

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EOU

Support person present: No

1. My name is EOU My date of birth is 1987. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Aberdeen. My mum's name is and my dad is called They are no longer together and they split up when I was about fifteen. My mum and dad had a baby girl a year before me who was called and she died a few hours after she was born. I have a sister called who is about six years younger than me.
3. I was brought up in Macduff and have lived there all my life. I went to Macduff Primary School and then went on to Banff Academy for my secondary school education. I was getting on ok at school, but when I got older I started to hate it. Banff Academy was good in the first couple of years then by the end of being in school I didn't care anymore. I didn't like some folk in my class.
4. I lived in a house in Macduff with my mum and dad and I had my own bedroom. Life at home was rubbish with my mum and dad. My dad worked away on the rigs and he'd work away for two weeks and then be home for two weeks. When he was at home he was always in the pub because my mum used to throw him out. My mum and dad had a bad relationship. I phoned the police because of them and my dad was arrested. My mum would start it and scream and shout for me to phone the police. My dad got the

blame but he wasn't a good drinker. He was always in the pub because he had nowhere else to go when he was at home.

5. My mum worked at the school so she could fit the work and holidays in with me and my sister. Mum used to say she worked with kids all day and she didn't want to come home to kids. It wasn't a happy time at home. She's not been very nice to me my whole life. She was different with my sister.
6. I grew up with horses and wanted for nothing and I got everything. Some of my pal's mums and dads could barely afford to feed themselves and keep their house. They had nothing and they were happy. Their parents and my friends paid more attention to me than my own mum. I used to love being around horses and I had horses to look after and I've ridden since I was little. It meant mum could just dump me and leave me with the horses and pick me up later on. When she turned really mean and stopped me having horses it ruined my life.
7. When I was fourteen, my mum put me to stay with my granny for a while and I didn't like it there and I came home. My mum said she was going to phone social work. I told her to do it as I wasn't going back to my granny's home. Mum phoned social work and they didn't put me into care so she was gutted. A social worker came to the house after my mum's phone call and they came out that day, but they left me at home and said they'd sort something out. The social worker was called Beverley Bruce and she worked in Banff. The social worker had to talk to me and to my mum. I can't remember what I told them at the time.

Foster care with EOV-SPO

8. A few weeks later the social worker, Beverley Bruce, arranged for me to spend every other weekend with EOV-SPO at their house. It was meant to be emergency care because life at home was shit. I could phone them if I needed to get out of my own home. The social worker arranged for me to be there every fortnight, but I started to want to stay with them more and not be at home.

9. [EOV-SPO] lived at the [redacted] beside Portsoy and Sandend. Their home was nearest to Portsoy. I called them [EOV-SPO] [redacted] was in her early thirties and she was maybe thirty-three or thirty-four. [EOV] was younger and he was maybe thirty. He is a big guy, tall and intimidating looking. I felt intimidated by him and there was something about him that gave me the creeps.
10. They had two children of their own called [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] was the oldest and she was around five or six and [redacted] was too young to be in nursery. [EOV] [redacted] drove lorries and worked at the distillery and helped at a friend's garage. He wasn't at home much at the start. [redacted] was a child minder by herself in the daytime and the foster care was through the night and at weekend, so both of them did that. They got paid for looking after me. I can't remember who told me that. [redacted] looked after pre-school kids during the day and they were the same sort of age as her own kids. I was at school so I didn't see them. Later on they had other, older, children for respite care like me and were working on turning the playroom into a bedroom.
11. They lived in a bungalow that was very brightly decorated for young children. They had doors painted pink and yellow skirtings. [redacted] had set up a little table and chairs for the kids to play on and have food. I didn't really use the front door to the property and I always went in the side door. It went into the kitchen and the lobby. There was a bedroom just off the kitchen and to the left. There was a big hallway and on the right was the living room and then another lobby door. There was a basic bathroom just off the hallway for the kids.
12. Further down the hall was the children's bedroom, my bedroom and [EOV-SPO] [redacted] bedroom. There was a proper bathroom with a separate door from the lobby. At the start there were three bedrooms at the back of the bungalow. There was a playroom beside the kitchen that was turned into a bedroom later on, when I was staying there.

Routine at ^{EOV-SPO} [REDACTED] home

Early days

13. The social worker Beverley took me to visit [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] so we could meet each other prior to me going to stay there. I didn't know them before that. The first time I met them the social worker was with me and we were there about an hour. I didn't want to go there at first as it meant meeting new people and going to a new house and I wanted to be left alone. I told the social worker I wanted to stay at home, but it wasn't going to be permanent care. It was just respite care from my own home.
14. I can't remember what they were like at first or how I felt when I first met them. I can't really remember what we did when I first visited them, but I can remember at one of the visits we got a Chinese takeout to eat.
15. The second time I visited them my mum took me to their house and she met [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED]. Later on, sometimes she would take me out there, but usually it was ^{EOV} [REDACTED] who would pick me up. Then the social worker took me a few times. The visits at the start felt awkward. I don't remember ^{EOV} [REDACTED] being there for most of the time. About two weeks after that first visit I stayed overnight at [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED]. The following weekend I had another night there.
16. After that I started to stay there for the weekend and it was meant to be every fortnight, in emergencies or for respite. I started to go and visit [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] more and more and it became every weekend. I was staying in my own home in Macduff in between those times at [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED]. My mum would phone them and say she didn't want me anymore and could they take me for the weekend. I had some mates who stayed in the same row of houses.

Mornings and bedtime

17. I could say when I wanted that I was going to bed or to watch tv. There was no set bedtime. I had a basic bedroom. There was two single beds, a chest of drawers and a tv. I was on my own in that room overnight.

Mealtimes / Food

18. The food was alright and there was enough of it. There were plenty of chocolate biscuits available.

Washing / bathing

19. There was no set time for a bath or shower and I could have one when I wanted, unless it was late and it would disturb their own kids.

Clothing / uniform

20. I took my own clothes with me for the weekend.

School

21. I still went to Banff Academy and I got there on the bus from their house if I needed to. My mates who lived in the same street got it too.

Work/chores

22. I can't remember helping out round the house. I'd read stories to the kids but I wasn't expected to do baby-sitting.

Trips / Holidays

23. I didn't go out to any organised groups or clubs at weekends. There were no magazines, comics or books or toys suitable for me that the house. There was plenty of toys in the house for younger kids.
24. On Saturdays I would sleep in until ten and the kids would wake me up. I had time for the kids and did activities with them. I went with them to swimming lessons. I'd have to get up and go with [REDACTED] to drop the kids off at swimming and we'd go shopping. Then they started horse riding lessons. Me and [REDACTED] would go in on the same lesson. I was with [REDACTED] and the kids at weekends and [REDACTED] EOV was probably working. I didn't do swimming but I'd go shopping and I had my own mates to see when they were swimming.
25. On a Sunday we'd go out in the car on a trips or [REDACTED] had to take car parts to the garage where [REDACTED] EOV worked. [REDACTED] EOV was into American cars as well as some of his pals. We'd go on car cruises. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV would take their kids and me to car shows. When the weekends were good, [REDACTED] and the kids and me would go camping in summer and go out to car shows and sometimes I went on holiday with them if it was my weekend.

Personal possessions

26. I didn't keep any personal possessions at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV, but I took stuff from home up there with me.

Birthdays and Christmas

27. I'd be at home with my mum when it was Christmas.

Visits / Inspections

28. I didn't see the social worker in the time I was staying with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV

Other foster children at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV

29. They had other children at some weekends. One boy was there because his mum couldn't take care of him and his dad had abused him. We all had our own reasons and stories for being there. In the time I stayed with [REDACTED] EOV-SPO they also took care of a boy called [REDACTED] another one called [REDACTED] and a boy called [REDACTED]
30. One boy, [REDACTED] was two years older than me. [REDACTED] was at [REDACTED]'s home through social work as well. We got on good but then we'd start fighting. He stayed over in the playroom. My bedroom was down the other end of the house next to the kids and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV [REDACTED] still had to supervise us. Me and [REDACTED] would sit on the sofa in the playroom to watch tv and hang out.
31. The playroom was beside the kitchen. [REDACTED] wanted the door to the playroom left open and if she was getting up to get a cup of tea she would stick her head round the door and ask if everything was ok. She didn't make a big deal out of it. [REDACTED] EOV [REDACTED] was always being creepy and using any excuse to come passed the room and it was more than just checking up on us. He'd be coming passed the playroom to the kitchen to get [REDACTED] another biscuit or going for a cigarette or getting firewood.
32. [REDACTED] EOV [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] used to have words. They'd go outside to smoke and they'd argue and then [REDACTED] would storm off and fly away on his dirt bike that was a small motor bike. Then he'd come back when he'd cooled down.

Healthcare

33. If I had any health issues they'd be dealt with during the week when I was with my mum.

Running away

34. I ran away from home when I was fourteen or fifteen. I ran away with my friend [REDACTED]. Life was shit for both of us. We were caught by the transport police in Aberdeen. [REDACTED] had to come to pick me up as my mum phoned him as she'd refused to pick me up and my dad was on the rigs. [REDACTED] mum picked her up. Social work weren't involved when I ran away.

Abuse by [REDACTED]

35. I always thought [REDACTED] was creepy. It was just him. After knowing him for a while he started creeping on me and my mates. He was being a weirdo. He generally made me feel weird. There wasn't a good vibe about him. This was before anything inappropriate was done or said by him. He used to buy fags for me when I asked him to and then he just started to buy them when he was out.
36. When [REDACTED] was taking the other foster kids home after the weekend he'd drop them off first and make sure he took me home last. He'd always volunteer to drive us home. In the car he'd be rubbing his hand up my leg and getting higher up my leg. I was worried he'd go further and I'd have to punch him in the face. I'd tell him to stop and he'd laugh at me. I felt disgusting. Me and my pals used to laugh it off at the time and say he was a creep and a weirdo, now I see it differently and he abused his position of trust.
37. I started to hate going to their house on a Friday because I hated him, but it was an escape from my mother and the arguments with my dad. If I was at their house I was abused by him but I wasn't self-harming at home and being emotionally abused by my mum.
38. My relationship with [REDACTED] was ok at first. She wasn't there as a replacement mum. I preferred her to [REDACTED]. Then she changed and seemed to develop a grudge or dislike to me. I've wondered for years if that was why I had to stop going to her house because

she felt intimidated by me being there. Did she think her husband fancied me and she knew or picked up on it? She just started to treat me differently after a while.

39. When I was fourteen I was on one of my weekends staying with ^{EOV} and I went to the fair in Alford with both of them and their kids. The fair was at the car museum where there was a lot of American cars and motorbikes. We camped in tents at the museum. My friend came with us and she was the same age as me. she lived in the same row of houses as and ^{EOV}. I was sharing a tent with her that and ^{EOV} provided. They had another tent for themselves and their kids.
40. There was entertainment and the fair which was appropriate for us. We'd hang out there a lot and ^{EOV} didn't like it. had supplied us with a one or two bottles of Wkd blue each to me and ^{EOV} gave us more bottles of the same that he'd bought at the fair as well as some whiskey that I drank. He wanted to be the cool guy and the good guy. He also used to buy me fags around this time. I can't remember what he was saying to us at the time. He'd lurk about where we were and he was watching us around the fair. He was never inappropriate around if I was with her, but he saw me by myself he'd be his usual creepy self. If he saw me with my friend and he'd be creepy then too, but he was different when was around.
41. When I was fourteen I went with and ^{EOV} to pick up an American car from the museum in Alford. I don't know if he picked us up but we went with him to pick up the car. He just dropped off the car and was being his usual being sleazy self with us and making the comments that usually made, he was touching and groping both of us.
42. Sometimes ^{EOV} took me and my pals to car shows, and behind back. He'd drive to England to a show and buy car parts. He told he was going to a car show with his mates, but he took me and my pal She was a year younger than me. We stayed overnight in a hotel room. It would be a double bed and a sofa bed. He'd make comments about sleeping in the double bed with me and my pal. We told him to get lost and me and slept in the bed and he was on the sofa bed. He didn't try to sleep in the bed with us. I wasn't under their care at the time and this was after I'd

left. I was still fifteen, but he was still coming to see me in Macduff and meeting my mates.

43. EOV used to take me and my mate into the cab of his lorry. He used to buy us fags and alcopops. He wanted us to sit next to him in the cab, but we sat in the back part of the cab. We didn't want to sit beside him. This was just before I stopped going to his house. He was taking me to see the RAF boy I was seeing if he had a run to Kinloss or Lossiemouth.
44. I could get in and out of the lorry cab and I didn't need help, but it was EOV way of having a grope and he would touch my arse cheek to push me in the lorry and help me out of the lorry cab. He used to call me 'bird' although he pronounced it as 'burd'. If he was in the driving seat and I was climbing out he'd reach over me to touch my breast over my clothing, and squeeze and grab at me. He did it to me and my friend.
45. I remember one time EOV found out that I'd been having sex. He went away to tell my mum. Then he stayed off work for the whole day to help and be there with me and my mum at the doctors. That was a bit weird. I was fifteen at the time. He made me feel uneasy.
46. After I stopped going to and EOV he'd still contact me. My mum would speak to him. He came to my mum's house and she was out. I was pregnant. It was disgusting and creepy. He was just there when she was out. I told him she was coming home or my dad was coming to the house. I couldn't get rid of him. He was stroking my leg and the outside of my thigh on the outside of my clothes and slapping my backside. I was probably wearing my jeans. He tried to kiss me. I was sitting on the sofa and curled my legs up in front of me to protect myself and then tried to push him away with my feet. He was getting really close to me. He wouldn't give up and kept getting closer. I can't remember what he was saying to me. I was still fifteen and I was pregnant at this time.
47. The older I got the worse he got because he thought he could get away with more and I'd kept quiet for so long. When I was sixteen there was another time when me, EOV

and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] we were on another trip to somewhere in England for a car show. We stayed in a Premier Inn or Travel Lodge. On the drive back to Scotland we saw a sign for Blackpool and we asked him to take us there. He said 'what's it worth? Is one of you gonna suck my dick?' We told him to get lost.

48. We stayed overnight in Blackpool at a B&B. There was a basic kitchen and a living room with a folded bed and a bathroom. He wanted to share the bed with us and we said no. Me and [REDACTED] made sure neither of us was alone with him so we went to use the bathroom together. The bed me and [REDACTED] shared was in a separate room and we put something against the door in case he tried to get in the bedroom.

49. When I was sixteen and my child was in bed, he came to my house. He would just turn up at my house in Macduff and at my mate's house in Banff. He put money down my cleavage and in the back pocket of my jeans pocket and slapped my arse and say 'there you go burd'. He did this to my friends [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. One time, I'm not sure if it was me or my mate, but one of us got our thong pinged and money put down the back of the thong. I think he preferred [REDACTED] because of how she looked.

50. ^{EOV} [REDACTED] was still in contact until I was about eighteen and I don't remember how he stopped contacting me. I tried not to see him. At some stage he was coming to my home once a week or every two weeks. Most times he came he'd try it on and grope and touch me or my mates. I can't remember what he was saying to me as he did that. For a while I would rather have been with him and treated like a piece of meat than be at home with my mother.

Reporting of abuse at ^{EOV-SPO} [REDACTED]

51. Social work didn't know anything. When I stayed with [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] I didn't see social work.

Leaving foster care with ^{EOV-SPO} [REDACTED]

52. I was fifteen when the foster care stopped suddenly after about two years. I was due to go to their house and my mum was taking me in the car. Two of the social workers from the area arrived at our house in a car and in a rush and said I wasn't to go there anymore. One of them is called Kirsten Duncan and I don't know the name of the other one. I'd met Kirsten before through social work and as her family is from the area. This was all of a sudden. They couldn't leave quickly enough. There was no explanation and I still don't know what happened. I've spoken to ^{EOV} [REDACTED] a few times over the years, but I've not spoken to [REDACTED]. I didn't see the social workers again after I stopped going to [REDACTED] house.
53. There was no preparation for me for leaving care. No-one from social work was teaching me how to budget, cook and look after myself.

Life after being in foster care

54. After social work told me I couldn't go back to [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] I was barely at home and I was always at my mate [REDACTED] house. I had no more social work involvement. I met a boy from the RAF in the local pub. He had a brother that stayed up the road from me. My mum pushed me to be with the RAF boy early on. When I was fifteen she put me in a wedding dress and put me in the pub and even got a fake marriage certificate made for us. I played along with it because she noticed me and I wanted her love.
55. My mum threw me out at fifteen. I was pregnant and I had a really bad infection and I had to be checked in case it was an ectopic pregnancy. My mum didn't care and she sent me to ^{EOV} [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for a night or two. For [REDACTED] not wanting me there, she seemed happy to take me back. It was strange I could go to their house after social work had said I wasn't to go back there a few months earlier. Social work wouldn't have known I went back there. I was very ill and it was a scare. My mum phoned them and she took me back home. I never asked [REDACTED] and ^{EOV} [REDACTED] then why I couldn't come

back. After that my friend [REDACTED] mum and dad looked after me and I stayed with them for a few years.

56. When I'd not long had the baby the social worker Beverley came to see me at my own home, to say congratulations, but really she was just being nosy. After I'd had the baby the council had found me my own house and I had a lot of relatives living near me. When I was sixteen I had my own child and my own house.
57. The relationship with the RAF boy ended after a few years. I have a seventeen year old son with the RAF boy. I didn't stay living in the house that the council got for me at sixteen and I've moved around a bit. I've had a few jobs in waitressing, working in a kitchen and volunteering with charities. I've not got married and I have a different partner now that I've been with for four years and I've known him for longer than that. He's helped me to come forward about what happened to me in foster care.
58. I don't know if [REDACTED] and ^{EOV}[REDACTED] fostered children after me. They have split up. I think [REDACTED] still does child minding. I think I've seen her at the family centre and the primary in Banff at break time and with kids. Maybe she's some sort of teaching assistant.
59. My mum treated my sister [REDACTED] differently and she was sheltered from my what my mum and dad did to each other. When she was sixteen, she got a car and lessons. When she was seventeen and got a provisional licence she got a personalised plate. I got nothing. They laughed at me when I wanted to drive. We don't have a relationship and that wouldn't have been different if we always lived together. I don't think of her as my sister.

Impact

60. My mental health has not been the same since I was in care. My mind just constantly thinks of bad stuff to do with everything that's happened to me, ^{EOV}[REDACTED] my son's father, my sister and my mother. I've been on anti-depressants and I've had them for years and other medications.

61. I started self-harming. I hadn't been like that before I went to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] EOV. I started it after I went there, but not in their house because of the kids. I did it when I was in my mum's house. It was a release to [REDACTED] when I couldn't cope with my mum and dad fighting. It got worse and worse. I've had medical treatment, with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was doing it because of a mixture what was happening at home and what [REDACTED] EOV was doing.
62. People used to say I was a bonny lass and my hair was really long and thick and beautiful. I just snapped and I hated the way I looked and I didn't want to be touched up by a creep. The way [REDACTED] EOV treated me made me think every guy was the same. I didn't want to be seen that way. When I was seventeen or eighteen I [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I cut my hair off and then maybe folk wouldn't just see me as a piece of meat and touch me up.
63. I lost him because my mum didn't help and she phoned social work because I was going out with a woman beater who I couldn't get rid of. He was really bad to me. Social work stepped in and took my baby. I started drinking a lot and I got in with the wrong company, just so I had the company and I wouldn't self-harm. My family rejected me. Everything that had happened to me with my mum, losing my son and what happened with [REDACTED] EOV was driving my self-harming.
64. I was looking for help. My GP referred me to the Keswick Clinic at Fraserburgh. Now I get injections once a month at the chemist. I got a Community Psychiatric Nurse, CPN, and I've seen a psychiatrist. My CPN has no clue about mental health. All they do is test me for drugs. I've been off drugs for years but I still have blockers of some sort to take. I'm on tablets for lots of things. I've had a diagnosis of bi-polar disorder, as well as anxiety and depression, since I was about eighteen or nineteen.
65. I've not had any counselling and I've been waiting for it since I was a teenager. I've been promised help and I've never had it. I've been treated in the community and in hospital. I've been an in-patient at the Cornhill Hospital when I can't cope. I've been in hospital for a week at a time and I can't handle any more than that. After a few nights

away I get depression at being away from my own home and it overcomes my mental health. I've felt a bit better in the last four years with my current partner.

Reporting of abuse

66. My son's father saw me climbing out of the lorry cab and ^{EOV} was groping me and holding my backside. He didn't say anything. I didn't tell social work department about it as they wouldn't have believed me. I tried to tell my mum but she wasn't interested. It was my partner who told me I should tell the police. I've not told anyone in authority until I read about the Inquiry in a newspaper. I contacted the police and then I read in the newspaper that police were making people feel bad about being victims of sexual crimes. I approached the police in Banff in September 2021 and I contacted the Inquiry around the same time.
67. The police came to the house to take a statement. Then they visited my friends and I was told they had enough evidence to take him to court but they think it will only be on a Breach of the Peace. The police will put it forward as an offence that should go to court. I was told by the police that ^{EOV} had been arrested and interviewed.

Records

68. I've not got my social work records. I didn't know I could get them.

Lessons to be Learned

69. Carers get their social checks, their background and their police checks and everything is fine. Like it was fine with and ^{EOV} and they put me with them and look at what happened to me. Even if the social worker Beverley visited me at and

EOV [redacted] and asked how things were going I wouldn't have been able to tell her anything because I wouldn't have been believed.

Hopes for the inquiry

- 70. If you had somebody who was more like a support worker, somebody you feel you can open up to and get to know, who you can spend time with, work with, go to do activities with like ten pin bowling. Someone who's not a social worker. Somebody who's on your side to help you and make sure you're ok so you know you have this person and they'll believe me. There's more that could be done because social work checks and police checks don't stop these things from happening to people.

Other information

- 71. 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 EOU [redacted]

Dated 14/02/2022