 time and the comments she makes is that the only thing  
22 her dad was doing was getting her and her sister ready  
23 for sex and that they were being used as child  
24 prostitutes.

25 She thinks she was going into first year so was

1           about 11 or 12 at the time and her sister was about  
2           nine. She says that her younger brother, who was about  
3           five years old, was also being abused too.

4           'Patricia' says she would try to make sure the kids  
5           were in bed so it was her being abused and not them.  
6           She names two of the men involved in that and she says  
7           there was also a policeman involved but she doesn't  
8           remember his name but could recognise his face.

9           They paid her dad to abuse them and her dad was also  
10          abusing them. She says there was a 23-year-old man, and  
11          she names him, who used to say that he was her boyfriend  
12          and at the time 'Patricia' thought he was being nice to  
13          her, but can see now he was grooming her and using her  
14          for sex and that he knew what he was doing was wrong,  
15          because when she saw him in a place where he worked and  
16          went and hugged him, he got scared and said that she  
17          would get him into trouble because she was just a kid  
18          and not to hug him in front of people.

19          'Patricia' says social workers were visiting all the  
20          time but were not noticing what was going on. She told  
21          a friend of hers and he got people together and started  
22          smashing the windows of their house. She says that in  
23          the middle of the night she took her younger sister and  
24          brother and sneaked out the house and sat outside the  
25          Social Work Department until the social worker turned up

1 in the morning.

2 She then says she told the social workers what was  
3 happening and she indicated that the three of them were  
4 being sexually abused by their dad and his cronies.

5 'Patricia' says that the senior social worker wanted to  
6 send them back home, but that another social worker had  
7 said no. They were taken to a clinic for a check-up.  
8 They all had their hair cut and she says that her hair  
9 at that time was down to her waist and full of lice, so  
10 they cut it all off and they were put into a children's  
11 home in Glasgow.

12 She talks about that from paragraph 37. Secondary Institutions - t

13 Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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22 She then says that they appeared before  
23 a Children's Panel after about three months in the home  
24 and it was decided they should go back home to her dad.  
25 'Patricia' says that there are notes that were written

1 by the senior social worker that say that she felt sorry  
2 for her dad and she comments that this was even after  
3 she had told her about the sexual abuse at home. So the  
4 three of them were put back to stay with their dad and  
5 the same abuse was going on as before, but after about  
6 two weeks she knew she had to get them out of there and  
7 again took her siblings to the shops and told them to  
8 start stealing things and she did the same and they got  
9 caught and the social work got involved, so they were  
10 put back into the children's home again.

11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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She was then sent to Dr Guthrie's School in  
15 Edinburgh after about nine weeks of being in the  
16 assessment centre. 'Patricia' talks about Dr Guthrie's  
17 from paragraph 96 onwards and she says:

18

'I was 13 when I went to Dr Guthrie's, which was  
19 a school for girls. I turned up there with my social  
20 worker.'

21

She names her. She says:

22

'SNR [REDACTED], Mr MTA [REDACTED], strip searched me when  
23 I first turned up. My social worker wasn't there during  
24 the strip search. Nobody else was in the room.

25

I was made to strip and squat. He poked around

1 a bit. He poked his finger in my back passage. He then  
2 told me to stand up and looked under my breasts. But  
3 I didn't have any breasts. He basically had a feel.  
4 I was told to put my clothes on, then I was taken up to  
5 the unit I was being placed in.'

6 She then says she saw another girl who had been  
7 moved there in her unit that she had seen before:

8 'The staff knew I was a staff beater and were going  
9 to start on me.'

10 Then she says that this girl butted in and stopped  
11 them doing it again so they backed off, but then this  
12 girl started bullying her herself.

13 At paragraph 100, 'Patricia' says:

14 'There was a big swimming pool at Dr Guthrie's that  
15 we were allowed to use.

16 I was given plastic sandals. There were two kinds  
17 of sandals. There was a pair you could get with straps  
18 across them and ones that were made up of squares.  
19 I took the ones with squares because I had in my mind  
20 that I was going to run away and I needed ones that  
21 would stay on my feet.

22 We had to wear a uniform, so I was sent to the  
23 sewing room to make my own uniform. It was a blue  
24 skirt, blue jumper and blue cardigan.'

25 'Patricia' then talks about abuse at Dr Guthrie's



1 from paragraph 103 and she says that the girl that she  
2 named became the bully and she bullied her constantly,  
3 she goes on say:

4 'My social worker had given me sweets and the girl  
5 took them off me. She took my Kermit the Frog nightgown  
6 case, which Mrs Johnston had given me. It was the only  
7 thing I had that was my own. I smashed the window and  
8 I ran away.

9 The school was connected to the police, which  
10 I didn't know. I only got about a mile down the road  
11 and the police were on my tail. I was running like the  
12 clappers but the police caught me and brought me back.  
13 When I got back, I was strip searched by Mr MTA again.

14 I ran away about twice a week during the five months  
15 I was there. Every time you ran away and were brought  
16 back by the police you were strip searched by Mr MTA .  
17 I never learned my lesson and just kept running away.  
18 He would do the same thing to me every time I was  
19 brought back. It was constant abuse. He would have  
20 a feel of me and I just never knew where or in which  
21 hole his fingers were going to go. He was an old  
22 parasite. He looked old to me. I don't know if he is  
23 still alive.

24 When you got back up to your unit after being  
25 brought back the other kids would laugh and ask, "What

1 hole did he play pokey with today?" Everybody knew what  
2 they were getting from him. He did this to other  
3 children too. There was no secret about it.'

4 There is a section then, my Lady, in her statement  
5 where she talks about the sweat room, paragraph 107.  
6 She mentions the girl again and says that she just kept  
7 pushing her luck:

8 'I lost it completely and threw her over the balcony  
9 and into the swimming pool. I don't know how I had the  
10 strength, but I think you find it when you are angry.  
11 I got put into what they called the sweat room, which  
12 was like a padded cell.

13 Another member of staff, whose name I can't  
14 remember, dragged me into the sweat room. She stripped  
15 me down to my pants and vest. There was another girl in  
16 there too. We had blankets. They would push our dinner  
17 into the room and not let us out. We didn't have  
18 anything to poo or pee in. We had to do it on the  
19 floor. We were in there for a week.

20 When I eventually got out, Mr MTA told me to clean  
21 the cell. I asked him for things to clean it with and  
22 he told me to clean it with my hands. I had to pick the  
23 shit up with my hands. He put my face in the piss.  
24 I told him, "You'll not break me", but, to be honest,  
25 I think he did break me.

1           After I had cleaned the cell, he threw me into the  
2 shower to get washed. He told me to bend over and he  
3 had a play with me. He put his two fat fingers in both  
4 my front and back passage. He stood behind me and put  
5 his arm around my waist as if he was having sex with me  
6 while he was doing it. Then he said, "Now there's  
7 a clean lassie, now get to your unit". I had to walk  
8 naked from the showers, past other groups, past the  
9 front door, and up to my unit. I hope he is dead.

10           There was nobody I could tell about what he was  
11 doing. They all knew.

12           I went to a Children's Panel in Glasgow after five  
13 months of being in Dr Guthrie's. My social worker took  
14 me through to Glasgow for it. That was when I found out  
15 that I was being fostered.

16           My dad was at the Children's Panel because he had to  
17 sign the papers.'

18           She then says that the couple who were fostering  
19 were also there. Her father indicated that he wouldn't  
20 sign unless he got a guarantee that she went to  
21 a Catholic school and he got that guarantee and then  
22 signed the papers and she was fostered out.

23           Paragraph 114:

24           'The Panel told me that I owed Dr Guthrie's £30,000  
25 in damages for smashing windows while I was there.

1 Mr MTA had given the Social Work Department a bill for  
2 that amount for the windows. I said "Stick it up your  
3 arse" and I walked out.'

4 She then talks about being in foster care with  
5 a couple from paragraph 115 and says she was 14 when she  
6 moved in with them. At that time she was told to change  
7 her name which she did, change her surname.

8 Then she tells us about that and at first she  
9 thought that the house was gorgeous and she had  
10 something like a princess room. It was the first proper  
11 bedroom she'd ever had.

12 She talks about abuse though whilst in foster care  
13 from paragraph 118 and she says that the foster father  
14 used to ask her to come and sit on his lap and would  
15 want to come into the bathroom and wash her hair when  
16 she was having a bath and started touching her on the  
17 body in places he shouldn't have been and started to  
18 kiss her.

19 He also started putting her hand down his trousers  
20 and the way she says it, to play with his thing. He  
21 would come into bed beside her and start cuddling her  
22 and kissing her and kissing her body and put his fingers  
23 inside her.

24 She told her foster mother what was happening but  
25 she said she was making it up and so she kept running

1 away but the police would always bring her back. It  
2 just kept on going so she started to reject her foster  
3 father and become destructive. She would tell him to  
4 stop touching her and that she didn't want to touch him.  
5 And he threatened her that he was going to tell her real  
6 dad and the people who had sexually abused her where she  
7 lived and he didn't stop so she kept running away.

8 'Patricia' says it was about a year before she was  
9 eventually put into care in Cardross Assessment Centre  
10 and she was 15 when she went there and she was there for  
11 quite a while. This is at paragraphs 126 to 128. She  
12 did run away whilst she was there and said she was going  
13 to steal her foster father's car. She knew where he  
14 left his keys, but something made him go out that night  
15 and she was found and taken back to Cardross.

16 Again, she was living back with the foster parents  
17 and she says at paragraph 130 she put all her anger and  
18 everything she had into her education and did well at  
19 school. She felt that nobody was going to believe her  
20 when she told them about the abuse and she was never  
21 going to get away from them and saw no way out.

22 'Patricia' says she did tell the senior social  
23 worker about the sexual abuse that was happening at home  
24 at the hands of her dad and other men but she still put  
25 her back to her dad after knowing that and that she also

1 told her what her foster father was doing to her and she  
2 said "Christians don't do that".

3 'Patricia' says she told her three or four times and  
4 was dismissed every time.

5 She then talks about her life after being in care  
6 from paragraph 134 and said that she went to Glasgow  
7 University and studied law and she got her own flat in  
8 Glasgow, but she couldn't get away from her foster  
9 father. He had a set of keys and would come in to her  
10 flat and get into bed beside her. She was 18 years old  
11 at that time and still couldn't get away from him.

12 She was still on Valium from when she first had been  
13 given that at the children's home and she says she  
14 wasn't enjoying her course at university and she applied  
15 to Edinburgh to do nursing.

16 She had read about Valium and what it could do and  
17 she wanted come off it before going to Edinburgh and she  
18 did that. She says that she had been reliant on Valium  
19 since she was 12 years old and that a doctor gave her  
20 a drug that off-balanced the Valium and helped her to  
21 get off of it.

22 She did nursing and then specialised in psychiatric  
23 nursing and says that her first relationship was  
24 an aggressive relationship with someone who had also  
25 been in care. He was abusive.

1 Her second relationship was also abusive and she had  
2 a son and she took to motherhood straightaway, but  
3 suffered from postnatal depression.

4 She says it was then that all her memories came  
5 back. Her third relationship with her current partner  
6 was not abusive and at the time of this statement they'd  
7 been together for 25 years and he's been a father to her  
8 son and then they also had a daughter together.

9 'Patricia' comments that she did find it difficult  
10 to take to her daughter when she had her and difficult  
11 to bond with her and she was very protective of both of  
12 her children.

13 She says that she has been in contact with her  
14 younger sister, who she is not happy with because she's  
15 not ready to tell her story and she talks about her  
16 younger brother ending up in foster care and then back  
17 with her dad and was on drugs and in Polmont by the time  
18 he was 17 and she said he suffered sexual abuse in  
19 Polmont from another inmate.

20 She then says that sadly her brother committed  
21 suicide when he was 41 years old.

22 In relation to impact, 'Patricia' talks about that  
23 from paragraph 148 and she says that she has an injury  
24 to her coccyx from -- she thinks it's from something  
25 that happened to her in the children's home and being

1 assaulted and landing on concrete slabs.

2 She comments she's had 89 broken bones in her body  
3 which haven't healed properly and she has arthritis.  
4 She has an aneurysm in her head which she thinks, she  
5 says is usually caused by an injury to the head and that  
6 relates again to her time in the children's home, where  
7 she was assaulted by a staff member.

8 She talks about being diagnosed with post-traumatic  
9 stress disorder and depression and not being able to  
10 leave her house for 20 years. She says she gets  
11 flashbacks and that this agoraphobia and depression has  
12 rubbed off on her son. She wasn't able to be  
13 affectionate with her children until they were older and  
14 they both said that she was too overprotective.

15 One of the comments 'Patricia' makes at  
16 paragraph 156 is:

17 'This life has made me the most miserable bitch  
18 I have ever known anyone to be. Inside I am crying  
19 every single day of my life. I am looking for answers  
20 but I don't think I am going to get any.

21 I smile when I am with my daughter. I smile with my  
22 mouth and I cry with my eyes. That is the only way  
23 I can explain my life.'

24 'Patricia' goes on to say that she didn't leave the  
25 house until last year and then she managed to go to the



1 Open Secret office in Stirling and she's had a lot of  
2 psychiatric treatment and cognitive behaviour therapy  
3 and she's currently having the eye movement  
4 desensitisation and reprocessing treatment, which has  
5 been quite effective.

6 She says she has had a lot of medical problems, been  
7 diagnosed with ADHD and depression, she has had heart  
8 attacks and strokes, she has been diagnosed with mytonic  
9 dystrophy, which curls up her bones and has to take  
10 a number of tablets every day for her various medical  
11 conditions.

12 She has managed to obtain some of her social work  
13 records, but there is a lot missing. She says that she  
14 has reported the men involved in her sexual abuse when  
15 she was younger and living with her dad to the police,  
16 but there are issues about whether her siblings are  
17 prepared to say what happened.

18 In relation to other information, 'Patricia'  
19 provides that from paragraph 168 and again some of that  
20 is about the time in children's homes and the people  
21 involved in her sexual abuse when she lived with her  
22 father.

23 In relation to final thoughts, 'Patricia' says at  
24 paragraph 173:

25 'I hope the Inquiry will make things better for

1 other children.'

2 She says:

3 'I hope that siblings are never pulled apart from  
4 each other.'

5 At paragraph 174:

6 'Every child should have things explained [I think  
7 it should be "to them"], no matter how old they are.'

8 She has then made the usual declaration and that is  
9 signed and dated 4 April 2019.

10 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes, was the evidence of this applicant  
11 covered in Foster Care, I recognise some of these --  
12 unless it's just very similar to somebody else.

13 MS FORBES: Actually I think it may have been, my Lady, and  
14 I'm not sure if --

15 LADY SMITH: If it was, if you could check and get the  
16 reference and we can link the two.

17 MS FORBES: I do have it here, my Lady. Yes, it was. It  
18 was previously read in during the Foster Care case study  
19 on 5 July 2022, Day 303. I have the transcript  
20 reference TRN-10-000000048.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 That was a read-in then as well.

23 I'll pause now for the mid-afternoon break, a short  
24 break, and then no doubt we've got space for some more  
25 reading in after that.

1 Thank you.

2 (3.08 pm)

3 (A short break)

4 (3.18 pm)

5 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

6 'Lee' (read)

7 MR SHELDON: My Lady, the next read-in is the statement of

8 'Lee'. His statement is WIT-1-000001053.

9 My Lady, 'Lee' was born in 1969 and grew up in the  
10 north of Edinburgh. He said that life at home was all  
11 right. The family was quite poor and he had a single  
12 mother, but apart from that it seems to have been  
13 a reasonably happy childhood.

14 However, he struggled at primary school and started  
15 skipping school. Eventually, he started to be referred  
16 to Children's Panels because of the truancy, and he  
17 would avoid the Panels simply by running away.

18 He says, paragraph 6, that he didn't have anybody  
19 there to represent him at any Panels that he did attend,  
20 just his mother and I think his teacher.

21 He says that nobody met him before the Panels to  
22 speak to him about what would happen and he just says he  
23 didn't really care about the Panels. Eventually,  
24 my Lady, when he was about 13-and-a-half, he was sent by  
25 a Panel to Howdenhall Assessment Centre and the records

1 would tend to bear out his estimate of how old he was at  
2 that time.

3 He says, and this is paragraph 9, boys tended to  
4 come and go quite a lot at Howdenhall, so there was  
5 quite a fast turnover. He says it was like a jail. He  
6 reports some cruel physical abuse at Howdenhall, but  
7 I'll leave the details of that for the section on these  
8 Edinburgh centres.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes.

10 MR SHELDON: Paragraph 27, page 8, he says:

11 'There were no care planning meetings when I was at  
12 Howdenhall. I wasn't involved in the decision to move  
13 me. I wanted to go home. I think there were meetings  
14 between my social worker and my mum, but I didn't know  
15 anything about that at the time. I was at Howdenhall  
16 for about six or seven months before being transferred  
17 to Dr Guthrie's. I was just told by Mr PAU [he's SNR  
18 SNR at Howdenhall at  
19 that time]. I wasn't given any reason. I think I was  
20 given about two days' notice. I didn't know anything  
21 about Dr Guthrie's or how long I was going there for.  
22 Mr PAU's wife was my key worker at Dr Guthrie's. She  
23 picked me up at Howdenhall and took me to Dr Guthrie's  
24 in her car.'

25 My Lady, the records that we have suggest that he

1           was admitted to Dr Guthrie's in ██████ 1984 and there for  
2           about six months to ██████ 1985. So this is right  
3           at the end of Dr Guthrie's period of operation, the  
4           boys' school closed in 1985.

5   LADY SMITH: Sorry, he was admitted which month in 1984?

6   MR SHELDON: ██████ 1984, my Lady, about ██████.

7   LADY SMITH: He was there right through to the closure in --

8   MR SHELDON: Almost to closure. I think closure was perhaps  
9           April that year, but it may well have been run down and  
10          the boys placed elsewhere.

11           Paragraph 28, page 8. He says he was about 14 when  
12          he went to Dr Guthrie's, around about then, my Lady. He  
13          may have been 15, but certainly of that order:

14           'It was a residential school. I got a bit of  
15          a shock when I arrived because of the size of it. It  
16          was an old building. There was a big, open yard and it  
17          had units all around it. That was where we had our  
18          classes. In the main building, there were offices and  
19          the kitchen downstairs. The bedrooms were upstairs.  
20          There were two massive dormitories on one side of the  
21          building and another two massive dormitories on the  
22          other side. I think there were about 20 boys in each  
23          dormitory and 80 boys altogether. The age range was  
24          about 12 to 15/16.

25           There was a girls' part of Dr Guthrie's in the

1 Gilmerton area. The girls would come to use the  
2 swimming pool one night every week, but we didn't have  
3 any contact with them. Dr Guthrie's was more open than  
4 Howdenhall had been. We had to go from class to class  
5 so we weren't locked in. We had more freedom. There  
6 were grounds around the school. There was a football  
7 pitch and an assault course for motorbikes.

8 We used to call SNR [REDACTED] of Dr Guthrie's  
9 GFC [REDACTED]. I can't remember his name. He retired when  
10 I was there and SNR [REDACTED]. I think SNR [REDACTED]  
11 SNR [REDACTED] name was Mr HSB [REDACTED]. He was quite old and he  
12 was all right. There were care workers and separate  
13 teachers at the school. I can remember key workers  
14 called GQC [REDACTED] and Mr GBD [REDACTED], Mrs [REDACTED] was my  
15 key worker and she was really nice. She wasn't involved  
16 with me very much. I saw her when she took me to  
17 Dr Guthrie's and then I think I only saw her once or  
18 twice after that.

19 She gave me a present of a pool cue when she  
20 retired. I had been at Dr Guthrie's for about a year  
21 when she left. I didn't get another key worker after  
22 Mrs [REDACTED] left.

23 I suppose, my Lady, it may be that the records we  
24 have aren't complete, but it's the best we can do.

25 LADY SMITH: Of course.

1 MR SHELDON: He talks about routine at Dr Guthrie's, he says  
2 he didn't bring any belongings with him when he went  
3 there:

4 'When I arrived at Dr Guthrie's, he says, I was  
5 shown around a little bit. I was shown which bedroom  
6 I would be in and where my bed was. Nobody explained  
7 the rules to me or helped me to settle in. There were  
8 two brothers that I knew from [his home area] and my bed  
9 was near their beds, so that was okay.

10 There were about 20 beds in each dormitory. There  
11 were three beds and units in a corner. We could keep  
12 our clothes in the units. There were nightshift workers  
13 on duty overnight. We were able to get out to use the  
14 bathroom if we needed the toilet. It was mad at night,  
15 because there were so many boys in each room. Boys  
16 would be fighting with each other and things like that.  
17 The staff would go daft at you if you were making  
18 a noise at night.

19 The staff would come in and turn the lights on in  
20 the morning. There was a boy in the bed next to mine  
21 who used to wet the bed. The staff would change his  
22 sheets for him in the morning. They didn't make  
23 an issue of him wetting the bed. I only knew about it  
24 because I was next to him. We would get ready for  
25 breakfast and go down for breakfast in the dining room.

1 After breakfast, we had to polish our shoes but we  
2 didn't do any other chores at Dr Guthrie's. Mr GBD  
3 would then take us for a fag in the smoking room, which  
4 was next to the room where we polished our shoes. We  
5 were allowed four cigarettes a day. The staff bought  
6 them for us and we always smoked them in that room.  
7 When we had finished our cigarette after breakfast we  
8 would go to classes.'

9 The statement then goes on to talk about meal times  
10 and food and he talks about an incident where some of  
11 the food seems to have been off, a mince dish was off  
12 and he was fortunate that he didn't eat it while  
13 everyone else got sick.

14 At paragraph 35 he says:

15 'We had a shower before we went to bed. There was  
16 a shower room. The showers were communal but they had  
17 cubicles without curtains or doors. There was a key  
18 worker called KLQ and another male key worker who were  
19 present while we had showers. KLQ would come and give  
20 you shampoo. She and the other key worker would stand  
21 there laughing and giggling at us while we were  
22 showering. They did that every night. It made me feel  
23 really uncomfortable. When we came out of the shower,  
24 they put toothpaste on to our fingers. We had to brush  
25 our teeth with our fingers. We didn't have



1 toothbrushes.'

2 He says:

3 'Dr Guthrie's gave me clothes to wear, but they  
4 weren't new clothes. I was given plain jeans and  
5 a brown jumper. I think that was the Dr Guthrie's  
6 uniform. The jumper was a bit tight on me. The only  
7 time you got new clothes was when you were taken down to  
8 the room and given a new jumper and jeans. We were  
9 given black shoes to wear. We didn't get football boots  
10 or a strip for football, but we had gym shoes.

11 We went to classes during the day. We had practical  
12 subjects like woodwork and mechanics. We also did  
13 academic subjects like music, history and English. The  
14 English teacher was called GWV . Mrs Horsburgh  
15 was the history teacher, she was pleasant. She used to  
16 talk to us nicely and treat us well. HIH was the music  
17 teacher and the PE teacher was called KEP . KEP  
18 was always grumpy. I liked maths at school but the  
19 teaching at Dr Guthrie's wasn't that great. I can't  
20 even remember us doing maths there. We didn't get any  
21 homework.

22 I enjoyed sport at school. I played football for  
23 the school team for the first six weeks that I spent at  
24 Dr Guthrie's. I was a right back. We got to play  
25 against other schools.'

1           He gives an example of that. He says that the team  
2 actually won a trophy in a tournament against other  
3 homes:

4           'But I had been dropped from the team as  
5 a punishment from the PE teacher, **KEP**. I had refused  
6 to play volleyball in PE because I didn't feel well.  
7 **KEP** assaulted me and also dropped me from the  
8 football team. I was devastated. The team were  
9 presented with the medals at church but I didn't get  
10 one. I didn't get to play for the school team again.'

11           He talks about leisure time a little and he mentions  
12 particularly a woodwork teacher, called Mr Mullen:

13           '... who was nice and had motorbikes, which we used  
14 to fix up. We would get a shot on the motorbikes and  
15 could take them out on the assault course and football  
16 pitch.'

17           He enjoyed that.

18           He said he would sit about at weekends:

19           '... because I couldn't really do anything. There  
20 would be about three members of staff and that was about  
21 it. We weren't allowed to go out and the staff didn't  
22 take us on any trips. Other than one weekend at home  
23 and when I ran away, the only time I left was to go to  
24 church.

25           He mentions again the incident where he refused to

1 take part in volleyball because he felt unwell and he  
2 says that he may have been examined by a nurse once. He  
3 can't remember much about that, and was taken to  
4 a dentist for a check-up.

5 At paragraph 42 he says:

6 'We had to go to church around the corner on  
7 Sundays. We weren't given a choice. I didn't go to  
8 church before I went into care so it was new to me. It  
9 was boring. Religion didn't play any other part in  
10 school life.'

11 In relation to Christmas and birthdays he says:

12 'I was in Dr Guthrie's for my birthday. I didn't  
13 get a card or a cake. It wasn't celebrated. Nobody's  
14 birthday was celebrated. I think I was there for  
15 Christmas, but I had no memories of anything special  
16 happening. I can't remember any decorations or  
17 a Christmas dinner. Most of the boys went home for  
18 Christmas.

19 The last time that I saw a social worker was when  
20 I was put in the assessment centre. I didn't get any  
21 social work visits at all at Dr Guthrie's. Nobody told  
22 me how long I would be there for. I was just left  
23 there. I can't remember any visitors coming into  
24 Dr Guthrie's at all. There was very little contact with  
25 the outside world. I didn't have any contact with my

1 family at all, apart from one weekend. We couldn't make  
2 phone calls and I didn't get any visits. I was only  
3 allowed out of Dr Guthrie's once the whole time that  
4 I was there. My sister and my nephew came up and I was  
5 given new clothes to wear because I was going out.  
6 I got to go and stay at my brother's for the weekend.  
7 I started running away after that and I was usually kept  
8 in at weekends as a punishment. There would be about 15  
9 boys kept at Dr Guthrie's over the weekend. It was  
10 hard.

11 Dr Guthrie's was open, so you could run away easily  
12 enough if you wanted to. I started running away because  
13 I felt so uncomfortable in the showers and swimming  
14 pool. I would run away with another boy [who he names].  
15 Before the showers we would run out the fire escape  
16 door, down the stairs and across the field. The first  
17 time I ran away was after being at Dr Guthrie's for  
18 about five months. We used to run away to the Oxfords  
19 area of Edinburgh [where his friend's dad lived],  
20 I think we also went to another part of Edinburgh and  
21 I think I ran away five or six times.

22 The first time we ran away the police caught us at  
23 his friend's dad's house. We jumped out of the window  
24 and ran away, but they chased us and caught us. They  
25 took us to Oxfords police station and gave us a couple

1 of slaps and a clip around the head. I was put into  
2 a cell for about half an hour.'

3 He thinks his friend had been in trouble with the  
4 police before:

5 'So they put us into a police car to take us back to  
6 the home. When we were in the car they told us to put  
7 our hands on top of the seats. If we moved our hands  
8 they would hit them with their truncheons.

9 The police caught us each time we ran away. They  
10 didn't normally take us to the police station. It was  
11 too late night for anybody from the home to pick us up,  
12 so the police would take us back to Dr Guthrie's. They  
13 never asked us why we had run away. When we got back to  
14 Dr Guthrie's, the person doing the nightshift would  
15 shout and bawl at us. I remember Mr HSB shouting at  
16 me for running away, but he was all right.'

17 He says there wasn't really a code of discipline at  
18 Dr Guthrie's:

19 'If you were cheeky to a member of staff the way it  
20 was dealt with depended on the member of staff. Some of  
21 them were really nice, maybe they had kids of their own,  
22 other members of staff would clip you round the back of  
23 the head if you were cheeky to them. Mr GQC would  
24 hit you with a slipper if you misbehaved at night time.  
25 I also saw a couple of boys being restrained.'

1           He names the head boy at the school when it came to  
2 fighting:

3           'I remember him being restrained by staff and taken  
4 off another boy he was fighting. I thought it was  
5 reasonable because the boys were battering each other.  
6 They didn't restrain boys unless it was necessary.'

7           In relation to abuse, he says:

8           'There were older boys than me at Dr Guthrie's and  
9 bullying did go on. I tried to keep away from that sort  
10 of thing. I experienced a bit of it when I first went  
11 there, but my nephew sorted it out for me. I was being  
12 bullied by someone in my dorm and my nephew put a stop  
13 to it.

14           [SNR] at Dr Guthrie's was called [GFC]. If  
15 he caught you having a chip butty at lunchtime he would  
16 slap you right across the head. He didn't approve of  
17 that. He had big massive hands and he would strike you  
18 quite hard.'

19           I pause there to note, my Lady, that we have heard  
20 of someone called Mr [BFX] who [redacted] and  
21 it may be that is the same person.

22 LADY SMITH: It could also be [GFC], who was known  
23 I think as [GFC] and we have heard other evidence  
24 about not being allowed to make your dinner into  
25 sandwiches.

1 MR SHELDON: '... he had big massive hands and he would  
2 strike you quite hard. I think it would have left  
3 a mark but it would have been under your hair. When he  
4 walked in the door the room would go quiet. If you were  
5 making a noise at night, GQC would take you  
6 into a room and take your jammies down. He was a big,  
7 fat man, probably in his early 50s. He would grab you  
8 and put you over his knee. He would leave the door open  
9 so other boys could see what he was doing. He would hit  
10 you on the bare bum with a slipper. He struck you about  
11 three times. He was a big man. He was a day worker,  
12 but I don't think the nightshift came on until later.  
13 GQC did that to me a few times and I know that  
14 he did it to my nephew as well. My nephew had stayed at  
15 Dr Guthrie's before I arrived there, by the time I got  
16 there he was still attending for school, but he lived in  
17 another residential home. I was left with a red bum  
18 after Mr GQC did that to me. He did it to other  
19 boys as well.

20 Mr GBD would take us for a cigarette after  
21 breakfast. He used to carry a big bunch of keys and he  
22 wore wooden clogs. He liked getting his back scratched  
23 with a key. He asked a lot of boys to do that for him.  
24 If you refused to scratch his back, he would throw his  
25 keys or his clogs at you. He would try and hit you on

1 the head. Mr GBD asked me to scratch his back on two  
2 occasions but I wouldn't do it. He chucked his keys at  
3 me one time and another time he chucked his clog. He  
4 missed on both occasions. I did see him hit other boys  
5 with his keys and clog. It was a big bunch of keys so  
6 they got a shock.

7 Mr GWV was the English teacher. When I was quite  
8 new at the school I went to his class and I couldn't  
9 remember his name. Someone told me that he liked to be  
10 called GWV, which was his nickname, I called him  
11 that and he went mad. He grabbed me by the hair and  
12 pulled me out of the class. He started battering me  
13 just outside the classroom. He was calling me a wee  
14 bastard and things like that. He was punching and  
15 slapping me on the head and body for about five minutes.  
16 I think he probably struck me about 15 times. My  
17 stomach and head were sore afterwards and I had a red  
18 face. I just had to go back into class.

19 Mr GWV assaulted me a second time. It was the  
20 day after I had called him GWV. I was in his  
21 class and he walked past me and punched me in the head.  
22 I didn't see him being violent towards other boys, but  
23 I heard he was. My nephew told me that he was assaulted  
24 by Mr GWV.

25 I remember walking over to the music classroom after



1 lunch. I think I'd been at Dr Guthrie's for about four  
2 months. I asked the teacher **HHH** a question about  
3 music. He just went mad. He grabbed me and put me into  
4 a kind of recess outside the building. He just started  
5 kicking me for no reason at all. He punched me to the  
6 stomach and ribs. It went on for five or ten minutes.  
7 There were other boys around when that happened.  
8 I think he had a short fuse, but he just went totally  
9 nuts. He looked a bit like he was French. He had dark  
10 hair, receding on top. I saw him get angry at other  
11 times, but I never saw him being violent again. I was  
12 dumbstruck.

13 One day we were playing volleyball at PE. I wasn't  
14 feeling well so I didn't want to play. The PE teacher,  
15 **KEP**, went mad. He was probably in his late 40s, thin  
16 and bald.

17 LADY SMITH: This sounds like the same incident that he  
18 referred to earlier on, it's now being dealt with under  
19 the abuse section.

20 MR SHELDON: I think so, my Lady. He gives a bit more  
21 detail here and he says:

22 'On this occasion he grabbed me, took me into the  
23 equipment cupboard in the gym hall and shut the door.  
24 He battered me. He punched me in the stomach and head  
25 for about five minutes. I was left with redness on my

1 face. I also didn't get to play for the football team  
2 as a punishment.'

3 He says:

4 'KEP [REDACTED] assaulted me a second time as well, about  
5 a week after the first assault. I refused to play  
6 volleyball again so he battered me in the cupboard.  
7 There were no other teachers around when he assaulted  
8 me.'

9 He says that he saw KEP [REDACTED] slap another boy over the  
10 head when he was mucking about:

11 '... but I didn't see him take any other boys into  
12 the gym cupboard.'

13 A lady and a man would take about 10 to 15 of us  
14 swimming in the pool at Dr Guthrie's. I can't remember  
15 their names. The woman was small and quite chubby. The  
16 man was older and thin. I never saw them at any other  
17 time, so I don't know what their roles were at the  
18 school. They asked if anybody wanted to go swimming.  
19 The first time that I went we went in and they locked  
20 the door. I thought that they would give us trunks, but  
21 we had to swim naked. The man and woman would stand  
22 there staring and laughing at us. I went swimming  
23 nearly every week. The same man and woman took us each  
24 time and we were always naked. At first I felt a bit  
25 funny about it. I then started to think it must just be

1 a routine thing, because everybody else was doing it.  
2 Sometimes the man would hit boys on the backside as they  
3 got out of the pool. He did that to me once. I asked  
4 him what he was doing and he just sort of laughed.'

5 He talks about reporting abuse and says:

6 'Mrs [REDACTED] was my key worker. I saw her when  
7 I first went in but I didn't really see her after that.  
8 There was nobody I could talk to. I didn't tell anybody  
9 about the things that happened in the showers and the  
10 swimming pool. Boys didn't talk about it to each other.  
11 Everybody thought it was just a normal occurrence.'

12 He says he was in Dr Guthrie's for about a year. It  
13 was then being shut down and all the boys were placed  
14 elsewhere:

15 'I think we knew for about three months that it was  
16 going to close. They were starting to get rid of the  
17 things in the rooms and that kind of thing. I didn't  
18 have too long left at the school by that time. They  
19 came to a decision that I would go back home again and  
20 attend Wellington Farm School near Penicuck.'

21 That was to be as a day pupil, my Lady.

22 He talks about it being strange being at home and  
23 seeing his friends again. He hadn't seen them for about  
24 two years:

25 'In that time my friends had become involved in the

1 drug scene, so I was bit taken aback. I found it hard  
2 to settle in at home. It was a different environment.  
3 It was hard to fit back into the routine at home when  
4 I'd been in such a regimented regime. It was just me  
5 and my mum. I felt like I had drawn away from her, so  
6 I found it quite hard. I had been close to my mum  
7 before I went into care.'

8 He then talks a little bit about Wellington Farm  
9 School and his routine there. At paragraph 65 says the  
10 school got him some work experience at a shop called  
11 [REDACTED] and he says he didn't get any qualifications.

12 At paragraph 66 he says:

13 'After I left Wellington, my friends had all got  
14 into taking drugs. I was being prescribed Valium by my  
15 GP. I told him that I'd experienced abuse when I was in  
16 care, so he started giving me 60 Valium tablets a week  
17 when I was 16/17. I think he prescribed them because  
18 I was anxious and I found it hard to fit in with my  
19 friends. I was very quiet.

20 I had a job in the YTS scheme, I did joinery,  
21 painting and decorating and cooking and did that for  
22 about eight months. I enjoyed doing that because it was  
23 a job. I didn't get any support from Social Work after  
24 leaving care. I was left at Howdenhall and they washed  
25 their hands of me. I finished the YTS scheme when I was

1 nearly 17.

2 I took drugs for a while and took every drug that  
3 was going, but it wasn't for me. I stopped taking  
4 drugs, but I started drinking instead. I moved away  
5 from my friends and travelled about. I stayed down in  
6 England with my nephew for a while. My mental health  
7 wasn't good. I was in and out of hospital about twice  
8 a week because I was taking overdoses. I've never  
9 really been able to hold down a job because of my  
10 alcohol use.'

11 He's had various jobs in factories as a labourer and  
12 as a chef.

13 He says that he 'never reported what happened to me  
14 in care to the police. I just thought it was a normal  
15 thing because it was happening to other people as well.  
16 There was nobody to turn to anyway and I didn't think  
17 that anybody would believe me. It wasn't until recently  
18 that other people's stories started to come out and  
19 I started thinking about my time in care. I saw things  
20 about the Inquiry.'

21 He notes that his mother was in Smyllum and was also  
22 abused there. So two generations of abuse, my Lady.

23 LADY SMITH: Yes, striking.

24 MR SHELDON: He says in relation to impact, paragraph 72:

25 'It wasn't until I came out of care that I felt the

1 impact of my experiences. I was just left on my own,  
2 out in the real world. I had no support to help me.  
3 I found it quite hard to fit back into the system again.  
4 Before I went into care, I didn't suffer from anxiety.  
5 I was able to talk to people. When I came out of  
6 Dr Guthrie's, I found it really hard to fit back in with  
7 my friends. They were doing different things and  
8 I'd missed out on it all.'

9 He again talks about I suppose the drug culture that  
10 was prevalent among his friends at the time.

11 He repeats that he felt withdrawn from his mother  
12 when he left care and that he'd been really close to her  
13 before he went to Howdenhall.

14 Halfway down paragraph 73:

15 'I also found it difficult to get on with my  
16 siblings when I came home. It was hard. Before I went  
17 into care, we'd been close. My sister had moved away  
18 with her boyfriend and my brother had moved away with  
19 his girlfriend. I was really left on my own. I moved  
20 out of my mum's and managed to find myself  
21 accommodation. I wanted to get away from people telling  
22 me what to do.'

23 He says he took an overdose when he was 19 and then  
24 saw a psychiatrist for a couple of years:

25 'That triggered things off and started a cycle of

1 memories of care returning and thinking badly of myself  
2 every so often. I would attempt suicide and end up in  
3 hospital again.'

4 He says he struggles with anxiety to this day:

5 'I have a stutter. I think I took drugs and alcohol  
6 to help me cope with the anxiety.'

7 Taking that short, my Lady, to paragraph 76, he  
8 says:

9 'I've been given medication for my anxiety. It  
10 helps a wee bit. I've previously had a CPN [community  
11 psychiatric nurse] and a key worker, but I find it hard  
12 to speak to them. It's difficult to have a conversation  
13 with them. I haven't always found them very helpful,  
14 but I do still see a CPN at my doctor's. My doctor kept  
15 on blaming everything on the drink, so I didn't find  
16 that very helpful. Nobody would tell me anything and  
17 I'm not really a person who asks a lot. I was admitted  
18 to hospital in May 2022 after a suicide attempt.'

19 He was kept in hospital longer and saw  
20 a psychologist. He says:

21 'I told her about my experiences in care. I've now  
22 been diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress  
23 disorder. I've managed to get a referral to  
24 a psychologist through my key worker. I've really had  
25 to push for that. I've never had a counsellor or

1 a psychologist before, but I'm going to start with  
2 a psychologist in the next month.

3 I don't think about being in care often. I sort of  
4 blocked it all out. I thought what was happening to me  
5 was normal anyway. Being in care definitely affected my  
6 self-esteem. It took me years to get into  
7 a relationship with someone. I've been with my partner  
8 on and off for about ten years. The last time I was in  
9 hospital I had a flashback to being assaulted by GQB  
10 at Howdenhall. I'd never had a flashback before,  
11 I could see his face and everything and he was punching  
12 me, it was terrifying. They had to get one of the  
13 nurses to sit by my door at night. I kept waking up in  
14 sweats in the middle of the night.'

15 He repeats that he's never been able to hold down  
16 a job and been in and out of employment. He has one  
17 daughter, who he spoils and thinks he's more protective  
18 of her than he would have been because of his  
19 experiences.

20 He says he doesn't trust people in authority.

21 He says that what happened with the police when he  
22 was in care is always at the back of his mind. It makes  
23 it difficult to speak to people in positions of  
24 authority.

25 He mentions attempts to get his records and



1 difficulties with that and he notes that a lot of it is  
2 redacted so he doesn't know what it says and that it  
3 felt a bit strange going back to that time.

4 Under 'Lessons to be learned', he says:

5 'I think there should always be at least two members  
6 of staff with children in homes. I don't think abuse  
7 would happen as much if there were more staff involved.  
8 Most of the things that happened to me were when staff  
9 members were on their own.

10 When children go into a home, I think they should  
11 have a point of contact who helps them get on with their  
12 lives and supports them. There was no support for me  
13 when I left care and there was nobody to turn to when  
14 I was in care. I think it would have helped if someone  
15 from outside the home came in once a week. If they  
16 stayed in a room, children could go and speak to them if  
17 they had a grievance. It needs to be someone  
18 independent from the home. Social work just washed  
19 their hands of me when I went into care and there was no  
20 support when I left.

21 When I think back, the brutality and the violence  
22 I experienced in care definitely had an impact on me.  
23 It's still going on with kids in this day and age, so  
24 it's good to get my voice heard. I hope that it might  
25 help kids who are in care just now. I've read in the

1 papers that abuse has still been taking place in  
2 Edinburgh and in the same place that I was in,  
3 Howdenhall. It's not right. That's what prompted me to  
4 come forward to the Inquiry. I want people to know what  
5 went on.'

6 He's made the standard declaration and signed,  
7 my Lady.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 Mr Sheldon, it's 3.50 pm. We've done well, I think  
10 we should stop there for today and leave things until  
11 10 o'clock tomorrow morning and we'll start with an oral  
12 witness.

13 MR SHELDON: We have an oral witness to start with, but only  
14 one witness tomorrow, my Lady, and then I hope we'll  
15 make more progress with read-ins.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you both very much.

17 I'll rise now until tomorrow morning.

18 (3.50 pm)

19 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on  
20 Wednesday, 5 June 2024)

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