

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FBD

Support person present: No

1. My name is FBD although I prefer to be called FBD. When I was in foster care I was known with the surname FBD. My date of birth is 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I don't have any memories of living with my parents and from what I can make out I was in care since I was three years old. As far as I know I was born behind the church just off Kilmarnock. My mum's name was and my dad's was. They were married and my mother's maiden name was. I had an older sister called who was three years older than me and a brother called who was two years younger than me.
3. I don't really know what happened and how we ended up being put into care. I was told that my mother and father separated and my father couldn't cope. I was told my mother left my father. The social workers told me this and so did FMX who became my foster mother. My mother was FMX's sister which meant FMX was really my aunt.
4. Me, and went into a home called Nazareth House which was just outside Kilmarnock. I don't know when I went there but I think I was three years old. This was only for a short period of time before FLB/FMX came and took us out and we went to live with them. I have really vague memories of falling off a

climbing frame and ending up in hospital for two or three days and just being shouted and screamed at all the time. These are memories that never go away from me. I have no other memories of being in Nazareth House. I have no memory of how long we were there but as far as I can make out when [FMX] heard we were in Nazareth House she went straight to social services and got us out. I have no memories of leaving there and all I know is we ended up in the [FLB/FMX]'s when we were very young.

**Foster Care – [FLB/FMX], Kilmarnock**

5. I believe I would have been three years old when I moved in to the [FLB/FMX]'s house at [REDACTED], Kilmarnock. The [FLB/FMX]'s already had their own children [REDACTED] who was about six and [REDACTED] was the same age as me. They might have had [REDACTED] as well because he was the same age as [REDACTED]. Over time [REDACTED] was born and later [REDACTED] came along. She was the youngest of the [FLB/FMX] family and was epileptic and special needs. I might have been ten or eleven when she was born because I was still in primary school. All the attention from the [FLB/FMX] side went to [REDACTED] which I can understand as she had special needs. From there on though things did really begin to drastically deteriorate. They hadn't been good before but [FMX] was starting to get more angrier and more drunk. [FLB] was starting to get more aggressive and abusive.
6. [REDACTED] was in the house all the time and she had to have someone with her all the time because of her epilepsy and special needs. I know now that she had to move to sheltered accommodation because social services found [FMX] drunk and incapable of looking after her. That happened at some time after I left the house.
7. Their home was a three bedroomed downstairs flat. When you walked in the front door there was a little bit of a passageway with another door, so it was like a hallway with a glass door. The door actually opened inwards and then there was a length of passageway and to the left hand side was [FLB/FMX]'s bedroom. When you walked up the hall it went in an 'L' shape to the left but to the right there was

another piece of hallway which was for the upstairs flat and it had a curtain in front of it. Along the hall there were two bedrooms and ours was on the right hand side and the lassies bedroom to the left side. When you went past the bedrooms there were airing cupboards, bathroom and toilet all in one. Past them was the living room and in there was another door that led into the kitchen. Once in the kitchen near where the cooker was there was a doorway that led you into what they would call a utility room. This room had three doors in it, one was the coal house because we were all coal fires back then, one was the pantry with concrete shelves in it and the other was a broom cupboard. There was also a back door.

8. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had one bedroom, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had another bedroom and [REDACTED] had the other. [REDACTED] went in with the girls when she was old enough.
9. [REDACTED] didn't work and [REDACTED] was a labourer/pipe fitter with the gas board. [REDACTED] was a proud Catholic Irishman or he was supposed to be. I don't think they were very old, I am not sure what age they were but probably under thirty. She was younger than [REDACTED]
10. We moved to [REDACTED] I cannot remember the number. I am not sure when we moved there but it was before I started at the academy.
11. There was never any explanation of our circumstances until I was either eight or nine. We always knew from arriving there that we were never part of that family because the atmosphere wasn't a family atmosphere. We were always made to be the scapegoats and do everything the [REDACTED]'s wouldn't do. You could say it was a Cinderella situation. We were the outsiders and were treated differently than their own children. It was them and us.
12. The [REDACTED] family decided that they would like us to be known as [REDACTED] We didn't get a say in that and you can imagine the embarrassment in school when they were reading the registers out and I used to get [REDACTED] known as [REDACTED]. We were known as [REDACTED]'s for the time we lived with them. When I was about sixteen and a

half I reverted to using FBD again. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have been known as FLB/FMX all their life since going to foster care.

13. I cannot remember if [REDACTED] was younger or older than [REDACTED], I think he was older but I am not sure. He was another foster child who came to live with us. He was Richard Small but they called him Richard Tracey. I am not sure what age I was when he was fostered but I wasn't around quite as much as I would be doing my own thing then. I always remember Richard coming, he was only a little toddler. Both his parents were heavy drug users [REDACTED] FMX. I am not sure [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I cannot remember now. His mother had committed suicide. To be quite honest I think he got treated worse than us, he was the youngest and easiest to get to. We were starting to grow up by then and starting to defend ourselves.
  
14. None of the three of us were ever adopted, we were only fostered. There was never any chat about the FLB/FMX adopting us and I have no idea why Richard was adopted and we were not. I can only think Richard might have been adopted because there was only one of him and there was three of us. That is all I can put it down to although I do wonder if they adopted him to make themselves look good to continue to foster us and get the money.

**Routine at Foster Care - FLB/FMX [REDACTED] Kilmarnock**

*First day*

15. I don't remember my first day however my first memory was everything was just cramped.

*Mornings and bedtime*

16. We got up in the morning, had breakfast got ready for school and out the door. Then it was back in from school to get your tea. It was FMX [REDACTED] who would get us up in the morning when we were younger and as we got older we would get ourselves up.

17. We were in bed at 7pm, as far as they were concerned night time was their time which was maybe fair enough. In the beginning all of the children had to go to bed at this time but as we got older bedtime was staggered. That would mean the middle kids went to bed at 8pm and the older ones went to bed at 9pm. My bedtime changed from 7pm to 8pm when I was about thirteen years old.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

18. If you didn't eat what was put in front of you then you starved. I can understand that things were a bit harder in those days but I have grown up now and I don't eat meat because I was always forced to eat things I didn't like. It was both **FMX** and **FLB** who would force us to eat. If we wouldn't eat our tea when we came in from school it was left on the plate to go cold and then we were made to stand in front of **FLB** and eat it. If we didn't eat it then we would get a good hiding.
19. Breakfast was a slice of toast and some mornings if **FLB** had been in he would make porridge. There was mainly cornflakes with hot watery milk in the winter time. Quite a few of us didn't want to eat it so many a morning we went to school hungry.
20. We were not able to go into the pantry as there was a padlock on it, we were not allowed to go and help ourselves. The **FLB/FMX** could go and help themselves to things like biscuits but if we went it was questioned who had said we could go and have that. I remember if I did take something it was a case of being confronted about whether I had asked if I could have it and being sent back to return it. Then I would get a clout. We would be called greedy.

#### *Washing/bathing*

21. The lassies shared the bath water even though they didn't bath together. One bath was run for them and they got in one after the other. The same was done for the boys but on a different night. I could go and wash my hands and face whenever I wanted but a bath was once a week.

22. We were not encouraged to brush our teeth which is why I have false teeth now. I have had false teeth since I was 21 years old.
23. We were running about as black as the ace of spades, we could wear the same clothes for days or weeks. There were times when we got out of the bath and had to put the same clothes back on. There was no regular laundry done and when it came to personal hygiene we were more or less left to fend for ourselves. We had no set routine for brushing teeth. If you wanted to wash your hands and face you just went away and did it but if you didn't then no one was making sure we did.

*Clothing/uniform*

24. My school uniform was always hand me downs. I would wear girls blouses instead of boys shirts because I was the oldest boy and I had two sisters above me. I can always remember [FMX] used to get vouchers from social services to go to a big drapers shop in Kilmarnock. They had the school uniforms for all the schools in the Kilmarnock area. We went once or twice bearing in mind the length of time we were at the [FLB/FMX] I think there were about two times that I got a new pair of trousers but the [FLB/FMX] always went to school with brand new school uniforms. We were always known as the tramps of the school in both primary and secondary. We were the 'scruffy' [FBD] or [FLB/FMX] by the other children at school.
25. All our clothes were second hand even our shoes. I wore shoes that were too small as they hadn't been bought for me. My shoes used to cripple me.

*Leisure time / clubs / groups*

26. The TV was always [FMX]'s programmes. If you enjoyed watching The High Chaparral, Bonanza or if you were lucky and Celtic were playing in the Champions League or the Union of Football Associations Cup that was what was on the TV. I wasn't interested in football then. We had to watch what they were watching, we couldn't come in and put cartoons on. Back then we only had three channels.

27. We didn't have toys to play with, nothing like that. When I was older, maybe fourteen or fifteen, I was allowed out to the park to have a kick about with my mates but it was only for half an hour.
28. Very rarely were we allowed out after school. Sometimes depending on the kind of mood they were in we were allowed to go out at the weekend and see our friends. We would have to report in at certain times and we would have to be in at 5pm and that was us. We were never allowed to roam the streets at night.
29. Weekends were basically the same as the rest of the week. I feel we didn't have weekends. We were made to do schoolwork on a weekend or do work like tidying the shed out, sweep the drive or do something in the garden. That was our life. There was no what you would call quality leisure time. I would say we had no freedom.

*Trips and holidays*

30. I remember **FLB** would have his works van at home and we were taken to places like Leadhills but that was it. We went to Ireland once to see **FLB**'s mother. We were there about a week I think. That was it, there was never any going to Butlins or anything like that. Days out consisted of school away trips basically.
31. We would get to go to what we called the Saturday matinee and we got swimming lessons but both were because we were children in care and they were free. We never ever got any spending money to buy anything when we were at these things.
32. I was a member of the cubs and then I went to the scouts. The cub hall was next to the church and it was about a five minute walk from our house. Both **FLB** and I were allowed to go and **FLB** joined as well. I wanted to go to the scouts but neither **FLB** or **FLB** were interested. I enjoyed it as it was a way out and I got some time away from the **FLB/FMX**. I would have been eleven years old when I joined the scouts and it finished at 9pm but the hall was about four miles from where we lived. I had to get the bus to and from the hall.

### *Schooling*

33. I started St Columba's Primary School when I was five. It was about two and a half miles away from the house. We used to walk to and from school although sometimes there was buses running. During the winter we used to walk because back then the winters were worse so the buses often didn't run. It would also depend if you had the bus money. All of the kids, including the [FLB/FMX]'s kids, attended the same primary and academy schools.
34. I wasn't the brightest child all the way through school. I was in the bottom class the entire time. We all got free school dinners including the [FLB/FMX] and I preferred school dinners to home dinners.
35. I remember an instance in my last year of primary school and I would be ten or eleven years old. I was wandering about the classroom not sitting down when the teacher told me to. I was literally sellotaped to a seat by a teacher. When I went home the school had phoned [FLB/FMX] to tell them they had had to restrain me in a seat and I got a good hiding for it. Any normal parent would have went nuts that their child had been treated this way at school.
36. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were always bullied at school. We were bullied by the [FLB/FMX]'s children as well. It was them and us, they would say if we were not there they would have had a better life. Don't get me wrong I had good friends at school but because of how we looked we did get bullied.
37. I started St Joseph's Academy when we had moved from [REDACTED] When we went to secondary school we were issued bus passes so we always got the bus unless they were off the road because of the snow. I left school when I was sixteen.

*Pocket Money*

38. We didn't get any pocket money. We were lucky if we got a penny worth of sweets now and then because I am going back when it was pennies and thruppennies. I am not going to deny it but if I wanted something I would pinch it. Back then it would be a shilling or a two bob bit from my mother's purse. I used to pinch <sup>FLB</sup> s fags because we had nothing. The amount of times and I got caught shoplifting in the local village store because we weren't treated like normal kids. You could see them walking about with bags of sweets, chewing something or having something fancy.

*Healthcare / medication*

39. From the age of five or six I developed a stammer and I mean it was really bad. The reason I put that down to now is I was always feeling frightened of what to say. I had to go to speech therapy and it wasn't a nice experience having to go. I went as a child right up until I was about fourteen or fifteen years old. Come that age I was learning to stand up for myself.
40. We had to go for regular three or six monthly screenings at the doctors. We got our height, weight, eyesight and ears tested. Just basic health care really. It was done by Dr Stewart on Portland Road, Kilmarnock. It was just me, my brother and sister and they were carried out because we were in foster care. There would be times me and my brother would have marks such as welts on us when we went for these check-ups but we were never examined in a way that these would have been seen.
41. Back then I don't think it was the done thing for someone to question if any child had a bruise or mark on them. It is not like things today when a child might turn up at school with a bruise and social services would be contacted. That didn't happen when I was at school.
42. We had the dental checks every six months which I think every child got. We didn't go for every appointment, I remember going the odd time. We only seemed to visit the

dentist when we had toothache. I can only really remember attending when I needed treatment rather than for a check-up.

### *Religion*

43. We were all made to do confirmation, holy communion, confession and everything like that. It was hypocrisy really. I was brought up a Roman Catholic but I couldn't honestly tell you if I was baptised or christened a Roman Catholic as I haven't got a clue because no one has ever told me. We were made to go to church every Sunday and the [FLB/FMX] and their children would go to. Their older children got the choice and sometimes [REDACTED] would say she wasn't going. I had no choice, I had to go right up until the time I left their house.
44. I was even made to become an altar boy which I did for seven or eight months. I hated every single bit of it. [FLB/FMX] thought they were good Catholics, they thought it was the done thing to do. Even [REDACTED] was made to be an altar boy but [REDACTED] wasn't. It was the [FLB/FMX]'s who decided this not the priest. They took us to see him and of course the priest in his role agreed. We were made to do church services on Sundays and sometimes through the week including evening mass. It wasn't a very nice experience.

### *Work*

45. We were expected to do what [FLB/FMX] told us to do. We didn't have a choice, we had to do the chores they gave us and if we didn't then it was world war three.
46. During the summer we were made to dig all the back garden. We had to do gardening, dishes, clean the four coal fires and reset them for the next day. It felt like whatever they couldn't be bothered to do they got me, my brother and sister to do. I wouldn't say the [FLB/FMX] children didn't do anything but they didn't do anywhere near the amount we did. We had no choice where they did. If one of them was told there was a sink full of dishes to be done they could say to get one of us to do them.

47. When Richard came along he was the youngest and he used to get the same as us.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

48. It was mainly all second hand stuff we got for Christmas. I once asked for a bike and we got a second hand Chopper bike to share between every member of the family. The [REDACTED]s had it and we very rarely did.

49. Birthdays were not celebrated, it was just another day.

*Personal possessions*

50. I never had anything of my own.

*Bed Wetting*

51. I was a serial bed wetter as was [REDACTED] and Richard. I am not sure about my sister as she was in a different room. It was handled very severely. If you wet the bed you got a good hiding and then you were made to lie in it the next night still wet. That would happen for months and months and when I think about it now it's hard to recollect as I haven't thought about it for a long time.

*Foster Care Payment*

52. I was aware that the [REDACTED]s were receiving payment for fostering us. It was common knowledge and of course the vouchers they used to get to clothe us. Whenever I have had a conversation with my sister or brother and even Richard I used to tell them that we were only there for the money. We were not there to be given a life, we were used as money. Back then they used to get money to feed us, house us, for looking after us basically. It was never ever spent on us.

### *Family Contact*

53. I couldn't even tell you what my mother looks like. I have never ever seen her. She is dead now and I never even got to know when she died.
54. I think I saw my father twice. I remember he came once and we came in from school and there was a wagon parked outside the house because my father was a wagon driver. I didn't know him from Adam, I didn't have a clue who he was. I can remember them saying that this was my dad. Then I can remember an argument between FLB/FMX and my dad because my father said he was taking it to court to have us back. FMX said it would happen over her dead body. That was it and nothing happened.
55. I contacted him when I was about fifteen, I wrote a letter to an address, explaining the situation at the FLB/FMX and asking if I could come and live with him. I was walking through Kilmarnock town centre one day with one of my mates when I saw this fella walking behind us with a woman and a couple of kids. He told me he was my dad and we went into a cafeteria and had a cup of tea. He told me he understood where I was coming from but there was no way he could take me to live with him. That was the last time I saw him. He is now dead.

### *Social Work*

56. We did have social workers but it was a total waste of time. It was Peter Murphy and Jim Gallagher and they were assigned to me, and . At first any social work involvement wasn't that regular. As we were getting older they put us down to being problem children. We were always labelled problem children from as far back as I can remember. It was always that we were causing trouble or causing problems within the family. Social work started to get more and more involved but whenever we were told that we were going to see the social workers we were told to keep our mouths shut or we knew what would happen. Both FLB/FMX warned us like this.

57. The social workers used to come to the house once every three or four months to do what they would call house check-ups. The [FLB/FMX]s would always be present. Then it started that we had to go to their offices, I cannot remember where they were but they were in Kilmarnock. [FMX] would always be there. We were not allowed to see the social workers on our own which was something I never could understand. We were sitting in rooms being spoken to and being told we were causing problems for the [FLB/FMX]. We were told if we didn't behave ourselves we would end up back in care. At one point I turned round to Peter Murphy and told him that if I was quite honest I would rather be back in care. I said I would rather be in a children's home than live the way we were living. Peter Murphy would just tell me I should be thankful for what I have got and that I was not in a children's home.
58. From about when I was fourteen or fifteen we used to go to another social workers actual house because it was more convenient for him to interview us at his house as he only lived round the corner from us. That social workers name was Jim Gallagher.
59. The social workers never asked proper questions they just asked things which got one word answers. They never probed to find out what was really going on. Deep in myself I know that Peter Murphy and Jim Gallagher knew what was going on and they did nothing about it.
60. I think Richard's social worker was Hugh Quinn although I am not one hundred percent sure.

#### *Discipline*

61. Anything we did we had to ask. We were not allowed to move without [FLB/FMX] [FLB/FMX]s say so. We were not allowed to go out and see our friends after teatime.
62. As I got older and I looked at other people's families or going to other kids houses their family life was totally different to mine. At that time I couldn't understand how their life was so different to mine because my life had become normal to me. It was all I had ever seen.

**Abuse at Foster Care – [REDACTED] Kilmarnock**

63. Good hidings were part of everyday life for us. Both [REDACTED] would hit us. It wasn't the life for a child. The situation in the house was if anything went wrong [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I got the blame for it. [REDACTED] and I, not so much [REDACTED] would get the hidings. I remember [REDACTED] getting shouted at but I don't remember her ever getting hit. Hidings were them hitting us with their hands or anything they could get a hold off and they hit us over our heads and bodies. I cannot remember a day that I didn't get a good hiding.
64. When we were learning our times tables at school, I wasn't the brightest child, and we had to take them home to learn. I would be learning them at the kitchen table and [REDACTED] would come in from work, he would have his tea before he would shout about seeing what we had learned today. I would have to go through my times tables in front of him. He used to have a pea cane and as soon as I got one wrong I used to get a whack on my legs or back with the cane. I can remember going to school and having to have a letter to say I wasn't fit enough to do physical education because I had welts off the pea cane on my legs and back. It was [REDACTED] who gave me the letter.
65. [REDACTED] would be going on at us saying that we had done this or we had done that. She would say that we had to wait until our father came in. She would slap us or hit us with a stick. When [REDACTED] came in she would go on that much at [REDACTED] that he would just get up off the chair and give us a kicking without even thinking or without even asking a question. We never ever got a chance to explain ourselves. I don't think we ever needed any medical treatment after any of these hidings. [REDACTED] knew where to hit you so it wasn't visible. He knew exactly what he was doing and it was as if he had been trained on where he could kick, punch or hit you. It was always the back or top of the legs or shoulders, somewhere that was always covered. [REDACTED] not so much, I had many a hand mark across my face from her.

66. FLB was responsible for most of the violence only because FMX was too drunk. FMX was an alcoholic but it wasn't from the get go I would say it really started from just after was born. I remember her lying about drunk and it feels like it was just yesterday. Things like that you don't really forget. She was solely responsible, day to day, for all of us children which was nine of us once Richard came along.
67. Seven days a week FMX was drunk and me and the older kids were left to see to We had to make her meals, make sure she got dressed and ensure she went to bed. took her first fit when she was about two years old. I was only a kid at the time and FMX had a go at me because had taken a fit. I didn't know what to do. When FLB came in because I hadn't phoned the ambulance or doctor quickly enough I got a kicking. It had only been me and FMX in the house at the time when she took this fit. If ever did anything wrong we got the blame. She was the apple of FLB/FMX's eye and everyone had to do everything for her. I don't have any resentment towards I had virtually looked after her through my teenage years. couldn't help the way she was whereas my resentment was for FMX and the way she was.
68. FLB didn't swear much but he did when he lost his temper. He would use phrases and swear words which children shouldn't ever hear. He made us feel like we were nothing. The things he called me and were awful. The verbal abuse from FLB wasn't as bad as from his children. FMX wasn't nearly as bad as FLB when it came to verbal abuse.
69. and I were regularly taken into the coal house and made to flog each other. It was FLB who forced us, he told us to smack each other and if we didn't do it then we got a kicking of him. FLB always did this when FMX wasn't in and it wasn't for any sort of punishment. He also used to make me and fight in the living room.
70. The FLB/FMX children would verbally bully us and it was unreal. They just copied FLB. They would tell us things like 'we were a waste of space' and 'god knows why

we were put on this earth'. They would tell us that if it wasn't for us they would have a better life and also tell us to go away and die. I just wouldn't dream of saying the things said to us to my children. They were also physical with us. [FLB/FMX] witnessed some but not all of this behaviour. They would get us to do their chores and if we didn't they would threaten us they would tell their mother which was worse. It sounds like normal kid's stuff but it wasn't normal. When I look back it felt like normal life to us but on reflection it was nothing like normality.

71. After being at the Academy we used to get off the bus in [REDACTED], Shortlees which is a five minute walk from there to our house. It used to take me twenty minutes to get home because I used to hate going home. I would know what was coming. [REDACTED] and I used to dawdle all the time because we just didn't want to go home. As we walked in the street we used to argue about who would walk in the door first. It would be [FMX] who would be home but we knew one of us would get it but we didn't know which one. We would walk in and it could be the one in front or the one behind but one of us would get a crack which is a slap around the head. It was systematic every day.
72. When I was at the scouts I would get the bus home. One night I was stood at the bus station waiting for the bus which arrived at quarter to ten. When I got home [FLB] was angry and asked me where I had been. I told him I had been waiting for the bus. He questioned me further asking where I had been waiting and what I had been doing but he didn't believe me that the bus didn't come until quarter to ten. He called me all the liars he could put his tongue to. He gave me another kicking because he said I was lying. [FLB] barred me from going to the scouts after that.
73. [FLB] took me into a bedroom when I was aged thirteen or fourteen and he made me pull my trousers down. He took a hold of my privates and he asked me what I wanted him to do. He said he could play with my privates or give me a good hiding. I told him I would rather have a good hiding. He just left it at that. That was the only thing that was of a sexual nature.

74. When I was fifteen and sixteen I was drinking quite heavily with the FLB/FMXs. There was always alcohol in the house and it was easily accessible to me. My downfall was whisky at that time. The FLB/FMXs were aware I was drinking so heavily but they tended to ignore it. Back then Scotland was a funny place for alcohol. It was the done thing but I'm not saying for everybody but I think it was a big issue at that time.
75. I remember a time when we had moved from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and FMX [REDACTED] had bought a car. I would have been sixteen at that stage. She had passed her driving test and God knows how as she couldn't drive. She crashed the car into a lamp post with four children in the car and I was the oldest. We went home and FLB [REDACTED] had asked what had happened to the car and she told him. I got the blame for her crashing the car, I got the kicking. I was kicked up and down the living room something scandalous. He used his hands and feet on me and all because she had crashed the car. A week later FMX [REDACTED] was drunk and FLB [REDACTED] was going to set about her in the middle of the living room and I stepped in. I actually stood in front of FLB [REDACTED] and told him that if he lifted his hands to her again he would have to go through me. He backed off and that is when things started to go on the turn for me because I stood up for myself and I stood up for FMX [REDACTED] I don't know why I stood up for her.
76. I remember Richard used to get some kickings from FLB [REDACTED] as well and I saw it on a number of occasions. I had to stop FLB [REDACTED] on a number of occasions setting about Richard and [REDACTED]. By that stage, when I was older, he knew I had had enough of being battered, being abused and being used as something you wipe off the sole of your shoe basically. That is how we were made to feel all of our lives. At the end of the day we were not FLB [REDACTED]'s children.
77. I also remember that the FLB/FMX [REDACTED] would cast up things up to Richard like his parents drug use and say things like his mother was nothing but a useless druggie and such things. To me that was all wrong.
78. So much happened over such a long time that I cannot remember everything that happened to me, [REDACTED] and Richard.

**Reporting of abuse at Foster Care – [REDACTED] Kilmarnock**

79. I think my brother and I could have told someone like a teacher or the doctor but children were never believed. I had mentioned that I was not happy at home to social services on a number of occasions. They would ask me how I was feeling and I would say I wasn't happy. I was just told I should think myself lucky I was fostered and not in a home. What I said was just shrugged off and no action was ever taken.

**Leaving Foster Care – [REDACTED] Kilmarnock**

80. I left school in May 1976 and was working for Alpine Pop which was delivering fizzy juice. At the time I was making £7.50 and [REDACTED] would take the money leaving me with £1.50.
81. I left the [REDACTED] when I was sixteen years old. I joined the army on [REDACTED] 1976 and the [REDACTED] were happy with that. My reason was to get away from them. I didn't want to join the army because at the time it was all the troubles in Northern Ireland but it was the only way I could see out. It was a relief just to get away. It took me four attempts to pass the entrance exams. Before then [REDACTED] had left. She got married when she was sixteen and she lived in [REDACTED] with her husband. She had worked in Tesco's and that is where she met her husband. [REDACTED] never spoke to [REDACTED] since she was sixteen.
82. I didn't like the army and I came out and I went back to the [REDACTED]. They were fuming because I had come out and they didn't want me living with them. I was still using the name [REDACTED] then and as far as they were concerned I had disgraced them. I thought fair enough and two days later I walked out and that was the last time basically I spoke to them.

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

83. After leaving the FLB/FMX's I went to live with a mate for a couple of weeks and then the fairground came to Kilmarnock. I joined the fairground in the June and travelled with them down to England and I have lived there ever since. Joining the fair was an escape. I worked with them for about a year or eighteen months and I used to put the fairs up and pull them down. It was a travelling fair but we mostly went to Northumbria and down the west coast of Scotland into Workington and Carlisle.
84. I came down to County Durham and I met my first wife and we decided I would leave the fair and settle down. We ended up having two children, a little boy and a little girl, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I went to jail and she left and put the two kids into care. I didn't find life easy at that time. I was drinking really heavily, committing crime like grievous bodily harm, a couple of thefts and a couple of frauds. I came out of jail to find she had sold all the furniture out of the house. I rebuilt the house and went to court and won full custody of my kids. I would have been 23 years old then.
85. My life continued with me drinking, looking after my children and living on benefits. When I was thirty something just clicked in my head, I don't know what it was. I just looked at myself and asked myself what I was doing. I sort of came to my senses. Don't get me wrong I was still drinking heavily but not as heavily as I had been. I thought to myself it is time I made something of myself and I buckled down and started finding work. A lot of time because I was working it was keeping me off the alcohol. By that time I had slowed down and was thinking about passing my driving test, which I did. I also looked back on my life and I thought I do not want my life for any of my children or anyone that I would live with.
86. I had a relationship in my early thirties and we had a little boy called [REDACTED]
87. I then started teaching myself motor mechanics which I still use nowadays for any repairs needed on my car or my wife's. People would see me working on cars and would ask me if I could do this or if I could do that. I would tell them I have never done

it but I would give it a go. I would do it and I would do it right so I just built it up from there. I could have five or six cars lined up outside the house.

88. When I was 35 I met my wife, [REDACTED] and we have been married for 25 years and I couldn't ask for anything better. It is a good stable relationship and she has been my rock really. Before I met her I was 99.9 percent becoming an alcoholic. I still like a drink but I don't drink to the excess I used to. I have managed to control this myself and with the help of my wife.
89. We had two boys together, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] already had a child and I had three children before I met her. So we have looked after six children between us.
90. I have had jobs working as a wagon driver, bus driver and delivery driver and now I work in hotels. I do breakfast waitering in the morning and in the afternoon I do maintenance. I work full-time, we go on holidays regularly. I would like to feel that that part of my life, with the [REDACTED], is in the past. That is why I don't talk about it now, not even to my wife. The way I look at it is if the [REDACTED] could see what I have now and what I have achieved it wouldn't half knock them sick.

### **Impact**

91. In the early stages I would say my time in care had a massive impact on me from everything from alcohol, getting into trouble with the police, relationships and basically just living a normal life didn't seem possible. Now I would say I am all right but there are underlying issues that come out now and again. For instance, when I am sitting in the house alone and my brain is working overtime. I think back and then I get annoyed about why I am thinking about all of that. That kind of thought process triggers the anxiety and depression.
92. It is hard to go over and think about how things were even after all these years. It is more of an anger now that the [REDACTED]s were allowed to get away with it for so long. I wish things like the Inquiry were going back then because the way I feel about it back

in the 1960s and 1970s we were the forgotten children. The social services who were there to protect us just weren't interested, although I can only speak for my social workers. I cannot speak for every social worker.

93. I got a phone call when **FLB** died which would have been nearly thirty years ago. I actually travelled up to make sure he was dead. I never went up to mourn his death, I went up to confirm to myself he was dead. To me it was closure then. I went up on the morning of the funeral and came back the same date. I went to **FMX**'s but I wasn't made welcome. I stood at the back of the church and the side of the graveyard and as soon as it was finished I got back in my car and drove home. I had to go to see for myself that he was really dead and being put in the ground. I know it sounds horrible but to me it was closure. As far as **FMX** is concerned I believe she went into a nursing home for alcoholics and she is now dead. I think she was 72 or 73 when she died.
94. Up until about 25 years ago I was more or less alcohol dependant. I believe that when you have been brought up around alcohol most of your life you do tend to pick up traits of how to use it. It was basically the only thing I had ever seen. Alcohol was what I turned to in what I would say was my time of need. When I look back I know it didn't help but it was a release. Back then I wasn't as strong as I am now.
95. I have tried to commit suicide twice, my wife doesn't even know about that. I know these things are all because of my experiences in care. The first attempt was when I was about twenty and the other two or three years after that.
96. I still suffer badly from depression and anxiety. I still wake up with nightmares about what happened to me in care. I have been to the doctors but they won't give me any medication for the depression and anxiety because I have tried to commit suicide twice. I don't get any form of support from health services. The way I look at it is I have managed it all on my own for so long. I have such a good life now and I think if anything was to happen to me what would happen to my kids and my grandkids. I'm their go-to man, if the grandkids want anything it's grandad or granny they come to, it's not their

parents they go to. I think my children and grandchildren would be lost if anything was to happen to me now.

97. I also think that because of the number of years we were made to feel worthless and useless it took me a long time, probably until I was thirty years old, before I started making anything of myself. I relied heavily on housing and unemployment benefits and things like that. Now I wouldn't entertain any of them.
98. I try not to think about it now although I find I can talk about it more freely now because I have a good life. I wouldn't say it is perfect but it is good and it is one I have had to build for myself as I have had no help. I should have had help but I couldn't turn to anybody and say I need help with such and such, I have just had to get on and deal with things myself but I think that is what has made me such a strong person now. I think I am a strong man but I didn't have much choice, I had to be.
99. I suffer from a condition in my feet called hammertoe which means all my toes cross over. This is because as a child I wore shoes that were too tight for me. I walked miles in those shoes. My feet are terrible now. I am flat footed as well and whether that is a condition that goes with wearing shoes that were too tight I don't know. I went to the doctor about my feet and he asked why they were like that so I explained to him. Nothing was ever recorded about it. He asked if I wanted him to send me to get my toes broke and repositioned but I said no. My feet still bother me now.
100. [REDACTED] is dead and he cannot speak about the things that happened to him in the care of the [REDACTED] FLB/FMX . He suffered from drug and alcohol abuse and he crumbled under what happened to him as a child. He died on [REDACTED] 2012 which is nine years to the date I had my session with the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.
101. [REDACTED] isn't capable of speaking about her time with the [REDACTED] FLB/FMX Before the pandemic she was starting to lose her memory and she went to try and get it diagnosed. With the pandemic it took over a year to get the diagnosis and she is virtually in full blown dementia now.

### **Treatment/support**

102. I have never had counselling or any sort of help like that but to be quite honest I have never looked for it.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

103. I have done one police interview and that was for Richard Tracey. Richard had put a complaint in about a person called [FLA] sexually abusing him. I knew [FLA] [FLA] as Richard and I used to go to his house. He used to watch us sometimes if [FLB/FMX] went out. Richard asked me if I would give a statement to the police about five years ago at Bishop Auckland police station. The police asked a number of questions similar to what has been asked of me today and I made a statement. I was only giving the police a statement on behalf of Richard but I did tell them all about the abuse by the [FLB/FMX]. The police contacted me by phone or letter, I can't remember which, and said there was no point in pursuing the [FLB] thing because he had died and [FMX] was a raging alcoholic so I doubt they would get any sense out of her. I couldn't really tell them anything about the [FLA] thing as he had never tried to sexually assault me.
104. That was the only time I ever reported what had happened as I had kept it to myself and in my mind it was personal. I wouldn't have reported it had I not been speaking to the police when Richard asked me to.

### **Records**

105. I have never tried to get my records. I would love to see what they say but I know it would be lies that have been told about me. I would love to see what Peter Gallagher and Jim Murphy had to say. I can guess as at the time they gave me the impression that they were just happy we were out of their hair. Then I think I don't know if I would

want to read these records because of how they might leave me feeling. Do I want to re-live that?

106. What I would say is if the Inquiry want to retrieve my records they have my full permission to receive and read them. I have nothing to hide. I think social services have a lot to hide. I think anyone reading my records would not find any mention of abuse. I can guess they will say something like **FBD** known as **FLB/FMX** has been a problem child from day one'.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

107. Since I was in care until now things have changed drastically. There is a better vetting system now although I don't know what vetting was like when I was in care as I was just a child. I know people who foster children now and they go through a system that takes about twelve weeks.
108. I also know people who foster now have to do courses to train in looking after children. Back in my time I think it was a case that it was our aunt and uncle and maybe a presumption they would be okay.
109. In some cases I think there needs to be better communication between the fosterer and social services.
110. Social workers need to be trained to understand children's words and feelings. Any parent can tell what their children are thinking and if their child has a problem.
111. I think a lot more things should be put in writing, such as conversations and reason decisions are made.
112. Maybe there needs to be legislation to allow things that are picked up to be dealt with properly.

- 113. There has to be more scrutiny when a child says something. Like when I said to Peter Murphy I would rather be in a home than be at the FLB/FMX. Back then they should have listened much more.
  
- 114. I don't have a lot of knowledge about what is done today but I know what things were like when I was in care. My experience of social services as an adult has been very different. When [REDACTED]'s daughter was in an abusive relationship there was a meeting with a lot of scrutiny. There must have been thirty professional people at that meeting and that is very different to how things looked for me.
  
- 115. My hopes are that children like myself have a better upbringing, are listened to and are understood.

**Other information**

- 116. It was Richard who told me about the Inquiry and he asked if I was willing to come forward. I told him I would as I didn't have a problem telling people what had happened. I just have a problem divulging personal information.
  
- 117. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed.....FBD.....

Dated..... 30 March 2021 .....