

1 Monday, 6 July 2020
 2 (10.30 am)
 3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Day 6 of
 4 this public hearing. Ms Langdale?
 5 MS LANGDALE: Good morning, chair and panel. Today in the
 6 first three sessions you will be hearing from
 7 complainant core participants, who will remain
 8 anonymous. In those circumstances, we will not be live
 9 streaming the evidence.
 10 In the fourth session, chair, after 3.00 pm, you
 11 will be hearing from Ms Nice of counsel in respect of
 12 the complainant gist table. For those purposes, of
 13 course, we can be live streamed.
 14 May I invite Mr Hughes, please, to swear in LA-A138.
 15 WITNESS LA-A138 (affirmed)
 16 Examination by MS LANGDALE
 17 MS LANGDALE: Good morning, LA-A138.
 18 **A. Good morning.**
 19 Q. As you know, I will be referring to you by a number, to
 20 keep you anonymous, and both of us will not be referring
 21 to names of any family members, other children in the
 22 home or members of staff in the home, unless they're
 23 convicted of offences.
 24 You have helpfully provided a statement to the
 25 inquiry dated 20 May 2020. Have you had a look at that

Page 1

1 **A. Well, I weren't wearing any clothes -- basically, you**
 2 **were put outside to play outside, but the clothing you**
 3 **would be wearing wouldn't be sort of the right clothing**
 4 **to keep you warm. So you were outside and you were**
 5 **freezing.**
 6 Q. So you were uncomfortable, and no-one --
 7 **A. Yeah.**
 8 Q. -- spotted or cared for that or put it right?
 9 **A. Nobody would even dream of going outside when it was**
 10 **snowing and freezing cold like that. You know, you**
 11 **wouldn't -- the only way anybody would go outside is if**
 12 **they had to, if they had to work outside or anything**
 13 **like that. You certainly wouldn't put kids outside.**
 14 Q. What about if they heard you talking in bed at night?
 15 What happened to you? What were you made to do if that
 16 was the case?
 17 **A. They would go upstairs, bring you downstairs and stand**
 18 **you in a room, which I think was a locker room, and it**
 19 **was very close to the back door of the cottage, and they**
 20 **used to place you there and you used to stand there**
 21 **facing the wall, and they'd put you in certain**
 22 **positions. Like, they might say, "I want you to put**
 23 **your hands out like that", (indicating), and you'd be**
 24 **facing the wall and they'd just leave you. I don't know**
 25 **how long I'd be in there for, but then they'd come and**

Page 3

1 again recently?
 2 **A. I have, yes.**
 3 Q. You have got it near you if you need it?
 4 **A. Yes, it's next to me.**
 5 Q. Thank you. Can you confirm to the chair that the
 6 contents are true and accurate, as far as you're
 7 concerned?
 8 **A. It's true and accurate, as far as I'm concerned.**
 9 Q. Let me ask you, then, you were placed in care when you
 10 were around 3 years of age, and you can't remember the
 11 names of the house parents at the time, but you can
 12 remember lots of children being in the cottage -- it was
 13 Chestnut Cottage, wasn't it?
 14 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 15 Q. Tell us what were your impressions of that home or
 16 cottage, as far as you can remember, at that early age?
 17 What was it like?
 18 **A. It was -- there were lots of us, so it was very chaotic.**
 19 **I can't really remember much about the staff. It was**
 20 **just -- I can just remember sort of certain things**
 21 **highlighted, so -- because I think -- like, for example,**
 22 **in the winter, when we were all put outside and it was**
 23 **snowing, I remember that, that sort of thing.**
 24 Q. What do you remember about that? What were you wearing
 25 when it was snowing? Why can you remember that?

Page 2

1 **get you, take you upstairs, you'd go back to bed and**
 2 **obviously go back to sleep.**
 3 Q. So they'd do that in the middle of the night, make you
 4 come down and do that, stand in that position?
 5 **A. I wouldn't say it was the middle of the night, because**
 6 **we went to bed probably quite early, so you could be**
 7 **talking about 11.00 o'clock, 10.00 o'clock. I have no**
 8 **idea what the time was, because we were kids and you**
 9 **just had no idea of what the time was.**
 10 Q. Would you be brought down by yourself to do that or with
 11 other children that you had been supposedly talking
 12 with?
 13 **A. I can only remember being downstairs on my own.**
 14 Q. What about the food? What food were you given? Can you
 15 remember anything about that?
 16 **A. I can remember the food. The food was okay, but it was**
 17 **sort of traditional. So every sort of Friday, you'd**
 18 **have fish and chips, and every -- it seemed to be a set**
 19 **menu for every day. But I remember not liking cheese,**
 20 **and they would always give me cheese on toast, and**
 21 **I wouldn't eat it, and, you know, I'd have to sit at the**
 22 **table and they would expect me to eat it. But because**
 23 **I hated cheese, I wouldn't eat it, you know, and they**
 24 **would sort of try and force me to eat it. So, you know,**
 25 **if you didn't like the food, it was tough luck,**

Page 4

1 **basically.**
 2 Q. What about if they ever heard you use bad language?
 3 What did they do with that?
 4 **A. Well, they'd wash your mouth out with a bar of soap.**
 5 Q. Did that happen if you had said anything wrong, as far
 6 as they were concerned, or did it sometimes happen
 7 anyway? What's your memory?
 8 **A. I can only remember it for, I would say, bad language,**
 9 **but I can't recall saying something which is bad**
 10 **language and then -- you know, so it could have**
 11 **happened, you know -- I could have said something that**
 12 **people didn't like, and that would have been the**
 13 **outcome.**
 14 Q. Because you were very young at this age, weren't you,
 15 and you were there most of the times, in terms of what
 16 you were going to be talking about?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. You remember, when you were at Chestnut Cottage, one of
 19 the older boys coming into your room. Can you tell us
 20 something about that?
 21 **A. That person was --**
 22 Q. Don't worry about the person; just what happened. So
 23 don't talk about the person.
 24 **A. He would come into the room, wake me up and start**
 25 **touching me sexually.**

Page 5

1 Q. Can you remember why you didn't want to say anything
 2 about that at the time?
 3 **A. I think that if I would have said something, I don't**
 4 **think I would have been believed anyway. A lot of**
 5 **the time, I think initially I was thinking, "I had**
 6 **a dream last night, I was woken up", and I wasn't quite**
 7 **sure what I was dreaming a lot of the time, but**
 8 **obviously I realised after a while I wasn't dreaming.**
 9 Q. Did you have a social worker, not just then but
 10 subsequently at any point, someone who wasn't in the
 11 home who came in to talk to you about how things were or
 12 not?
 13 **A. I can't remember a social worker at that age, because**
 14 **I would have been very young. I can't remember any**
 15 **social worker. Not at that point.**
 16 Q. We will come to later later on. So then you went to
 17 Lime House, didn't you, after a while? You went there
 18 after two or three years, you say?
 19 **A. Yes.**
 20 Q. You say you suffered physical abuse there. Give us
 21 examples of how -- what abuse you suffered, physical
 22 abuse?
 23 **A. They were house parents who were really strict, and they**
 24 **had their own way of doing things. So when we were**
 25 **eating at the table, if we did anything that they didn't**

Page 7

1 Q. When you say "touching you sexually", at the time, what
 2 did you think was going on? What were you, as your
 3 younger self, thinking that meant? What was happening
 4 to you?
 5 **A. I didn't know what to think because I was very young.**
 6 **When you're woken up in the night like that, you're not**
 7 **sometimes fully awake. So a lot of the times, you're**
 8 **not sort of fully with it.**
 9 Q. Do you think anyone knew or suspected that that young
 10 person was coming into your room at night, or not?
 11 **A. No, I don't think they knew because, if they could hear**
 12 **us talking upstairs and telling me to go downstairs and**
 13 **stand me in a room, I would have thought that -- I think**
 14 **if they would have heard that individual in my room,**
 15 **I think they would have known, you know. It's hard to**
 16 **say, you know, because I can't remember -- because in**
 17 **the rooms there was certain -- the kids would share in**
 18 **the room. I wasn't in a room on my own. I don't know**
 19 **how many beds were in that room, so I don't know whether**
 20 **that person -- or I can't remember whether that person**
 21 **slept in my room or was he in another room and was**
 22 **coming into my room.**
 23 Q. Was it something you felt able to tell anyone about at
 24 the time, any staff member, a house mother, for example?
 25 **A. No.**

Page 6

1 **like, they would hit us with the cutlery, in particular**
 2 **they had a big spoon which was like a ladle, about the**
 3 **weight of a ladle, and you'd either get hit over the**
 4 **knuckles with it or actually hit over the head with it.**
 5 Q. I think you tell us in your statement you had a lot of
 6 headaches. You remember having headaches there?
 7 **A. Yeah, yeah, I did, yeah.**
 8 Q. And you were being hit over the head?
 9 **A. Yeah, yeah, and that spoon was very, very heavy. You**
 10 **know, it wasn't a standard spoon. They used it as**
 11 **a lever. They would sort of put their arm out and hit**
 12 **you over the head, and it really used to hurt.**
 13 Q. You said you would get no warning, you'd be looking the
 14 other way and get a bang on the head?
 15 **A. That's right, yes. I think that it was probably done**
 16 **more when you weren't looking, because if you were**
 17 **looking and you were aware and you could see it in your**
 18 **peripheral vision, you would have probably avoided it**
 19 **because, obviously, you knew from previously how much it**
 20 **hurt. So it wasn't something you'd want to have happen**
 21 **to you.**
 22 Q. You also tell us about racist abuse that you endured at
 23 Lime House. Without the name of the person, and looking
 24 over the cubicle, tell us about that?
 25 **A. Before I go on to that, there was other abuse that I had**

Page 8

1 in Lime House. A [redacted] woman who was there for
 2 a very short period of time, and whenever anybody did
 3 anything wrong, she was very violent -- smacking you
 4 around the legs, hitting you physically, and that
 5 really, really hurt, and she -- that used to happen
 6 quite a lot.

7 Q. Did other members of staff see that happen, or was it
 8 just when she was on her own with you or the children?

9 A. I think that -- because they were probably short
 10 staffed -- I can't remember other staff being there, you
 11 know. I think she was probably there on her own, you
 12 know. I think that was probably part of the reason,
 13 that she probably felt that she was rushed off her feet,
 14 and lashing out because of frustration. I think that
 15 partly had something to do with it. That was a real
 16 eye-opener, because you don't normally see that sort of
 17 violence towards kids. It wasn't just a simple smack or
 18 anything like that; it was really violent stuff.

19 Q. Tell us now about the racist abuse that you endured?

20 A. When we went swimming, on one occasion there was one of
 21 the people from the other houses who wanted to use --
 22 I can remember, they wanted to use the swimming pool
 23 after we were in there, and we -- they had it booked,
 24 and because they wanted to use the pool and we weren't
 25 out of the building, they would sort of call --

Page 9

1 he was stopping it; because he didn't like you as an
 2 individual. It wasn't the fact that what you were
 3 saying was illogical, or anything like that, he just
 4 sort of -- he was an out-and-out racist, really, so it
 5 was quite shocking, quite frustrating, that somebody
 6 could be in that position and say whatever he wanted and
 7 do whatever he wanted and not care about anything.

8 Q. Again, do you think other staff members heard him
 9 speaking like that to you and to children?

10 A. Yeah, I think definitely. I think they were all sort of
 11 scared of him. He was married, and he was there with
 12 his wife, so I don't know whether the other house
 13 parents would have reacted the same. But I think if I'd
 14 go around there and he wasn't there, you wouldn't have
 15 any problems with anything, you know, you'd be able to
 16 sit there and do anything, whatever you want. It was
 17 only a problem when he was there, you know.

18 Q. You then went to Plane House, didn't you? That was the
 19 next house you were moved to?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And there was a member of staff there that you describe
 22 as pestering you. Can you tell us about that?

23 A. I'm trying to think how it -- I think I was in the house
 24 and then that person was new to the house, and they --
 25 yeah, were very interested in me.

Page 11

1 individuals to call us names and everything. But that
 2 was -- that happened when I was in the swimming pool or
 3 when I'd go around to a certain person's house to play
 4 football, that individual would see me and make
 5 gestures, monkey gestures, and all sorts of things.

6 Q. So that was a house parent from another house who acted
 7 like that?

8 A. Yeah, and also there was another -- I had a friend who
 9 is no longer with us now. He passed away a few months
 10 ago. He was in a house and his house parent, the man in
 11 the house, was very racist, and it turned out later on
 12 apparently he had voted for the National Front, and
 13 whenever I, like, used to go around there, they said to
 14 me that he didn't want me in the house because there
 15 were enough black people in the house and he didn't want
 16 any more and he wasn't the sort of person that felt like
 17 black kids and white kids should play together. You
 18 know, he would call you all sorts of names.

19 Q. How did you feel about that? How were you able to
 20 respond or not when he said that kind of --

21 A. You couldn't really respond, but he was -- if you went
 22 around there to ask the kids to come out to play
 23 football, and he saw you and you wanted to participate
 24 with any of the kids in the football, he would stop
 25 that, and you -- you know, you would know the reason why

Page 10

1 Q. How old were you, roughly, then? Roughly?

2 A. I would have been about 12 or 13. So they were really
 3 interested in me, but throughout Shirley Oaks, nobody
 4 was really interested in you. It was just like --
 5 you're just like a number, you're just like a name.

6 Nobody -- they don't really care. But this individual
 7 sort of seemed to like me, and, you know, it seemed
 8 strange because I couldn't work out why straight away,
 9 but they were prepared to sort of go out of their way
 10 for me. They wanted me to spend as much time with them
 11 as possible, and I couldn't work out why, and then
 12 I think there was one occasion when I was sat in her car
 13 with her, and she basically put her hand on my leg and
 14 said she wanted to sleep with me.

15 Q. How did you feel at that point?

16 A. Well, I was really shocked. I was sort of speechless.
 17 I couldn't believe it. You know, I was confused. It
 18 just didn't make sense.

19 Q. Did you feel able to tell anyone about that?

20 A. No, I didn't, because they wouldn't have believed me.
 21 But, in the end -- well, not in the end. Very shortly
 22 after that, I sort of stopped talking to the individual
 23 and would ignore the individual, and the other house
 24 parents were asking me why I wouldn't speak to her, but
 25 it was pretty obvious, really, I would have thought, if

Page 12

1 **they would have looked at the situation, what was going**
 2 **on.**
 3 Q. At the time, as you describe it, you knew what she had
 4 done or tried to do was wrong, didn't you --
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. -- from (overspeaking) doing it. And you think that
 7 others might have picked that up as well, if they were
 8 looking carefully enough at how you were behaving?
 9 **A. Well, I think they should have realised, you know, that**
 10 **she was showing an interest in me and that she was**
 11 **suggesting that I go places with her and there were no**
 12 **other kids. So they should have realised that, you**
 13 **know, her behaviour wasn't sort of right, because**
 14 **obviously she wanted to get me on my own all the time,**
 15 **and you would have thought that somebody would have**
 16 **picked up on it.**
 17 Q. So she was trying to get you in the house on her own
 18 with you and also taking you out in her car?
 19 **A. Yeah. But I did speak to somebody a few years ago who**
 20 **knew the house parents at the time, and they assured me**
 21 **the house parents at the time were very clever people,**
 22 **and they would have picked up on anything that was going**
 23 **on, and they said there was no way, there was nothing**
 24 **like that could have gone on without them knowing, and**
 25 **they assured me that the house parents would have known.**

Page 13

1 **But I think there weren't many people in my house.**
 2 **I think -- at one stage, I think there was virtually**
 3 **only me there and a couple of others. I can't really**
 4 **remember.**
 5 **If there was -- because I just moved house, and**
 6 **there might have been only a few of us in the house**
 7 **I was in, some of the time the other people might have**
 8 **been away. So I used to go into that other house to**
 9 **speak to the other people and socialise with them. And**
 10 **there was a certain individual in that house, that's no**
 11 **longer with us, who was much physically bigger than**
 12 **anybody in that house, much stronger and everything, and**
 13 **he used to do whatever he wanted to do, and if he wanted**
 14 **to grope you, which he did to me on a few occasions, he**
 15 **would do it, and he would do it in front of all the**
 16 **other kids.**
 17 Q. So he did that to you. Did you notice that being done
 18 to other people in your presence as well?
 19 **A. No, I didn't see it, but I can remember one occasion,**
 20 **I think we were all watching TV and there must have been**
 21 **lots of kids, at least sort of eight or nine in there,**
 22 **and I can remember him grabbing me by my private parts,**
 23 **and I was in a lot of pain and, when he let go, nobody**
 24 **in the room seemed to be surprised at his behaviour.**
 25 **They seemed to -- obviously they lived in that house**

Page 15

1 Q. Again, you didn't have a social worker at that time,
 2 aged 12 or 13? You don't remember having a social
 3 worker that you could speak to?
 4 **A. I don't really recall having one at that particular**
 5 **point. I mean, the social workers only used to sort of**
 6 **come in very rarely anyway. I think you'd see them**
 7 **every probably six weeks or even less frequent than**
 8 **that. You were told the social worker was going to be**
 9 **coming to see you, and sometimes they wouldn't even turn**
 10 **up. But the social workers weren't really interested in**
 11 **anything like that. All they were trying to do was get**
 12 **you off their books, get rid of the problem.**
 13 Q. You then moved to another cottage. Again, can you
 14 remember roughly how old? You would have been
 15 a teenager by then, clearly?
 16 **A. Yes, I think I was 13 then.**
 17 Q. When you went to that cottage, you commented on the
 18 behaviour of another child and what he would do to you,
 19 and quite openly. Can you tell us a bit about that, how
 20 it was in that cottage?
 21 **A. Yes. So I got moved from one side of Shirley Oaks to**
 22 **the other side. I was in a single house. In the house**
 23 **in front of me was a double house. So you had a lot of**
 24 **kids, probably about 12 or 13 kids, and I knew most of**
 25 **them from school and playing around and all that lot.**

Page 14

1 **with him, they knew what that individual was like.**
 2 Q. Did any adult or someone with responsibility for running
 3 the home see that behaviour?
 4 **A. No. I remember his house mother really well. She --**
 5 **I don't think she was really interested in her kids.**
 6 **But I think he was sort of the golden boy in her house.**
 7 **So she would have -- you know, nobody could say anything**
 8 **about him. She would have just dismissed it, you know,**
 9 **as sort of child's play or -- you know, unless they**
 10 **actually saw it happen, they wouldn't take any action,**
 11 **and I think that because that individual had got away**
 12 **with that sort of thing for so long, he was just sort**
 13 **of -- he was out of control, I would say, so they just**
 14 **let him do what he wanted. I don't think they were**
 15 **really interested.**
 16 Q. What about your education at this time? There you are,
 17 you're a teenager. What was school like for you?
 18 **A. The school down there, in Shirley Oaks, the school on**
 19 **the site, it was just a waste of time, really. You**
 20 **didn't really learn anything. I think they just -- you**
 21 **were just there because you had to be there, and the**
 22 **teachers just weren't worried about anything. They**
 23 **weren't really trying to teach you anything. I don't**
 24 **think they were probably the best qualified, but I think**
 25 **everybody just wanted an easy time, so it was just --**

Page 16

1 you actually just went through the system and you didn't
 2 really learn anything, and it was only in the last year,
 3 when we had a teacher who was really good, where you
 4 learnt quite a lot. But what you also learnt is that
 5 you didn't know anything, and you hadn't been taught
 6 anything. So, you know, you realised that you were
 7 playing catch-up, because I went from -- after I left
 8 the school, I went to a school in [redacted], and I was
 9 just so far behind all the other kids, it was just
 10 unbelievable. It was only then, when you look back,
 11 when you realise that that school on site, you know, it
 12 didn't do you any favours. They weren't interested.

13 Q. I presume that, because it was on site, you only met
 14 other children from Shirley Oaks when you went to that
 15 school?

16 A. Yeah, that's right. There was no kids from outside who
 17 went to that school.

18 Q. You say in your statement you used to play a lot of
 19 football at Shirley Oaks, and there were quite a few
 20 very big fields where lots of you used to play. You
 21 speak about a staff member there "who played football
 22 with us". Tell us about that staff member and what
 23 happened there?

24 A. Well, there was an individual who -- I thought he was
 25 a staff member, because I just assumed that somebody

Page 17

1 used to turn up. I don't know. He used to obviously
 2 drive around to find out what's going on because there
 3 were several places we could play football, but on
 4 saying that, there was only a place where we called "top
 5 field", which was a big massive field with a swimming
 6 pool, where he'd let people drive the car.

7 When we played football in front of the cottage, and
 8 there was lots of us, I never saw him there, and he
 9 would never -- you know, obviously nobody ever drove his
 10 car there. So it was only when we were sort of out of
 11 the way he would turn up and play football.

12 Q. As you say, he came regularly enough that people would
 13 have known he was there or coming on to Shirley Oaks'
 14 site?

15 A. Yes, his car stood out. A car with blacked-out windows
 16 like that really stood out. Everybody knew him because
 17 of his car, you know, because, when people drive a car
 18 with blacked-out windows, people want to know who is in
 19 the car and whose car it is, so that actually drew more
 20 attention than what a normal car would.

21 Q. Did the boys ever have discussions between themselves?
 22 Did you ever discuss with others what was happening to
 23 you when you sat on his lap and driving the car, or was
 24 it never really mentioned between the children?

25 A. No, because when people went in the car, they were on

Page 19

1 wouldn't be playing football -- somebody wouldn't turn
 2 up in a car and play football with lots of kids in
 3 a children's home. You just assumed that he was a staff
 4 member. It was only after I found out he wasn't a staff
 5 member, he was -- I think he was classed as a staff
 6 volunteer. So he used to come in and turn up, and he
 7 had a Mini with blacked-out windows, and he used to turn
 8 up and play football, but before he would be playing
 9 football, he would let kids drive his car, and obviously
 10 the kids were -- you know, that was -- you know, if you
 11 gave a kid an opportunity to drive a car, something like
 12 that, which looked really nice, they're going to jump at
 13 that situation, and everybody had a go in it, you know,
 14 and I had a go in it and he would sit you on your lap
 15 and do the pedals, but while you'd be steering the car
 16 around this field, or whatever, he would be touching
 17 your private parts.

18 Q. You say you always had loads of sweets as well. Did he
 19 give those out?

20 A. Yes, he would turn up in his car and be really popular.
 21 He would be like a magnet to the kids. He would be
 22 giving the sweets out to everybody, let them drive the
 23 car, play football and everything, and, you know, then
 24 he would sort of just disappear. So it wasn't a regular
 25 occasion, it would just sort of -- I don't know, he just

Page 18

1 their own with him. There wasn't anybody else. You
 2 know, people were so -- kids were so excited about being
 3 able to drive a car that sort of -- they sort of forgot
 4 anything. You know, that's all they were interested in
 5 doing. Forget about the football for the minute, they
 6 were interested in driving a car, because they could
 7 play football at any time, but the opportunities to
 8 drive a car, which looked very flash and everything,
 9 that was a huge attraction to people. So people sort
 10 of -- that experience of driving the car would -- people
 11 would only sort of be so focused on what they were
 12 doing, they wouldn't be interested in anything else.
 13 They'd get out of the car and talk about the fact that
 14 they drove the car, and that was, you know, that was
 15 a real honour for them.

16 Q. You also tell us about a swimming instructor who used to
 17 look over the cubicle. Tell us more about that?

18 A. Every Friday -- at least every Friday, there were
 19 swimming lessons with a swimming coach. But this person
 20 was not a coach. He just -- he just sat there most of
 21 the time. He never gave anybody any instructions on
 22 swimming or any tips on swimming or any training or
 23 anything like that. You know, he just sat there most of
 24 the time staring at us, and then at the end, or at the
 25 start, he would come around, bang on the doors and look

Page 20

1 over the cubicles, just find out what was going on, and
 2 that was it. He wasn't a swimming coach. You know, the
 3 kids never improved their swimming because of it, or
 4 anything like that.

5 Q. Did that make you feel uneasy at the time, when he was
 6 doing this?

7 A. Yes, because when he would bang on the door, you'd think
 8 it was a friend of yours trying to play a practical
 9 joke, and you'd think, why is somebody banging on the
 10 door? You know, you're trying to get changed, trying to
 11 get out of there as quickly as possible, and he's
 12 banging on the door, you know.

13 Q. Again, is he someone that you would have told anyone
 14 about at the time or thought about telling someone about
 15 at the time?

16 A. No, he was on his own all the time, never with another
 17 adult. You would just -- once you finished swimming,
 18 you were just focused on getting out of there. You were
 19 in your own cubicle getting changed. You didn't really
 20 know what was going on because you were focusing on
 21 yourself.

22 Q. I want to ask you now about after you had left care, and
 23 you say how that education, or lack of education, really
 24 impacted for you, didn't it?

25 A. Yes.

Page 21

1 black people in the part of the army I was, and because
 2 I had such a bad education, that stopped me from getting
 3 to a certain level. That limited me -- that basically
 4 stopped me from getting to sergeant, because every time
 5 I went to take the exams, I could never pass the exams
 6 because my education wasn't good enough, and they really
 7 wanted to promote me, because while I was in the army,
 8 I ran --

9 Q. Don't say too much about that for risk of identification
 10 about what you were doing in the army. Don't worry.
 11 But you are very clear your lack of doing tests and
 12 education impacted on your promotion and your prospects?

13 A. Yes, because there were certain people, black people,
 14 who went on and got commissioned and then they stayed in
 15 the army, so they got a much bigger pension, much more
 16 pay, and they could stay in the army until they were 55,
 17 which is what I would have wanted to do. But because of
 18 the education, that was the thing what limited me, and,
 19 in the end, I had the option of getting out and trying
 20 to join the [redacted] or staying in and not getting
 21 anywhere, so in the end, I took the chance and tried to
 22 join the [redacted].

23 Q. One of the things you tell us in your statement is that
 24 you have kept your experiences at Shirley Oaks a secret
 25 from friends, and that's had an impact when they have

Page 23

1 Q. How do you feel about that and can you say in what way
 2 do you feel that impacted on you, not having an
 3 education?

4 A. Well, I went into the army, and at the time you had to
 5 do all these tests and see how good you were. From what
 6 I can remember, there was hardly any maths or any
 7 English, but I wanted to join -- what they wanted to do
 8 is put all the -- as many people in the infantry as
 9 possible. So they wanted to put me in the infantry.
 10 But the house parents I lived with, the husband was in
 11 the TA, and they had a big discussion about it and he
 12 said that I had to get a trade. So although I got
 13 a trade, what limited me all the way through my army
 14 career was not having a good education, and that all
 15 stems back from Shirley Oaks. Once you're in the
 16 army -- I joined just after [redacted], so a lot of
 17 people got out, and I had been waiting into the army,
 18 but we'd gone into a recession so nobody was getting
 19 into the army -- so nobody was getting out of the army.
 20 So I got into the army, and at the time, the army were
 21 trying to get you through as quickly as possible and out
 22 on the front-line because you were obviously replacing
 23 the people who had left. So they never had time to
 24 teach you anything.

25 But also, at that time, they were looking to promote

Page 22

1 found things out about you, and issues around trust.
 2 Can you just explain to the chair how your experiences
 3 as a child have affected your ability to trust others
 4 and how that's impacted from them to you in your
 5 relationships?

6 A. When I was at Shirley Oaks and I had that problem with
 7 that woman, well, the people who were at Shirley Oaks,
 8 now I still see them occasionally, and they were always
 9 asking me whether anything happened to me at
 10 Shirley Oaks, and I've always told them no, and somebody
 11 else from Shirley Oaks told them of my experiences, so,
 12 one, they didn't trust me after that, and, two, they
 13 were very upset that I'd never told them of my
 14 experiences.

15 Q. Can I interrupt for a minute? Why did you choose to say
 16 no? How have you responded? What made you want to say
 17 no?

18 A. Because people would just keep asking you more and more
 19 questions, and that's the sort of thing you don't want
 20 to bring up. It's a bit like being in a bad car
 21 accident and then having to recall what happened and
 22 explain the gory parts again and again, and it's
 23 something you just don't want to do. So it's better not
 24 to trust anybody, not to say anything, because if you
 25 told an individual, then that individual could tell

Page 24

1 other people and then other people would judge you
 2 differently and everything. So it's better just to keep
 3 yourself to yourself, and, you know, if, for example,
 4 that had come out when I was in the army, people would
 5 have looked at you differently, they would have taken
 6 the mickey out of you, and it's better just to not say
 7 anything and just to keep everything quiet, and, not
 8 only that, people -- I don't think people believe you
 9 and people wouldn't understand.

10 Q. You also tell us in your statement that you have not
 11 sought psychological treatment in the past:
 12 "I have tried to bury it in the back of my mind,
 13 something I try not to talk about."
 14 People react differently, obviously, to
 15 circumstances, so, for you, how do you mean you've just
 16 tried to bury it in the back of your mind and not
 17 getting psychological treatment? What's your approach
 18 been?

19 A. If you can sort of forget about it, then, you know,
 20 I think the brain automatically buries the bad
 21 experiences, but I can remember certain records I'd hear
 22 on the radio which would put me back to Shirley Oaks at
 23 a time when certain things were happening to me, and
 24 that would make me think, so sometimes you couldn't
 25 avoid it, but it's just sort of -- something like

Page 25

1 discussing --

2 A. Yes, that's right, because -- I had problems breathing,
 3 and they said it was -- you know, they'd run a lot tests
 4 on me and said there was nothing wrong with me and they
 5 said that they think it's that I'm suffering from
 6 stress, basically, and it's anxiety, and that's what
 7 they thought, and that was a real sort of eye-opener for
 8 me.

9 Q. Going back to the disclosure and reasons why you never
 10 disclosed at the time what you were experiencing and the
 11 abuse, you say:
 12 "The main reason was because I just did not think
 13 I would be believed."
 14 Can you just unpack that a bit for us again? What
 15 is it about all those experiences you have described,
 16 right from when you were in the first cottage and moving
 17 through, where you just felt you wouldn't be believed?

18 A. Nobody would believe you because they didn't care about
 19 you, you were just a number and nobody showed you any
 20 attention at all. So why should anybody believe --
 21 nobody cared. It was pretty obvious that they weren't
 22 doing their job out of love, they were doing the job
 23 because -- they were doing the job, they had to do the
 24 job, it was just a job -- they weren't interested.
 25 I can remember having a social worker and the social

Page 27

1 a millstone around your neck all the time. It's hard to
 2 explain, really. If you didn't have to think about it,
 3 it's not a problem. Whereas, if you start thinking
 4 about it, the more you think about it, the more it's
 5 a problem, the more you get depressed, angry, frustrated
 6 and everything else.

7 I mean, certain individuals which have apparently
 8 committed suicide, I have known those individuals really
 9 well, and I know they wouldn't do that, and just when
 10 I think about what's happened to certain people, you
 11 know, you want answers, and you're not going to get
 12 answers, and it's really frustrating. People have told
 13 you that certain people killed themselves because of
 14 this and killed themselves because of that, and I think
 15 to myself, no, you know, that didn't happen. That
 16 person wouldn't do that. So, you know, the more you
 17 think about it, the more problems you can cause
 18 yourself. And I don't see what going to a psychiatrist
 19 is going to do about it, because if you're going to
 20 a psychiatrist in the first place, that's going to bring
 21 back and trigger memories in the first place, isn't it?

22 Q. You tell us, because you had some problems breathing
 23 recently with stress and anxiety, you chose, when you
 24 got to the hospital -- you don't want to discuss the
 25 cause with them. You would still prefer not to be

Page 26

1 worker wanted me to go and live with my brother, who was
 2 adopted, but I didn't want to go, but the social worker
 3 was not interested in any reason why I felt
 4 uncomfortable and I didn't want to go. All they wanted
 5 to do was get me living with my brother, get me off
 6 Lambeth's books, and that was it. So it was obvious
 7 that they weren't interested. They didn't care. And if
 8 you said anything, it would have just got swept under
 9 the carpet.

10 Q. In terms of being a child in care, when you look back,
 11 in what ways do you think you were vulnerable as a child
 12 in care? I don't mean for any other reason, just being
 13 a child in care. How did that make you vulnerable, do
 14 you think, to the experiences you suffered?

15 A. Well, because nobody cared. There was no support, there
 16 was no -- there didn't seem to be any chain of command.
 17 There was no -- like I said, nobody interested, nobody
 18 gave you any warnings or anything like that. They
 19 just -- you were just placed there, and that was it. It
 20 was, like, get on with it, and unless there was dramatic
 21 problems, nobody would merely sort of pay any attention.

22 Q. You had no visitors from outside the home? No
 23 independent visitor coming in or talking to you?

24 A. No. Only the social workers. They weren't independent,
 25 they came to see you with an agenda, really.

Page 28

1 Q. Were you ever told in any of the cottages who you might
 2 go and speak to if you had a problem or something you
 3 were worried about? Was anyone ever nominated as
 4 a person you could complain to?
 5 **A. No. When I think about it -- all the times they**
 6 **physically hit you and everything, if they physically**
 7 **hit you for doing trivial things, if you could then**
 8 **report them for doing certain things, imagine the**
 9 **consequences that would come of that?**
 10 Q. They were big grounds, weren't they? Shirley Oaks was
 11 a big place. It would have felt a big place, did it?
 12 **A. Yes, it was 78 acres or something like that. It was**
 13 **massive. So you could be there, you could be anywhere**
 14 **on that site and nobody would really know what was**
 15 **happening to you unless you were actually physically in**
 16 **front of the house. You didn't get any specific**
 17 **instructions: "Only play in this area. Don't do this,**
 18 **don't do that". It was a huge site.**
 19 Q. Do you think, when you look back, that people were
 20 turning a blind eye to what was happening to you or that
 21 they didn't know it was happening to you? They didn't
 22 see it? What do you think? What's your view?
 23 **A. I think they were turning a blind eye. They -- the**
 24 **individuals knew some of the stuff that was going on,**
 25 **but they didn't want to rock the boat. You know, that**

Page 29

1 their bodies, what should happen, shouldn't happen, to
 2 be educated in knowing about how to keep safe, really,
 3 and then what shouldn't be happening?
 4 **A. I think the kids are taught somewhere along the line,**
 5 **you know, nobody should be touching them above the knee,**
 6 **nobody should be touching them below the waist, or**
 7 **whatever. I think it needs to be age appropriate.**
 8 Q. Was that ever said to you at any time through your time
 9 in care?
 10 **A. No.**
 11 Q. Never? Not when you were little, there was no
 12 discussion around that?
 13 **A. I suppose the people who worked there would say that's**
 14 **not relevant. I think that would be their excuse at the**
 15 **time, or they wouldn't be interested.**
 16 MS LANGDALE: Thank you very much. I haven't got any
 17 further questions. I don't know if the chair has
 18 further questions.
 19 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. No. We have no questions,
 20 but I'd like to thank the witness very much. You've
 21 given us a very clear description of life at
 22 Shirley Oaks and afterwards, and we are grateful for
 23 your assistance. Thank you very much.
 24 **A. Thank you.**
 25 **(The witness withdrew)**

Page 31

1 **would just cause more problems.**
 2 Q. Can I ask you -- we are asking everybody in your
 3 position -- to think about recommendations or how things
 4 might be different for children now in care, or how they
 5 might be different. What do you think would be
 6 important to do to make sure what you experienced wasn't
 7 experienced by anyone now?
 8 **A. Well, I think people are accountable. You've got to**
 9 **have certain guidelines, like kids aren't left alone**
 10 **with adults. Depending on how old the kids are, I think**
 11 **the kids should be told the rules, so if anything**
 12 **happens to them, like -- there needs to be a support**
 13 **network in place. If anything happens to them, they**
 14 **need to know who the nominated people they should go to,**
 15 **what action they should be taking and how they can take**
 16 **it, and I think you need to look a lot closer to the**
 17 **individuals and who works there, and also tell the kids**
 18 **that, if they report something, they will be believed**
 19 **and show them there is a proven support network behind**
 20 **them. Because, otherwise, nobody is going to report**
 21 **anything.**
 22 Q. What about for very young children? You say when you
 23 first found yourself in the first home, trying to make
 24 sense of what was going on, do you think it's important
 25 for children to understand just the language around

Page 30

1 MS LANGDALE: Chair, I see the time. It may be the right
 2 time to take a break and reconvene at 11.45 am.
 3 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 11.45 am. Thank you.
 4 (11.19 am)
 5 (A short break)
 6 (11.45 am)
 7 MS LANGDALE: May LA-A327 be sworn.
 8 WITNESS LA-A327 (affirmed)
 9 Examination by MS LANGDALE
 10 MS LANGDALE: LA-A327, you know I am using a number rather
 11 than your name, and today you and I will not be using
 12 any names when you're giving your evidence.
 13 **A. Okay.**
 14 Q. If either of us make a mistake, I can ask for
 15 a restriction order to deal with that, but that's our
 16 intention, that we don't refer to names in the
 17 statement.
 18 You have provided a statement dated 27 May 2020.
 19 Can you confirm for us that that's true and accurate, as
 20 far as you're concerned?
 21 **A. Yes, I can confirm that.**
 22 Q. Let me ask you some questions, then, arising from it.
 23 We know that you didn't go into care until you were
 24 about aged 12, and we will come to that in a moment.
 25 Can you tell us a few things about what you remember

Page 32

1 about being at home, anything that you want to tell us
 2 about being at home before the age of 12?
 3 **A. Yes. So I lived at home with my mum, my dad, my twin**
 4 **sister, my brother and my older sister. From probably**
 5 **the age of about 4, I can remember abuse by my mother.**
 6 **I can remember being locked in wardrobes and being tied**
 7 **up in chairs. As time went on, I was never given pocket**
 8 **money. My twin sister, she got everything, so she was**
 9 **bought clothes and things like that.**
 10 **There was one incident where she had been taken from**
 11 **Brockwell Park by a man, and when, obviously, she was**
 12 **brought back by the police, my mum blamed me. We was**
 13 **both in Brockwell Park. But we was only about 7, and we**
 14 **was on our own. And I was made to wear her clothes for**
 15 **the week.**
 16 **Coming later on, my mum put a bottle over my head**
 17 **and knocked me unconscious. It was just really abusive.**
 18 **Some of the abuse was also by my older sister --**
 19 Q. Sorry to interject there, but do you remember, when you
 20 were about 12, your mum taking you to a police station?
 21 Can you tell us the circumstances of that?
 22 **A. So I started running away, and I was seeing a boy, and**
 23 **he was 15 at the time, and on one occasion, my mum**
 24 **dragged me to the police station, where I was put in**
 25 **a cell, and then, a little while later, a doctor came in**

Page 33

1 **supposed to stand up. And when he demanded I stand up,**
 2 **I said no. He then obviously restrained me and I was**
 3 **placed in a cell which they had in the establishment,**
 4 **and I was left there for four hours. That was my first**
 5 **day in this place.**
 6 Q. Did anyone come and see you when you were in that cell?
 7 Did people talk about it as a cell?
 8 **A. Yes, it's a cell. It looks exactly -- it looked exactly**
 9 **like a cell in a police station. It was a cell with,**
 10 **you know, a very small bed, iron bed, concreted into the**
 11 **floor, a thin mattress, and that's it. It just looked**
 12 **like a cell.**
 13 **I was let out after four hours. During the**
 14 **four-hour period, no-one came to see me. Like I said,**
 15 **that was my first day. Life was hell there. It was**
 16 **like hell. I was [redacted] person there.**
 17 Q. How many dormitories? How many of you slept in
 18 a dormitory?
 19 **A. So the dormitories were -- it was like four or five**
 20 **children in a dormitory. But I only was in a dormitory**
 21 **for, I don't know, maybe three/four weeks. I was then**
 22 **removed from the dormitory and taken to a lower landing**
 23 **where there was maybe four/five single rooms, and I was**
 24 **taken there and I was locked in every single night.**
 25 Q. How did you feel about the door being locked and being

Page 35

1 **and they brought a trolley in, and my mum came in, and**
 2 **I was forced to undergo physical examinations, which**
 3 **were quite intrusive --**
 4 Q. Was it internal examinations?
 5 **A. Yes. That was all done in a cell by a doctor and in the**
 6 **presence of my mother while I was --**
 7 Q. Sorry. Was that related to your mother's concerns about
 8 whether you'd had sex with that boy or not?
 9 **A. Yes. Yes.**
 10 Q. So she was present, a doctor was present, and that was
 11 all happening to you in a cell?
 12 **A. Yes.**
 13 Q. You were then taken to Cumberlow Lodge, weren't you?
 14 That's where you went to?
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. Can you tell us what it was like there? Without telling
 17 us about other children there, tell us just about your
 18 experience there?
 19 **A. It started straight away for me. So on the first --**
 20 **I got there in the evening, and on the very first**
 21 **morning, we were sitting there eating breakfast. There**
 22 **was about eight/ten of us in the house, and a man come**
 23 **in that I know to be the head of the establishment, and**
 24 **when he come into the dorm and everyone stood up,**
 25 **I didn't, I just sat down, I didn't know we were**

Page 34

1 in a room like that?
 2 **A. I knew, even at that young age, that if there was ever**
 3 **a fire, I'd die. There was bars on the windows, most of**
 4 **the children were upstairs or on different landings.**
 5 **I was the only child in this landing. So the first --**
 6 **even at that age, I knew that, if there was a fire, the**
 7 **first people they'd go and get would be all the children**
 8 **up in the top dorms. So I knew that.**
 9 Q. You were worried about that? You remember thinking
 10 about that?
 11 **A. Oh, yeah, every night I knew, if there was a fire,**
 12 **that's it, I'm a goner. That's what I used to think.**
 13 Q. Do you remember a security man when you were there as
 14 well at that institution? What did that security man
 15 do?
 16 **A. Maybe once a week, twice a week, a certain security**
 17 **guard would open my door and he'd shine a torch at me**
 18 **and then he would come into the room and he would slowly**
 19 **pull some of the cover off me, so he'd slowly do that.**
 20 **It felt like forever to me, but obviously it was**
 21 **probably a couple of minutes, but he'd just stand there**
 22 **staring at me, shining the torch and then you'd hear the**
 23 **heavy breathing and then it would all stop and he'd go.**
 24 **He never touched me.**
 25 Q. But he was in your room and staring at you and you

Page 36

1 didn't know who he was?
 2 **A. He'd come right in. Every other security, if they**
 3 **needed to open a door, they would just open the door,**
 4 **shine the torch, you know, to make sure I was there,**
 5 **I assume, and go, lock the door again. This security**
 6 **guard came into the room and came up to the far end of**
 7 **the room where I was.**
 8 Q. When you were there, did you get any education at all?
 9 **A. There was minimal education, so the course of the day**
 10 **was, you woke up and you went and had your breakfast,**
 11 **you then had to put overalls on and you'd work from**
 12 **9.00 o'clock until 11.30, and the work would be**
 13 **polishing the staircases, washing the stairs. You'd**
 14 **have to go into the main building and clean the same**
 15 **things every day. Half 11, you'd come back down, you'd**
 16 **have what they called a tea break, and then at**
 17 **12.00 o'clock, you'd go to education, which would be art**
 18 **or pottery, sewing and maybe -- I think there was an**
 19 **English teacher there as well. And then you'd be there**
 20 **for an hour. You'd go back for lunch for an hour.**
 21 **You'd go back -- so maybe two hours, two and a half**
 22 **hours a day of education, and that education mainly**
 23 **consisted of art, sewing and pottery. So there wasn't**
 24 **nothing robust with that. I wasn't learning anything at**
 25 **all.**

Page 37

1 ascribe to that? What was going on?
 2 **A. That man was clearly getting sexual pleasure. When**
 3 **I look back, I think the more we struggled and moved,**
 4 **the better it was for him.**
 5 Q. At the time, would you have been aware of whether that
 6 was happening or not, or what was the experience at the
 7 time? Can you remember?
 8 **A. No --**
 9 Q. How (overspeaking) were you?
 10 **A. I know I was 12. I wasn't much aware of anything sexual**
 11 **then. You know, this is kind of like 40 years ago. You**
 12 **know, I'd had no sexual education, and things like that.**
 13 **Even my encounter with the boy, I don't know what**
 14 **happened. So it was -- and when we was actually in the**
 15 **place, we laughed, you know, about it with each other,**
 16 **going, "You're going to have to -- like, it's going to**
 17 **have to be your turn next". Even in conversation with**
 18 **other kids, like, "Errgh, we have got to sit while he**
 19 **shakes". Even in conversation, none of us realised.**
 20 Q. Was there anyone that you could have told about that,
 21 any other adult, at the time or not?
 22 **A. The other adult witnessed with it. So, you know, the --**
 23 **a couple of the adults when this was happening -- this**
 24 **man didn't care where he done it. He would grab you in**
 25 **front of other staff and make out it was, you know, he**

Page 39

1 Q. You say in your statement that sometimes you were
 2 restrained when you were there. Tell us what that
 3 means?
 4 **A. I was always restrained. Restrained would be your arms**
 5 **were pulled right to the top of your back, you know,**
 6 **like a policeman would do to a felon, and they'd go**
 7 **right to the top of the back, and then usually with**
 8 **restraining you'd either -- I'd either be put in my**
 9 **single room and locked in again or I'd go straight to**
 10 **a cell, and that was just regular. I was quite**
 11 **boisterous, and so, eventually, they forced me to take**
 12 **tranquillisers.**
 13 Q. Tell us about a particular member of staff, not by name,
 14 but what that member of staff would do to you?
 15 **A. There was a member of staff, so what would happen is, if**
 16 **we were being emotional, upset or we was getting**
 17 **agitated, this member of staff would make us sit on his**
 18 **lap. He would hold us with his arms across our waist so**
 19 **there was no escape, and he would just make us sit**
 20 **there, and we'd sit there and obviously we would be**
 21 **trying to get off and, you know, and then he'd start**
 22 **shaking, like uncontrollably shaking, and then, once the**
 23 **shaking stopped, he'd let us off his lap. And this was**
 24 **not just me.**
 25 Q. As you describe that, when you look back, what do you

Page 38

1 **was trying to help us, so -- and also the fact that,**
 2 **like, telling other staff in the place -- some of**
 3 **the staff were really abusive anyway, so, you know, the**
 4 **less attention we kind of brought to ourselves, the**
 5 **easier it was for us, so -- but it wasn't a big secret.**
 6 Q. Were all of the staff abusive? Were some of them nice?
 7 Can you remember now, or not really?
 8 **A. There is a couple -- again, not every single one of them**
 9 **was abusive. There were some really nice staff there.**
 10 **So, yeah.**
 11 Q. But beyond the girls discussing between themselves or
 12 making comments about it, any unease you felt, you
 13 didn't feel able to tell any of those members of staff
 14 at the time?
 15 **A. No. You just didn't. The staff witnessed loads of**
 16 **things. You've actually come off screen. Can you still**
 17 **see me?**
 18 Q. Yes, I can see you. Sorry.
 19 **A. In fear of reprisal. So even at that younger age, we**
 20 **knew that if, you know, we got on their nerves,**
 21 **something would happen to us. So ...**
 22 Q. So were you aware of their power and authority over you
 23 all the time in that place?
 24 **A. All the time. Even to the extent that -- for me, even**
 25 **to the extent that, the whole time I was in this place,**

Page 40

1 I see no-one, no-one at all. You know, I was in
 2 there -- although there was a six-week break, I was in
 3 there a year, and in that year I seen no-one from the
 4 outside.
 5 Q. Was there a social worker at all from the outside coming
 6 in?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. No social worker, no visitor?
 9 A. No. I had a visit once, in the first week I was there,
 10 from my parents. They never came back. I had a visit
 11 from a social worker -- I think he was a social worker,
 12 and this was all in the first four weeks. And then
 13 a visit -- I had to see a psychiatrist while I was in
 14 there as well. And that was all within the first four
 15 weeks. I seen no-one else the whole time I was in
 16 there.
 17 Q. You also refer to being physically hit when you were in
 18 there. Can you tell us something about that?
 19 A. If we was rude to the staff, or things like that, they'd
 20 clip us around the top of the head. It wasn't, like,
 21 enough to make us dizzy or things like that, but it hurt
 22 if it caught the top of your ear, so ...
 23 Q. You then tell us in your statement that you were then
 24 sent to Shirley Oaks Children's Home for a period of
 25 about two months?

Page 41

1 to watch out for that person, you were told?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. But you never saw that person?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. You do tell us about an upsetting incident with
 6 a toddler that you saw who was crying. Do you want to
 7 tell us about that?
 8 A. It was one morning after breakfast, and all the other
 9 kids had gone to school. There was only a couple of
 10 other kids in the house, but I had no school, there was
 11 no education for me, and I come down from my bedroom,
 12 and I was in the main room, and I could hear the little
 13 girl screaming. She was only about 3. I looked at the
 14 cleaner, "What's wrong?", and the cleaner just said,
 15 "They're toilet training her", and so I thought nothing
 16 of it. But then the screaming went on for ages, and
 17 then it was turning into sobbing, and then I looked back
 18 at the cleaner and I said, "This isn't right", and she
 19 put her finger up to her mouth, like in a -- you know,
 20 "keep quiet" gesture, and it was then I knew -- you just
 21 knew that this kid wasn't being potty trained. So
 22 I left straight after that and I never went back.
 23 Q. You went back to Cumberlow Lodge for a period, didn't
 24 you, and then you were moved on. Did you ever talk to
 25 anyone about that brief time at Shirley Oaks and what

Page 43

1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And (interference) there, it was a very harsh
 3 environment. What do you mean by "harsh"? Give us some
 4 description of that -- the food, the place, the house
 5 parents?
 6 A. My first day there, and the other children were already
 7 telling me about a flasher, but when I got into the
 8 actual home, I never see the house parents, I see the
 9 woman once walk through to the main room and out again.
 10 They was never there.
 11 If I come in late, I got no food.
 12 Q. You say about the house parents in your statement they
 13 were always in their own office or talking amongst
 14 themselves?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Was that your impression? Did anyone give you any
 17 attention and talk about your journey or how you were
 18 with you?
 19 A. No. The only conversation I had was with the cleaner.
 20 I never -- although I see the house parent, the woman,
 21 once, I never spoke to her. So I never had no
 22 conversation. That's -- me being there didn't last long
 23 because of what I witnessed, so I just ran away.
 24 Q. You mentioned about the flasher. So other children had
 25 said to you a flasher came to Shirley Oaks and you had

Page 42

1 you had seen and how you felt about the place?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. You ended up, didn't you, at some point -- are you okay
 4 to carry on?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. You ended up in Calais Street, didn't you?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Let's go to your experiences there. Again, be really
 9 careful not to use names here. What was your experience
 10 there?
 11 A. So my time in Calais Street, that was when I knew I was
 12 in danger, in real danger, and it was because of
 13 the actions and behaviours of two brothers. One of them
 14 was in the children's home itself, the other one,
 15 although he was a looked-after child, I think he'd been
 16 given --
 17 Q. Don't say too much about the other children. Just say
 18 what happened to you.
 19 A. So in the time that I was in Calais Street, I was raped
 20 continuously. I was made to sleep in a bed one
 21 Christmas. It was -- the person who was in charge of
 22 the children's home, we was -- three of us -- four of us
 23 were taken to her house for Christmas, where she slept
 24 in the front room with another member of staff and all
 25 four of us were made to share her double bed. There was

Page 44

1 **time -- another time, where I was taken to another**
 2 **member of staff's home where she promptly started**
 3 **smoking cannabis and offered me some. There was loads**
 4 **of incidents.**
 5 Q. Going back to the time of Cumberlow Lodge, you had been
 6 prescribed medication, tranquillisers. Was that the
 7 future for you in childhood at various times or your
 8 teenage adolescence, being prescribed medication?
 9 **A. Sorry, could you repeat that?**
 10 Q. You say you were prescribed medication when you were
 11 a teenager at various points yourself?
 12 **A. No.**
 13 Q. You said in Cumberlow Lodge you'd had some
 14 tranquillisers. You'd seen a psychiatrist in
 15 Cumberlow Lodge. Did you (overspeaking) and have any
 16 medication throughout --
 17 **A. Previous to that, I think I was about 11, my mum took me**
 18 **to the doctors and said that there was something wrong**
 19 **with me, and they prescribed me depression tablets,**
 20 **I think. But that's all -- the only medication that**
 21 **I remember having. So when I got to Cumberlow Lodge, my**
 22 **belief is they asked my mother for the permission to**
 23 **give me these, but I know I said I didn't want them and**
 24 **they told me themselves they were tranquillisers to calm**
 25 **me down.**

Page 45

1 **live on. I never had a social worker, so during all**
 2 **this time, I had to get molestation orders out --**
 3 Q. You had to get an injunction, didn't you, in relation to
 4 someone you'd met at the home and --
 5 **A. Loads happened. I'm not even too sure -- when I had**
 6 **a caesarean, I was rushed into hospital, I'm not even**
 7 **too sure they knew that. So the police had to get --**
 8 **they went to my older sister to get permission for the**
 9 **hospital to do the operation.**
 10 Q. So they weren't aware that you were having a caesarean
 11 section and you were still in care at that point. You
 12 formally left care at 18, of course.
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. What kind of assistance were you getting then?
 15 **A. Nothing. So it was probably a week after my**
 16 **18th birthday they come to another flat that I'd finally**
 17 **been given, and they more or less just said, "Well,**
 18 **that's it now, you're 18", and that was it. I never**
 19 **heard from them again. So during this period, even on**
 20 **their last visit, they see me in a flat with just a bed,**
 21 **nothing else, no cooker, no fridge, no flooring,**
 22 **nothing, just a bed and a cot.**
 23 Q. When you say "they", was it a social worker who visited?
 24 **A. Yes, it was a woman social worker who come.**
 25 Q. How were you emotionally at that time? How were you

Page 47

1 Q. Going back to you when you were a teenager, there came
 2 a time, wasn't there, when you were pregnant as
 3 a teenager? How old were you then?
 4 **A. I fell pregnant when I was 15 and I was in Calais Street**
 5 **at the time.**
 6 Q. And you kept the baby, you managed to keep the baby,
 7 didn't you?
 8 **A. Yes.**
 9 Q. Where did you go with the baby? Did you go to a mother
 10 and baby unit or a foster --
 11 **A. They put me in a flat -- it was just a council house, so**
 12 **a council flat. That was literally it. I walked out of**
 13 **Calais Street and went into a council flat. No help, no**
 14 **furniture, nothing, and I was -- that was it. I was**
 15 **literally left to deal with it myself. No money, no**
 16 **nothing. Nothing.**
 17 Q. That's my next question. What support did you get?
 18 Let's break it down, financial and emotional support.
 19 You're a young mother then. You're in this council
 20 flat. What emotional support -- is any social worker
 21 visiting you, are you getting follow-ons --
 22 **A. Nothing. Once I left Calais Street, I never see**
 23 **a social worker again. The only time I see social**
 24 **workers was when I was homeless and I had to go to the**
 25 **offices to get -- where they would give me £20 a week to**

Page 46

1 coping?
 2 **A. If I'm honest, by then, I'd been through so much and,**
 3 **you know, having to steal your food to eat -- I didn't**
 4 **even understand, at that age, that this shouldn't be**
 5 **happening to me. I didn't -- I wasn't quite -- I didn't**
 6 **understand that, you know, this isn't how kids live.**
 7 **My perspective now is, well, why didn't I change**
 8 **anything, any of it? It's because all I remember is**
 9 **abuse and neglect. I don't have a childhood where**
 10 **I remember anything different, you know, and it's not**
 11 **until later on in life, you know, and obviously once I'd**
 12 **had my child, and, "This is not how it's supposed to**
 13 **be", you know, and so you don't fully comprehend it,**
 14 **even at 16/17. I didn't fully comprehend it, you know.**
 15 **I lived day to day.**
 16 Q. We have been asking everyone, and I want to ask you,
 17 what would you recommend to the chair and panel, what do
 18 you think needs to be done to make it different for
 19 somebody in care at the age you were, and particularly
 20 with your experience leaving care, what should be done
 21 when people leave care to help and support them, as far
 22 as you're concerned?
 23 **A. I mean, definitely with leaving care, there should be,**
 24 **like, minimum, a 12-month programme, you know, or**
 25 **a 12-month plan put in place, just so that, you know --**

Page 48

<p>1 to make sure that, you know, everything is going okay 2 for them. You know, children in care have less life 3 skills than what, you know, a child that was brought up 4 in a family, not through, you know, not one of, you 5 know, maybe the foster carers, but even today, a child 6 in care, they're not put in one placement and left 7 there. 8 Like, for example, one of my grandchildren, in 9 a year, he was already moved three times, and, again, 10 it's making sure, in a plan, a minimum of a 12-month 11 plan, that if there's family, they're, you know, bonding 12 with the family still, and, to be honest, this should be 13 done throughout the period the child is in care. 14 I'm a prime example of that. I left care with 15 no-one. I went into care, I had family. I came out of 16 care, I hadn't seen my family for 14 years. 17 Q. So you felt very isolated leaving, and you think 18 a package or programme to make sure the person has, 19 moving into independence, links, associations, support? 20 A. Yes, most definitely. Most definitely. It is the most 21 bewildering thing, you know, to become 18 and then all 22 of a sudden you're on your own. You know. Especially 23 if these children don't have families or they can't see 24 their families, that there's someone still there saying, 25 "No, we're still here", just having that, you know, you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 can pick up the phone to someone, whereas, you know, in 2 a lot of children's cases, when they leave care, they 3 don't have that. 4 Q. What about financial assistance? I mean, you describe 5 literally not being able to afford food and £20 a week 6 to live on? 7 A. That's me and a baby, yeah. 8 Q. How do you think financial support should look for 9 people leaving care? What's needed? 10 A. I think definitely the minimal when they leave care is 11 that they have the necessities and, you know, your 12 necessities look like somewhere to sleep, you know, 13 somewhere to be able to cook, somewhere to be able to 14 store your food. These are all necessities. And 15 I think minimal that the authorities need to make sure 16 that this is all in place, it's all paid for, they 17 haven't got to worry about any of that, and they're left 18 in a position where, you know, they're able to live 19 without any stress. These are things that normal 20 parents would give their children when their children 21 left home. You know, these are the necessities and 22 these need to be put in place. They need to be put in 23 place. You can't expect someone to come out of care, 24 especially if they're not working, and put them in 25 a flat and that's it, you're on your own. For some</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>
<p>1 people, it takes a long while to get everything, you 2 know, to build a home. 3 Q. Finally from me, in terms of reporting, I mean, what was 4 happening to you in your time at Calais Street and what 5 you witnessed when you were in Shirley Oaks, and also at 6 Cumberlow Lodge, when you described a man who used to 7 put you on his lap, what would have helped you to be 8 able to tell people at the time what was happening, tell 9 people in authority? How do you think that could be 10 made better for children in care and young people? 11 A. An independent outsider, like a mentor or something, 12 coming in, building a relationship with that child, so 13 that child is not scared to speak up. When you're in 14 the surroundings and the people you see all the time 15 are -- you know, you find it hard to be able to complain 16 about, you know, make any complaints, but if you've got 17 a bond with someone that is not attached to where you 18 are, then you can safely say how you're feeling and 19 things like that without, you know, worrying -- I think 20 a lot of it is all -- a lot of children will worry about 21 complaining about something but being left in that 22 environment as well, kind of thing. So, you know, for 23 me, it would help me if I had an attachment with someone 24 that was independent from the place I was in that 25 I could confide in. You know, even a social worker</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 coming to see me a bit more regularly would have helped. 2 I don't think, even today, that there is enough time 3 with the social worker bonding with the children. It's 4 kind of -- everything feels just kind of tick box. 5 Q. That's what we hear, "tick box". Is it that you were 6 worried that people don't really feel that they are 7 being cared for, someone is being kind and interested in 8 them? Is that how you feel -- 9 A. Yeah, yeah. I mean, yeah. I mean, just someone -- 10 a child knows -- like, even in foster care, that child 11 knows that them parents ain't their parents. They know 12 that. That child, you know, you might, you know, get 13 a foster carer that really is doing it because, you 14 know, that's her vocation, so she's doing it for the 15 children, but then you get the carers that, you know -- 16 you know, it's very black and white, it's for money, 17 basically, and sometimes children get involved in this 18 and they understand that, although they're being looked 19 after and cared for, this person doesn't really love 20 them, you know, and with that attachment of someone from 21 the outside who genuinely cares, you know, genuinely 22 cares about how they're doing and things like that, 23 because -- I don't know. As you get older, especially 24 in your teenage years, you need that, you need someone 25 saying, "Hey, you know, I know it's not what you would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

1 **have wanted, but we do care", kind of thing. Whereas**
 2 **some places you just don't get it.**
 3 Q. Your experience was that you did not feel that anyone
 4 cared, from what you're describing?
 5 **A. No, not at all. No. You know, you get that from the**
 6 **way you're treated as well. So you -- and even**
 7 **children, you know, at a young age understand it,**
 8 **whether, you know, there's a genuine affection there,**
 9 **whether it's false.**
 10 MS LANGDALE: Thank you very much for giving evidence.
 11 I don't have any other questions. I don't know about
 12 the chair, but thank you.
 13 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We have no questions for you, but
 14 I'd like to thank you very much for your evidence. We
 15 know it is not easy to recall such painful experiences,
 16 but you have been a help to the inquiry and we are
 17 grateful for you telling us about your experiences.
 18 Thank you.
 19 **A. Thank you.**
 20 **(The witness withdrew)**
 21 MS LANGDALE: Chair, the next witness is due at 1.45 pm so,
 22 a little earlier than usual, may I suggest we break for
 23 lunch now and reconvene for 1.45 pm?
 24 THE CHAIR: Yes, we will do that. Thank you.
 25 (12.21 pm)

Page 53

1 **all go out scrumping, when we shouldn't. But they knew**
 2 **that.**
 3 Q. That's fine.
 4 **A. It was big grounds, nice green grass, and I would just**
 5 **play out on there, and then we had a piggery with an**
 6 **army truck and we used to play in there and play games.**
 7 Q. You remember Christmas parties at that place, didn't
 8 you, at that cottage?
 9 **A. Yes, we had lovely Christmas parties and Christmases.**
 10 **We didn't go without. And you also went to other**
 11 **parties. So we had more than one Christmas party.**
 12 Q. You say in your statement you felt people did care about
 13 your welfare there, they were interested in you at that
 14 time?
 15 **A. Yes, yes.**
 16 Q. You went to Shirley Oaks Primary School at that time.
 17 How did you find the school there?
 18 **A. It was a nice school. When I was younger, I didn't**
 19 **understand a lot of it, but as I got older and in more**
 20 **classes, I couldn't do all the work because I couldn't**
 21 **read properly when I was there.**
 22 Q. Did you feel you got much support or help with any
 23 problems that you had at school, or not really?
 24 **A. No. No.**
 25 Q. You make the point that you went on to a high school,

Page 55

1 (The short adjournment)
 2 (1.45 pm)
 3 MS LANGDALE: Chair, may I call LA-A25.
 4 WITNESS LA-A25 (affirmed)
 5 Examination by MS LANGDALE
 6 MS LANGDALE: LA-A25, you know I'm using that number just so
 7 that we can keep you anonymous?
 8 **A. Yes.**
 9 Q. You know, as we go through your evidence generally, we
 10 are keeping other children anonymous and being careful
 11 where we use names?
 12 **A. Righto.**
 13 Q. We know that you went into care when you were about
 14 aged 3, and the first place you went to was a place
 15 called Daisy Cottage at Shirley Oaks. Can you tell the
 16 chair what it was like at Daisy Cottage?
 17 **A. It was a lovely house. I don't know how many children**
 18 **there was actually in there. The house parents that**
 19 **looked after us, they were really lovely and caring, and**
 20 **they treated us as if we were their own children, and we**
 21 **had -- oh, I can't think of my next ...**
 22 Q. But you describe, don't you, you went on rambles, you
 23 climbed trees?
 24 **A. Yes, yes. We went -- like, every day, we went out after**
 25 **our supper, and in the summer holidays we would, like,**

Page 54

1 and when you went on to that high school, did you feel
 2 you weren't where you should be for your age; in other
 3 words, you hadn't learnt what you should when you were
 4 at Shirley Oaks Primary School?
 5 **A. Yes. When I went there, I was in a special class.**
 6 Q. You then moved to another house, didn't you, at
 7 Shirley Oaks, and everything began to change for you,
 8 didn't it?
 9 **A. After a while, to that house.**
 10 Q. So what happened when you went to that house? What was
 11 different about the atmosphere when Mr and Mrs Hosegood
 12 became in charge as the house parents?
 13 **A. Well, once -- when the other house parents left, things**
 14 **changed, and it wasn't really -- didn't feel loving and**
 15 **I didn't enjoy it. But there was some staff there for**
 16 **a while that I did like, but then they all left, and**
 17 **then there were a couple of other members of staff.**
 18 **They were all right. It was just the Hosegoods.**
 19 Q. What about physically, first of all? How, physically,
 20 did Mr Hosegood behave?
 21 **A. Sorry, what do you mean "physically"?**
 22 Q. Was he physical? Was there hitting, or anything of that
 23 nature, first of all? How did he treat the children?
 24 Or how did he treat you?
 25 **A. Well, when I got upset from coming home from my nan's,**

Page 56

1 **I would cry, so he'd make me stand on the landing for**
 2 **hours.**
 3 Q. Because you had been upset?
 4 **A. Yes.**
 5 Q. What would he say to you when he made you do that, stand
 6 on the landing?
 7 **A. The more I cried, the longer I would have to stand**
 8 **there.**
 9 Q. Did you see that kind of thing happen to other children
 10 as well, that they were made to stand like that for
 11 a long time?
 12 **A. No, because there was all different parts where the**
 13 **bedrooms were, and that, so where I was, I couldn't see**
 14 **if anyone else was -- you know, if it had happened to**
 15 **anyone else.**
 16 Q. You tell us in your statement that there came a time
 17 when Mr Hosegood would look through a keyhole or find
 18 a way to look in the window if you were washing?
 19 **A. That was in another house.**
 20 Q. So when you went to another house, he was still in that
 21 house?
 22 **A. Sorry?**
 23 Q. He was in the next house that you went to as well? He
 24 was in two houses?
 25 **A. Yes.**

Page 57

1 **caravan he had, and I thought nothing of it, and sat**
 2 **there and was in there thinking, "Oh, I'm lucky to be in**
 3 **here", you know, and then he just come straight out and**
 4 **did it to me.**
 5 Q. At that time, did you feel you could tell anyone what
 6 had happened?
 7 **A. No, because it had got worse. I'd once told someone,**
 8 **but because of the way he was, he said I was lying and**
 9 **had been naughty. Then his threats got worse.**
 10 Q. What sort of threats did he make?
 11 **A. That he'd kill me, and then, when it got more worse,**
 12 **the things he was doing to me, he said he could get me**
 13 **locked up and no-one would believe me, and I'd be away**
 14 **forever.**
 15 Q. When he said that to you and you were just a teenager,
 16 did you believe that? Did you believe he could do that?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. You also tell us in your statement you were once told to
 19 sleep on the floor in the boys' room. Did you do that?
 20 **A. That was when we were on holiday.**
 21 Q. Did he try and tell you or get you to do things with
 22 another child that you didn't want to do?
 23 **A. Yes.**
 24 Q. Did he show films, or anything of that nature, to you?
 25 **A. Yes.**

Page 59

1 Q. What did he start doing to you in that house?
 2 **A. He'd come in late at night and touch me. It started**
 3 **with that. And then, if I'd be washing or anything,**
 4 **that's when he would look through the keyholes in the**
 5 **wash room, and when I was having baths, because there**
 6 **was a downstairs bath, he would try looking through the**
 7 **window so that he could see through that. So, in the**
 8 **end, I used -- when I was washing, I would have my back**
 9 **and that to the window, the wrong way in the bath. When**
 10 **I'd come out of the bath, he'd be there, and he'd make**
 11 **me drop my dressing gown, or undo it, and show him.**
 12 Q. He would just walk into the bathroom when you were
 13 there, would he? Just follow you in?
 14 **A. No, he'd be outside waiting.**
 15 Q. So you'd have to get past him to get out? Is that the
 16 position?
 17 **A. Sorry?**
 18 Q. Did you have to get past him to get out? Would he be
 19 waiting outside?
 20 **A. Yes. Yes, because there was a little bit -- there was**
 21 **a step, and then there was the back door, and there was**
 22 **only a little space.**
 23 Q. Then how did things continue with that? What did he go
 24 on to continue to do?
 25 **A. He once asked me if I would like to go and look in the**

Page 58

1 Q. You also mention being put in cold baths.
 2 **A. Yes. That was in Cedar House.**
 3 Q. You mention, as well, a cleaner who tried to help you in
 4 some circumstances, if you'd wet the bed, and how the
 5 cleaner could help. Do you remember that?
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. What did the cleaner do to try to help you? What
 8 happened there?
 9 **A. She'd wash my sheets.**
 10 Q. How was that helping you if she washed your sheets? How
 11 did that make life better for you? What would have
 12 happened if she didn't?
 13 **A. Because if he found them, he would have a go at me and**
 14 **say things and shout at me and say I'm doing it on**
 15 **purpose.**
 16 Q. You, at that time -- I don't want you to say which
 17 family members, but if you had a family member visiting
 18 you at the home, were you ever left to speak on your own
 19 with that family member or were you never left on your
 20 own with a visitor?
 21 **A. No, I wasn't.**
 22 Q. Did you have a social worker visiting at that time and
 23 talking to you about what it was like at the home?
 24 **A. I couldn't tell anyone. I was too scared to.**
 25 Q. There came a time, when you were around 16, when

Page 60

1 somebody else mentioned to the home about whether their
 2 child was being abused, didn't they?
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. Without saying who it was. And they mentioned it to
 5 you, too; they asked if it was happening to you. Is
 6 that right?
 7 **A. Yes.**
 8 Q. When that person asked you, what did you tell them?
 9 **A. I told them the truth and told them it was.**
 10 Q. Then it was some months, I think, before the police
 11 talked to you, wasn't it, and you were still at the home
 12 after you'd told that adult; yes?
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. In those months, the abuse carried on, did it?
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. You then had a part-time job on a Saturday. Tell us
 17 what happened one day when you went into work, how it
 18 came out and what you did?
 19 **A. I had the part-time job for a little while. It was the**
 20 **same job. Then it went on to full time. It was when**
 21 **I was in full-time work.**
 22 Q. What did you say to one of the workers when you went
 23 into work?
 24 **A. Well, on that day I got up and there was a police car**
 25 **outside and I knew what it was for, and I just broke**

Page 61

1 Q. When you got to the police station, what happened? What
 2 room did you go to? Who were you speaking to? Describe
 3 what it was like to go to the police station?
 4 **A. Well, I was sort of numb-like, you know, going out**
 5 **through the shop, everyone seeing you, wondering what**
 6 **you've done wrong, and drove me to the police station,**
 7 **and then I had to go up these stairs. It seemed quite**
 8 **long to me. And then they put me in this room, and**
 9 **then -- I don't know how long I waited, and then this**
 10 **man came in and he wanted to know what happened, and**
 11 **I was there all day, and then --**
 12 Q. When you were in the room, was the door locked behind
 13 you or not? Were you on your own in the room? Or can
 14 you not remember?
 15 **A. The door was locked when no-one was in the room.**
 16 Q. Then, when there's a police officer in the room, it
 17 wasn't locked and they were asking you questions. You
 18 said "for hours" in your statement? Did it feel like
 19 for hours? Do you know how long you were?
 20 **A. I don't know how long it was. It was light when I went**
 21 **in there and it was dark when they'd finished and I had**
 22 **to wait -- I told them that, like, you know, I said,**
 23 **"I can't go back there, because he threatened to kill**
 24 **me", so then they found somewhere else for me to go.**
 25 Q. How many police officers were asking you questions? Do

Page 63

1 **down. But I still continued into work.**
 2 Q. Had the police car already come to talk to you? Is that
 3 what it was about?
 4 **A. They weren't to talk to me. It was for Mr Hosegood, but**
 5 **I knew straight away what it was for.**
 6 Q. Were you taken after that to speak to the police, after
 7 you saw the car come for him, or were you speaking to
 8 the police before that car came to him?
 9 **A. Sorry?**
 10 Q. When you saw the car come and you knew it was for
 11 Mr Hosegood, had you already spoken to the police, or
 12 did you speak to them after?
 13 **A. No. No.**
 14 Q. So after you think he's gone to the police, you then
 15 speak to the police, or they come and speak to you?
 16 **A. I told the works, because they said what was wrong and**
 17 **I just said I was ill, because they put me in the sick**
 18 **bay and I wouldn't tell them and they kept going and**
 19 **I finally told them, and they spoke to my manager, and**
 20 **then my manager said he wanted to hear it from me, and**
 21 **he was -- said that, if I was lying, I would be fired,**
 22 **and then, after I'd told them all what had been**
 23 **happening, he got on to the police.**
 24 Q. Did you then get taken to the police station?
 25 **A. Yes.**

Page 62

1 you remember?
 2 **A. One.**
 3 Q. You say in your statement you asked the police "whether
 4 they believed me or not"? Did you ask that --
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. What answer did you get?
 7 **A. I said, "If you don't, then, you know, charge me,**
 8 **whatever".**
 9 Q. You actually said, "Charge me"? You said that to the
 10 officer?
 11 **A. Mmm.**
 12 Q. What did the police officer, in fact, say to you?
 13 **A. He said, "No", he says, "I know you're telling the**
 14 **truth".**
 15 Q. You say in your statement that the police officer said
 16 that to you, that they "did believe me". You said,
 17 I didn't think they did, but this was down to my
 18 mentality from growing up in Fir Cottage?
 19 **A. Yes.**
 20 Q. What do you mean? You know you've got the police
 21 officer saying, "Yes, I believe you", but you didn't
 22 think that they did, so why was that?
 23 **A. Well, all children tell lies and things. I did. But**
 24 **anything sort of I said or anything was, "Oh, you're**
 25 **lying about this, you're lying about that". One time**

Page 64

1 **I fell down the stairs, and they said that I didn't.**
 2 Q. The police then made sure you didn't go back to
 3 Shirley Oaks and you went to Chevington, didn't you?
 4 **A. Yes.**
 5 Q. That was a home for small children?
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. You obviously, at that stage, were much older, or not
 8 that young, anyway, and when you went to Chevington, you
 9 were told you had to go to bed at 8.00 o'clock and you
 10 say you did go to bed at 8.00 o'clock. What do you
 11 think was happening around that? Why were they saying
 12 that to you? What do you think, looking back?
 13 **A. Well, there was one lot of house parents and then we had**
 14 **new house parents. But this house parent, the first**
 15 **one, the head one, she just come in one day to me at**
 16 **8.00 o'clock and said, "You've got to go to bed", and**
 17 **I thought, "Oh, a bit early", so I just did what I was**
 18 **told.**
 19 Q. Did you feel isolated at Chevington?
 20 **A. Yes.**
 21 Q. Did anyone come and visit you or support you after what
 22 you had told the police? Did you get support from the
 23 police or anywhere?
 24 **A. No.**
 25 Q. We know that Mr Hosegood was charged with various

Page 65

1 Q. I think you tell us you struggled a great deal, after
 2 you reported this to the police, with your voice. You
 3 were very stressed, obviously, weren't you, by all of
 4 this?
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. When your voice went down to a whisper, did they have to
 7 find a different courtroom or some other environment to
 8 deal with that?
 9 **A. They had to stop the court hearing so they could get**
 10 **another room with speakers and get an interpreter.**
 11 Q. So that the jury could hear you?
 12 **A. And so that -- yes, and that the interpreter could tell**
 13 **them what I was saying as well.**
 14 Q. You said there was one point in court, when you had been
 15 giving your evidence, that you remember when everybody
 16 was laughing?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. What was that about? What happened?
 19 **A. Well, the judge asked me, is it true that I put**
 20 **a thermometer in a hot glass of water, and I said yes,**
 21 **and he said, "Why?", I said, "Well, all the children did**
 22 **it so we can get more time off school".**
 23 Q. You say the whole court started laughing, to the point
 24 the judge had to settle the court down.
 25 **A. Yes.**

Page 67

1 offences, and you were 17 when you were giving evidence
 2 against him in a criminal court, weren't you?
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. Can you just tell us what that court looked like? Were
 5 there people asking you questions in wig and gown? Can
 6 you remember now?
 7 **A. Yes.**
 8 Q. Did you have to go into the court where the jury was and
 9 the judge was and the lawyers were?
 10 **A. Yes.**
 11 Q. Had you seen the court or where you were going to give
 12 evidence from before you went to go and give evidence?
 13 **A. No.**
 14 Q. So you just walked in and then had to answer questions,
 15 did you, from the --
 16 **A. Yes.**
 17 Q. -- barrister? How did that feel when you were doing
 18 that?
 19 **A. Well, I was so scared and everything that sort of my**
 20 **mind sort of -- sort of went back as if no-one was**
 21 **there, and just sort of where a voice would come, or**
 22 **looking at the judge, and answer their questions.**
 23 Q. You lost your voice, didn't you? It went down to
 24 a whisper at the time?
 25 **A. Yes.**

Page 66

1 Q. How did that make you feel when that happened?
 2 **A. Well, they were laughing so much, I nearly wanted to**
 3 **laugh, even though I knew it was the truth, and it just**
 4 **seemed -- it was a bit of lightness, if you know, if you**
 5 **know what I mean. But I didn't.**
 6 Q. When Mr Hosegood was not convicted, and he wasn't
 7 convicted, how did you feel about that?
 8 **A. I wasn't told straight away.**
 9 Q. When were you told?
 10 **A. My sister told me.**
 11 Q. You went on, obviously, to leave care at 18. Did you
 12 get much support --
 13 **A. Just before I was 18. Sorry.**
 14 Q. No, not at all. Did you get much help and support from
 15 anywhere, given what we've described and everything you
 16 have gone through, and you were very soon 18 after that
 17 trial. Did you get much support leaving care at that
 18 time?
 19 **A. No, none.**
 20 Q. How were you feeling mentally in yourself at that time?
 21 **A. Not good. I had to leave my job because I was still**
 22 **losing my voice and I didn't think it was fair that they**
 23 **should have to put up with that, especially after**
 24 **a customer complained.**
 25 Q. This has lived with you, hasn't it, clearly, for your

Page 68

1 whole adult life?
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 Q. You say many things in your statement, and it is
 4 a matter for you what you want to say about the impact
 5 on it for you.
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. When you look back now, what could have been done to
 8 make it easier for you to tell someone at the time what
 9 was happening? What do you think there should have been
 10 to make it easier for you to say what was happening to
 11 you in care?
 12 **A. If there was -- I did tell one person once that, you**
 13 **know, if there was someone, like, who I could have**
 14 **actually -- because he said I was lying, you know, if**
 15 **there was someone, you know, you could go to and tell**
 16 **things about house parents, you know --**
 17 Q. Was that (overspeaking)?
 18 **A. Sorry?**
 19 Q. Was that another care worker that you told or somebody
 20 not related to Shirley Oaks, that you told about it at
 21 the time? Don't give me a name, but just --
 22 **A. Another care worker.**
 23 Q. So you met a care worker --
 24 **A. They did try and find out, but he said I was lying.**
 25 Q. Mr Hosegood said you were lying to the care worker?

Page 69

1 **A. Yes.**
 2 Q. First of all, you talk about tighter checks on
 3 individuals working. What do you think about that?
 4 What do you think needs to be done?
 5 **A. Sorry?**
 6 Q. What do you think needs to be done about tighter checks
 7 on individuals?
 8 **A. What I mean by that, it's like, you know, have checks to**
 9 **make sure that they haven't been -- oh, I can't find the**
 10 **right word for it -- like, done anything to children.**
 11 Q. Offended against children? No criminal acts towards
 12 children?
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. You also say, when a child makes an allegation, their
 15 mental and physical well-being ought to be paramount?
 16 **A. Yes.**
 17 Q. So how do you see that, what do you mean by that? What
 18 needs to happen when someone like you makes the
 19 allegation that you did and have that experience?
 20 **A. Well, someone -- you know, if they feel you're depressed**
 21 **or anything, and everything, they should, you know, give**
 22 **you help and make sure you're okay.**
 23 Q. Would you have been helped by counselling and support to
 24 talk through the traumatic things you had gone through?
 25 **A. Yes, I would have been helped.**

Page 71

1 **A. Yes.**
 2 Q. So you told somebody who asked Mr Hosegood and he just
 3 said you were lying?
 4 **A. Mmm.**
 5 Q. Did the care worker come back and tell you that, that he
 6 had said you were lying, or did the care worker not talk
 7 about it with you again?
 8 **A. No, she told me -- oh, sorry, they told me that he said**
 9 **I was lying.**
 10 Q. Did you ever have a social worker that talked to you
 11 throughout your time in care, or not?
 12 **A. We all had social workers.**
 13 Q. Did you have one that made you feel that they could get
 14 to know you or cared about you?
 15 **A. Sorry?**
 16 Q. Did you have one that made you feel they actually cared
 17 about you, or were interested in you?
 18 **A. When I was younger, there was a social worker, but**
 19 **I can't remember her name.**
 20 Q. But not when you were a teenager when all this was
 21 happening?
 22 **A. No.**
 23 Q. You give the chair and panel, in your statement, some
 24 recommendations or ideas about how children in care can
 25 be kept safer and should be kept safer than you were.

Page 70

1 Q. You say:
 2 "The counselling provided ought to be by an
 3 organisation or agency that has specialist expertise in
 4 working with young people who have been affected by and
 5 experienced sexual abuse."
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. You also say:
 8 "All local authorities and organisations working
 9 with young people should not only have a safeguarding
 10 policy for the health and safety of their children, but
 11 a definite vision of how to implement their procedures."
 12 What do you mean by that, a vision of implementing
 13 procedures? What are you thinking about that?
 14 **A. Sorry, could you explain what "implementing" means,**
 15 **please?**
 16 Q. Do you think they need to make sure that whatever they
 17 say is going to happen, happens in practice?
 18 **A. Yes. Yes, definitely. Yes.**
 19 Q. So not just talk the talk; walk the walk?
 20 **A. Yes, definitely, in all cases.**
 21 Q. Sorry, "in all ..."?
 22 **A. In all cases.**
 23 Q. You tell us in the final paragraph of your statement
 24 that you received a letter of apology from
 25 Lambeth Council which you collected personally. Tell us

Page 72

<p>1 about that letter of apology and how that made you feel 2 to get that letter of apology? 3 A. Well, I felt relieved, because it sort of meant me, you 4 know, finding the -- I know it was all true, even though 5 it -- it gave me a sense that I was believed, after all, 6 and they were sorry. But it isn't this Lambeth that 7 needs to be sorry. 8 Q. When you say how that felt, you had been told by so many 9 people that you weren't believed. How important was it 10 for Lambeth to say to you that you are, and that that 11 had happened? 12 A. An awful lot. 13 MS LANGDALE: No further questions, thank you. Chair? 14 A. Thank you. 15 THE CHAIR: We have no questions, but I would like to thank 16 the witness very much for her evidence today. We are 17 grateful to you for telling us about your truly shocking 18 experiences, and we are aware how difficult this must 19 have been for you. So thank you very much. 20 A. Thank you. 21 (The witness withdrew) 22 MS LANGDALE: Chair, we will now resume, I think, at 23 3.00 pm, and after the break we will be live streaming 24 and going to Ms Nice of counsel for the gist table. 25 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We will return at 3.00 pm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 (2.21 pm) 2 (A short break) 3 (3.00 pm) 4 MS NICE: Chair and panel, I will now read in the evidence 5 of complainant core participants, those who, as 6 children, were in the care of Lambeth and who are not 7 giving oral evidence. I will be doing this today and on 8 at least one other date. 9 This evidence has been summarised in tabular form. 10 The purpose of the table is to reflect the evidence of 11 those core participants in such a way that their voice 12 is heard by the inquiry, to assist the inquiry in 13 understanding the nature and extent of allegations of 14 sexual abuse made by children in the care of 15 the Lambeth Council. 16 The evidence has been summarised by reference to 17 thematic issues relevant to the inquiry, namely, the 18 experience of those children of being in care, 19 institutional responses to any allegations made and the 20 barriers to making such disclosure, after-care provision 21 made by the council following the child's discharge from 22 care and the loss of education and opportunity 23 consequent upon the child's experiences. 24 Some complainant core participants have also made 25 recommendations regarding how institutional responses to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>
<p>1 allegations of child sexual abuse could be improved. 2 Statement of WITNESS LA-A308 (read) 3 MS NICE: I will begin by reading in the account provided by 4 LA-A308. He was placed at Shirley Oaks in the late 5 1930s. He describes Shirley Oaks as "a frightening 6 place for both me and my brother" and he refers to 7 violent punishments, children being force-fed until they 8 were sick, and having soap put in his eyes and being 9 humiliated by LA-F276, who was in charge of the house. 10 He also describes the sadness of being prevented 11 from speaking to his mother: 12 "When my mother would call us, LA-F276 would tell 13 her that we were not there. We were there and we could 14 hear the conversation. That would leave me and my 15 brother in tears." 16 He recalls an incident and violent sexual assault by 17 the house mother LA-F276. He says: 18 "It was very painful. I was crying at the time. 19 After that, she pushed me onto the floor on my back, 20 grabbed my ankle and proceeded to beat the sole of my 21 foot with a wooden-backed hairbrush. This was also very 22 painful. This happened about five or six times over the 23 two-year period that I was at Shirley." 24 LA-A308 has recently seen a psychiatrist who 25 diagnosed him with PTSD. He says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>	<p>1 "I am now 90 years old and the abuse I suffered at 2 Shirley I am still reliving. I feel that I am managing 3 much better since my case has concluded." 4 The psychiatrist diagnosed LA-A308 with PTSD as 5 a result of the abusive experiences at Shirley Oaks and 6 noted, but for the abuse, he would have been able to 7 pursue a more independent and productive life at an 8 early stage. 9 LA-A308 also says that his wife can see the effect 10 of the abuse. He says: 11 "It put so much fear into me for so long, I was 12 unable to trust anybody." 13 As to recommendations, he says: 14 "Staff who care for children should be trained in 15 recognising the signs of child abuse and how to deal 16 with concerns about potential abuse and disclosures of 17 abuse. The child should then be questioned in a safe 18 environment away from caregivers to ensure that they are 19 in a place where they feel able to share." 20 I will now move on to children placed in care in the 21 1950s. 22 Statement of WITNESS LA-A305 (read) 23 MS NICE: LA-A305 was placed at Shirley Oaks. She remembers 24 it as a cold, unfriendly place. She was distressed by 25 being put in a different dorm from her brother, who also</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 found it upsetting. On the first night, she remembers 2 she could hear him crying. She went into his room and 3 lay down on his bed and fell asleep. She was awoken by 4 the house mother dragging her back to her bed. She also 5 remembers being regularly shouted at and being insulted 6 and that the house mother was spiteful. 7 As to sexual abuse, she recalls an incident when she 8 was in the swimming pool changing room on her own. She 9 heard the door go and she was suddenly violently raped 10 by a man she did not recognise. She says: 11 "I started screaming and crying. He put his hand 12 over my mouth and threatened to harm me if I didn't shut 13 up." 14 This man she describes as having a distinctive musky 15 smell. He was older, with greasy black hair and 16 stubble. After the rape, LA-A305 went back to her house 17 and tried to report what had happened to the house 18 mother. She said: 19 "She didn't believe me, she called me evil, slapped 20 me across the face and sent me to bed with no tea." 21 LA-A305 then tried to tell another member of staff 22 that evening. She had come to her room because LA-A305 23 was still crying. This person listened. But LA-A305 24 says: 25 "It was never mentioned by anyone ever again."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 She has not made any more recent disclosure. She 2 says she still continues to suffer from guilt and 3 feelings of mistrust which she traces back to her time 4 at Shirley Oaks. As to her education, she was sent to 5 a convent school. She couldn't read or write, but 6 no-one realised, so she would be punished for not 7 completing school work, but she was not given adequate 8 help. She never received proper help learning to read 9 or write, something which seriously affects her to this 10 day and has significantly affected her employment. She 11 says she would have liked to have owned her own business 12 and believes she has the necessary skills, but issues 13 with literacy which stemmed from childhood remain 14 a problem. 15 Discovering of another family member suffering abuse 16 elsewhere triggered a serious mental health 17 deterioration and she left her own family for a while. 18 She says: 19 "It has taken time to get rid of memory of 20 the abuse." 21 Statement of WITNESS LA-A302 (read) 22 MS NICE: LA-A302 was placed at Shirley Oaks and at various 23 other care homes. She moved between numerous care homes 24 and schools. At Shirley Oaks, she recalls numerous 25 incidents of cruelty and violence, such as children</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>
<p>1 having their heads flushed down toilets, being beaten as 2 punishment and being made to eat in silence. She 3 remembers being constantly afraid. She describes how 4 her father died whilst she was at Shirley Oaks. She was 5 told by the Shirley Oaks welfare officer. She says: 6 "The tears just flowed and flowed. I was so upset. 7 I needed a hug and someone to console me, but no-one 8 did. I was left to walk out of the room on my own, 9 crying outside." 10 The only thing she remembers is the house mother 11 saying, "Don't be so silly", as she cried. She goes on 12 to describe extreme violence being used by teachers and 13 staff in schools she was sent to outside Lambeth. She 14 also describes being given medicine every day at 15 Shirley Oaks, which made her feel drowsy, and was 16 usually given at night-time or in the morning. At 17 a later placement, she also remembers being taken to 18 a hospital after being disruptive in school and being 19 injected with the same medicine. 20 As to the sexual abuse she suffered, she describes 21 a young boy who forced sexual activity onto her. Her 22 house mother's son also attempted to assault her. 23 LA-A302 was then raped by a group of older boys in the 24 grounds of Shirley Oaks. They took her to the boiler 25 room and then to the piggery. One boy would put a sack</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 over her head when he raped her. LA-A302 estimates that 2 this happened 500 times. She says: 3 "I don't know how we weren't seen or why no-one knew 4 this was going on." 5 She also describes sexual abuse by a teacher at 6 a later placement. 7 She complained to F64 in Shirley Oaks, the 8 superintendent, but no response is described. 9 Thereafter she says: 10 "There was no-one to speak up for me at the time or 11 for me to go to. I never had any visits or support." 12 She desperately wanted to speak out about the abuse 13 but she says she was scared. 14 Recently, her mental health has suffered as the 15 process of recording her experience has brought back 16 many bad memories. She has also recently reported the 17 abuse to the police, apart from disclosing details of 18 the rapes about which she says she is still so ashamed. 19 But she says the police weren't able to take any further 20 action. 21 At boarding school, she says: 22 "Although I was disruptive, deep down I was very 23 frightened and nervous about being there. At the 24 schools or homes that I was at, I didn't take any exams, 25 although I could read and write when I left."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

1 She also discusses the potential impact of being
 2 given the specific medication her notes refer to, which
 3 throughout her childhood she was given and which she now
 4 understands from her doctor may have caused infertility.
 5 But she states the biggest loss caused by being in care
 6 has been that, "I have lost my family and any chance of
 7 long-lasting relationships with my siblings".
 8 Shirley Oaks was LA-A302's first and then her last
 9 care home as she had been returned to it. She says:
 10 "I left Almond House in September just before my
 11 18th birthday. I had no help to find somewhere to live
 12 and no financial or other support. Basically, they
 13 washed their hands of me. I asked someone if he knew
 14 where there were rooms to rent and some were pointed out
 15 to me which were across the road from Shirley Oaks, so
 16 I stayed at one of those houses."
 17 She was on her own without any assistance.
 18 As to recommendations, she says:
 19 "A child should be told that if an adult asks them
 20 to keep a secret, they should tell another adult.
 21 Children's homes should have a help button to connect
 22 a child to the police. If a child alleges abuse, the
 23 alleged perpetrator should be removed, not the child.
 24 The child should never be punished for speaking out.
 25 Parents who abandon children should be prosecuted."

Page 81

1 touching.
 2 LA-A222 did not disclose any abuse at the time. He
 3 says no-one ever said anything about what was going on:
 4 "I was only 5 or 6 at the time. I just remember
 5 thinking that I was small, but in care, and that if
 6 someone told me to do something, then I should just do
 7 it. I do not think there was anything asides from me
 8 being in care that made me vulnerable to being abused.
 9 Obviously this also happened to a lot of other children.
 10 I think it was simply a case of us being isolated and
 11 away from our families. This, in and of itself, was
 12 enough to make us all vulnerable to possibly being
 13 sexually abused."
 14 He did give a statement to police three or four
 15 years ago. He says:
 16 "The police told me that they could not find F226 or
 17 any records about him or that he ever worked for the
 18 home so there was no prosecution. In all honesty, I do
 19 not believe that the situation was handled very well by
 20 the police. I remember that I had different case
 21 workers and that I would speak to one and then they
 22 seemed to move on and I would have a new one. I also
 23 found it difficult to try and get any information from
 24 them about what was going on."
 25 LA-A222 left school without any examination results

Page 83

1 Statement of WITNESS LA-A222 (read)
 2 MS NICE: LA-A222 was placed in a foster placement and then
 3 Shirley Oaks before being with his aunt and uncle. He
 4 has limited memories of individual house mothers and
 5 Shirley Oaks, although he recalls the swimming pool. He
 6 remembers not wanting to be left there and screaming and
 7 shouting. He says:
 8 "When visits were made by my mum and dad, I remember
 9 at the end of the visit clinging to them and crying not
 10 to be left behind. The staff would have to physically
 11 pull me away."
 12 LA-F226 was a teacher at the primary school. He
 13 abused LA-A222 by sexual touching, which he did to other
 14 children. He would put his hands up the boys' shorts
 15 and the girls' skirts. This happened regularly.
 16 LA-A222 also recalls a single incident when he was
 17 indecently assaulted by this man when he was trying on
 18 a costume for a school play. The teacher had insisted
 19 he remove all his clothes to try on the costume.
 20 LA-B47, an older child in the same cottage, also abused
 21 LA-A222 by way of indecent assaults committed in the
 22 toilets.
 23 LA-A222 was then cared for by his aunt and uncle
 24 after Shirley Oaks but he describes how they also went
 25 on to abuse him by way of indecent assaults and sexual

Page 82

1 and he has poor reading and writing. He says education
 2 was made worse by the abuse.
 3 He had to return to his mother to get out of
 4 Shirley Oaks. He says she was then violent and they
 5 lived with his father but had to fend for themselves and
 6 eventually he and his brother managed to get a flat. No
 7 aftercare is described.
 8 As to recommendations, he says he hopes children now
 9 are more aware and might be able to come forward.
 10 Statement of WITNESS LA-A324 (read)
 11 MS NICE: LA-A324 was also placed at Shirley Oaks and other
 12 care homes. Prior to arriving at Shirley Oaks, he had
 13 been abused by his mother's partner. He recalls
 14 arriving at Shirley Oaks in floods of tears. He
 15 remembers being unwell and in the sick bay and left in
 16 isolation. Thereafter, he remembers Shirley Oaks as
 17 a strict environment, quiet and insular, and being told
 18 things like, "Toughen up", when he was physically
 19 punished. He also recalls being given nightly medicine
 20 which he says "would knock me out and sometimes I would
 21 come round a day or two later". He felt more and more
 22 scared as time went on.
 23 After a while at Shirley Oaks, he began being
 24 subjected to sexual abuse. Members of staff would take
 25 him into rooms to meet individuals or couples where he

Page 84

<p>1 would then be assaulted and made to engage in sexual 2 activity. These adults would tell him to say he 3 couldn't tell or that he couldn't remember what had 4 happened if he was asked about what was going on in the 5 room. The abuse consisted of indecent assault, 6 attempted rapes and an incident of rape which he says 7 was extremely painful. Sometimes a little girl would 8 also be brought into the room and they would be made to 9 simulate sex. He remembers the staff member who would 10 take him into the room would say he was nice and clean. 11 He thinks this comment was linked to the weekly enema he 12 was also made to have. This also happened at the next 13 placement. He says adults would come into the placement 14 and sexually abuse him and that it occurred regularly 15 until he was moved again to another placement. 16 After the incident of rape, he was bleeding from his 17 bottom and he says he was scooped up by someone and 18 taken to the sick bay on site, where he stayed for 19 a week. He was examined by a doctor and nurse. He 20 says: 21 "I am not exactly sure what they were doing and 22 whether it was treatment or not. I recall being told 23 that it would get better. I believe staff came in 24 during this time." 25 No other investigation is described and he also says</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 that he developed physiological problems as a result of 2 this incident of abuse. 3 As to recent disclosure, he says that setting out 4 his experiences more recently has been very difficult, 5 as buried feelings have come to the surface. Whilst he 6 was in care, as time progressed, he says he became more 7 withdrawn and did not have many friends. He fell in 8 with a local group of boys who recognised he was 9 a target they could pick on. He also got a job in 10 a market stall and started missing school. His school 11 accepted that he did not attend full time. He says: 12 "At school I was bullied when I said I had been in 13 Shirley Oaks and I was told I must have been abused, so 14 it seemed it was common knowledge." 15 LA-A324 discusses how his life has been affected by 16 periods of depression, intrusive thoughts about the 17 abuse and problems with sleep. He has not been able to 18 discuss the abuse with anyone as he is too ashamed. He 19 says: 20 "I am angry and frustrated over how I was treated in 21 the homes and feelings of resentment and revenge have 22 always been there. Look at it now and think that all 23 the staff have probably died or the ones that are alive 24 are living on a nice pension and it is now left to me to 25 pick up the pieces."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>
<p>1 Statement of WITNESS LA-A271 (read) 2 MS NICE: LA-A271 was also placed at Shirley Oaks and many 3 other care homes. He describes how racial abuse was 4 a common theme throughout his time in care, that he was 5 often the only black child in the home or school setting 6 and subject to racist bullying. He says: 7 "I just seemed to be entertainment to the staff." 8 He was also aware that white children were given 9 more opportunities. He says: 10 "I began to realise I was getting differential 11 treatment and being held back from things like going on 12 holiday. It seemed to me that white children were 13 getting a lot more than me in terms of new things, 14 holidays, presents at Christmas and birthdays. I would 15 be told I was not going somewhere but the white kid next 16 to me would be told that they could go." 17 LA-A271 also recalls the use of physical punishment 18 and being subject to numerous beatings throughout his 19 time in care. As to Shirley Oaks, he remembers it being 20 run by a very strict ex-army man. LA-F145, the house 21 father at Shirley Oaks, was both violent and sexually 22 abusive. As punishment, he would slap A271, punch him, 23 stick his fingers down his throat, force him to strip 24 naked and make him sit in the cupboard under the stairs. 25 F64 would also cane him as punishment. He says that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 being hit with the cane or the slipper happened at least 2 once or twice a week. He was also regularly beaten in 3 school by the teacher LA-F276. 4 LA-F145, the house father of his cottage, would 5 indecently touch LA-A271 in the cupboard or the bedroom. 6 The assaults were violent. F145 attempted to rape him 7 on occasions. He says: 8 "I would be screaming, shouting, struggling." 9 This occurred once a month for the duration of his 10 time at Shirley Oaks and he was raped on a few 11 occasions. He also recalls an incidence of attempted 12 abuse by the boyfriend of his house mother which 13 occurred on a trip to her house. 14 He doesn't describe disclosure of abuse at the home. 15 Apart from one teacher who showed an interest in him, he 16 says: 17 "All the other teachers and staff seemed to have no 18 time for you at all. I did quite a bit of running away 19 from Shirley Oaks as I couldn't handle what was 20 happening anymore. When I eventually left Shirley Oaks, 21 I just cried, as it was such a relief, and I still 22 didn't really understand why I had been treated like 23 I had, for not really doing anything wrong other than 24 being placed in care." 25 LA-A271 did report abuse to local police, but they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 weren't having any of it, and no-one was arrested. He 2 does not describe recent disclosure, but he hopes that 3 closure in this case will help him try to come to terms 4 with what has happened and how he feels. Knowing that 5 Lambeth have accepted responsibility, he says, "However, 6 I feel that the damage was done. Nothing will ever make 7 up for how I was treated in care." 8 As to his education, he says he moved around so much 9 that he attended various different schools. He feels 10 very let down by the care system and still feels it now. 11 He developed a problem with alcohol and drugs which 12 helped him to cope better because it functioned as 13 a form of escape. Flashbacks and nightmares remain an 14 issue. After he left care, he felt the only way he 15 could give himself a chance was to live in other 16 countries. He says: 17 "I basically hate the care system for what it did to 18 me and I still feel that now in 2019. It's clear the 19 way staff treated children carried on long after I had 20 left, which deeply hurts me. Children should be the 21 most important thing in life for anyone and should be 22 given a fair chance and shown some guidance and care and 23 attention, which was never shown towards me. This then 24 affected me so badly that I felt I had to run away." 25 As to after-care support, he describes how he was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 convicted for theft and served a short period of time in 2 prison, after which social workers helped him find 3 somewhere to live, but no other after-care support is 4 described. Since then, he has worked most of his life. 5 However, he describes problems with drugs and alcohol, 6 which developed as a child as a form of escapism, 7 persist today. 8 As to recommendations, he says: 9 "Children should be given a fair chance and shown 10 some guidance and care and attention which was never 11 shown towards me." 12 Statement of WITNESS LA-A298 (read) 13 MS NICE: LA-A298 was placed at Shirley Oaks. She has 14 memories of her brother being badly treated at their 15 first care home, which was upsetting. At Shirley Oaks 16 she notes she was the only girl for a while. Aged 17 about 8, LA-A298 started being abused by a boy also in 18 the care of Lambeth who was aged about 17. He would 19 come into her bedroom at night and assault her. She 20 says he raped her on about 10 or 12 occasions: 21 "He would hold my mouth with his hands so no-one 22 could hear me trying to scream." 23 She was also abused by her own father on visits to 24 see her. He would take her into the coal shed and force 25 him to masturbate him. Her father went on to rape her</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>
<p>1 after she had left Shirley Oaks. 2 As to contemporaneous disclosure, she says: 3 "The boy was caught by a member of staff, naked in 4 my room, in the early days of the abuse starting. 5 However, she, the staff member, didn't do anything and 6 no action was taken and I wasn't questioned about what 7 had happened." 8 LA-A298 told her foster carers about what had 9 happened later on. At first they did not believe her, 10 but did then take her to the police station where she 11 made a statement. No follow-up action, investigation or 12 prosecution is described. She says: 13 "I didn't tell anyone else. I couldn't face it. 14 I was so confused and I couldn't turn to anyone and 15 I thought that I wouldn't be believed." 16 As to her education, she says: 17 "In terms of my employment, I believe I have been 18 severely hampered by not being able to read and write 19 properly and to fill in application forms for jobs. 20 I had to get others to fill in application forms for me, 21 which is embarrassing. I feel that if I had had 22 a better education, I would have had better job 23 opportunities and, therefore, life prospects." 24 She also notes: 25 "I have had issues with sexual sides of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 relationships which I think is due to my past and which 2 I think is connected to the thoughts of the abuse." 3 I will now move on to children placed in care in the 4 1960s. 5 Statement of WITNESS LA-A221 (read) 6 MS NICE: LA-A221 was also placed at Shirley Oaks. He 7 describes being separated from his siblings and how he 8 was not allowed to play with them. He was 6 years old 9 at the time. She says the home he was in was run by two 10 very religious women. He recalls being angry and 11 frustrated a lot of the time. 12 In his account of sexual abuse, he describes how 13 F224, the house mother, excessively touched him at bath 14 time, and on one occasion she also got into bed with 15 him. He says he found it confusing because F224 was the 16 mother he never had. One of his siblings has since told 17 him that he was also abused by this woman. 18 As to disclosure, he said he never told anyone at 19 the time because he was too afraid. He says: 20 "It was quite impossible for us children in those 21 days to speak to staff about what was happening." 22 He also says in his supplementary statement that 23 separating families within children's homes causes 24 families to fall apart and it means that they are not 25 there for each other as strongly as they could be:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 "When my family was separated in Shirley Oaks, we 2 were really scared to talk to each other, as we were 3 afraid that we would get each other into trouble. This 4 resulted in us not talking and saying what was really 5 happening to each of us. This makes me feel really 6 guilty, especially for my little sister, who killed 7 herself over what happened to her in Shirley Oaks. Even 8 as a child, what was happening to me, my family and 9 others made us feel scared and frightened to tell anyone 10 within the home about the abuse." 11 He has never spoken to police about his experiences 12 or been involved in criminal proceedings. He goes on to 13 say that he left school at 15 and he has been in and out 14 of prison since then. He is now supported by a mental 15 health team: 16 "I believe that my time at Shirley Oaks has messed 17 me up and that I have been angry about what has happened 18 ever since. Once I left, I was a different person." 19 As to recommendations, he says: 20 "Children's homes need another sounding board, like 21 a nurse, for children to speak to." 22 Statement of WITNESS LA-A24 (read) 23 MS NICE: LA-A24 was also placed at Shirley Oaks. During 24 his time at Shirley Oaks, LA-A24 was placed at numerous 25 different houses. At Cedar House, Donald Hosegood was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 his house father, whom he remembers as a violent bully. 2 He describes various incidents of physical violence such 3 as Hosegood smashing LA-A24's head against a radiator 4 causing his head to split open. Hosegood also sexually 5 abused him. In another house where LA-F282 was the 6 house mother, he describes being stabbed in the face 7 with a fork for not eating his food. LA-A24 also 8 suffered regular racist abuse. He says that one house 9 parent made up racist phrases for fun and the other 10 children would copy. The children were also often left 11 hungry. He witnessed violence against other children, 12 which was also really upsetting, and he describes in 13 particular seeing a house mother sitting a 2-year-old 14 child so hard she knocked the child out of his high 15 chair. He says being at Shirley Oaks "made my whole 16 life hell". 17 Hosegood would practice judo as a pretext to 18 sexually abuse LA-A24. He would purportedly try out 19 a judo move but would force his thumb into LA-A24's 20 testicles and try to insert his finger into his anus. 21 Sometimes LA-A24 bled from his bottom afterwards. 22 Hosegood would put him into a judo lock. LA-A24 says he 23 would try to resist but Hosegood would say, "What's 24 wrong with you? You're going to be a man soon". LA-A24 25 was a young boy at the time. LA-A24 believes that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>
<p>1 Hosegood attempted to rape him but that he passed out. 2 Hosegood abused him three or four times a week but he 3 could not say how long it went on for. 4 LA-A24 also remembers LA-A25 sleep walking. He 5 followed her into the kitchen. Hosegood was there. 6 Hosegood grabbed hold of LA-A24 and aggressively pushed 7 him out of the room. When LA-A24 heard LA-A25 returning 8 upstairs to her room, she was crying. LA-A24 also 9 remembers LA-A2, who was younger than him, and in 10 relation to whom he was quite protective. On one 11 occasion, he remembers hearing LA-A2 screaming and he 12 found him outside in the coal shed. A tall man he 13 thought he recognised as a staff member was running away 14 from it. When he went inside, LA-A2 was bleeding from 15 his bottom. LA-A2 begged LA-A24 not to tell anyone. 16 When LA-A24 left Shirley Oaks, LA-A2 pleaded with him 17 not to leave. LA-A24 remains deeply upset by LA-A2's 18 death and blamed himself. He felt that if he had stayed 19 at Shirley Oaks, he could have protected LA-A2 and that 20 he would not have died. 21 LA-F285 was a house mother who also abused LA-A24 by 22 way of indecent assaults. This occurred two to three 23 times a week. He says: 24 "If I ever wanted anything like new clothes, I had 25 to please her by performing sexual acts with her. This</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 abuse went on for months." 2 As to contemporaneous disclosure, he describes how 3 complaints about physical abuse were ignored. He 4 complained to LA-F93 about physical assault by Hosegood 5 which led to his head being cut open. LA-F93 told 6 LA-A24 that he was telling lies and to "man up". LA-A24 7 describes LA-F93 as a really nasty military man and 8 that, in fact, he should have called the police and 9 arranged for LA-A24 to go to hospital. 10 He also reported the toddler being assaulted and 11 knocked from his high chair. Nothing happened. He 12 says: 13 "Every time I complained, it was brushed under the 14 carpet. It seems like every time I complained I was 15 moved to a different house." 16 He did not report the abuse of a sexual nature until 17 he disclosed it to his social worker once he left 18 Shirley Oaks. He says he did not take any action. He 19 should have reported the abuse to the police: 20 "When I reported the abuse, I was not taken 21 seriously and it was brushed under the carpet. The 22 response was inadequate from the members of staff at 23 Shirley Oaks. The abuse should have been reported to 24 the police and there should have been an investigation 25 carried out by Lambeth Council."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 As to schooling, he says that school was "my only 2 escape from the abuse. I enjoyed school because it was 3 an opportunity to get away from Shirley Oaks. I was 4 bright at school. I was told I had potential and 5 I wanted to be a doctor. When I left Shirley Oaks, 6 I had to leave school and, due to this, my hopes of 7 being a doctor were gone." 8 He says: 9 "My life has been all 'what ifs' and 'maybe'. 10 LA-A24 cites various other problems he considers 11 continue to affect him, including trust and his physical 12 and mental health. He also says that he remains plagued 13 by what happened to LA-A2. 14 As to aftercare, he says: 15 "No-one looked after me once I left Shirley Oaks or 16 gave me any advice about getting a clothing grant or any 17 money. No-one supported me in any way. I went to live 18 in a squat." 19 Statement of WITNESS LA-A303 (read) 20 MS NICE: LA-A303 was placed at Shirley Oaks, Southvale and 21 then in foster care, including by F31 and F32 and then 22 at other homes. She says she became very withdrawn in 23 Southvale and describes being subject to racial abuse as 24 the only white child in the dorm. She otherwise has 25 limited memories of this home. She was placed at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 Shirley Oaks aged about 6. She slept in a dormitory 2 with two other girls, describes regular physical abuse 3 by the house mother, including being regularly slapped, 4 hit until her nose bled, made to stand on a high chair 5 facing the wall as punishment, or being made to stand 6 outside in the cold. This woman would describe the 7 children as "worthless". She says: 8 "I was frightened and scared, being so young. The 9 foster placement with LA-F31 and 32 was also very 10 unhappy. LA-F31 was physically violent and spiteful. 11 Each foster parent would hold her down for the other to 12 punish and shout at. LA-A303 also describes how her 13 sister died at Chevington just before her first 14 birthday. LA-A303 was not allowed to go to her funeral. 15 LA-A303 suffered sexual abuse by three different 16 boys at Shirley Oaks on different occasions. All the 17 boys were considerably older than her. LA-A303 was only 18 6 when it started. The abuse consisted of sexual 19 touching and digital penetration. LA-A303 would often 20 be forced to be naked. At some point, she was returned 21 to her mother's care but was then abused by one of her 22 mother's partners. 23 As to contemporaneous disclosure, she says she had 24 a male social worker at the time to whom she complained 25 about the house aunt and other staff. She says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>
<p>1 "I also complained to other staff at the time, but 2 I don't recall anything happening over it." 3 However, she says someone must have reported the 4 abuse by one of the boys. LA-A303 was summoned by the 5 house mother of this boy's house and told that she was 6 making trouble. She recalls that the boy then she 7 describes, as she says, "ran my head into a chain mail 8 fence. He was shouting and swearing at me saying, 'What 9 have you been saying?' Not being believed made me feel 10 isolated and even more scared". 11 She tried to tell her social workers in the foster 12 placement with LA-F31 and 32: 13 "They didn't react in any positive way and I do not 14 recall anything happening. I remember that there were 15 meetings that I attended. I was asked if I was okay. 16 I was not able to say anything as I just thought that 17 everything was my fault and that no-one would believe me 18 or take any notice of me if I did say anything." 19 More recently, she told her doctor about her past 20 and has been referred to some counselling. As to her 21 education, she says that at secondary school she was 22 bullied by people who discovered the sexual abuse by one 23 of the older boys at Shirley Oaks. After leaving care, 24 she developed a drug problem which functioned as a way 25 of escaping her experiences and forgetting about her</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>	<p>1 past. She then moved out of London and has been in work 2 since then. She says that, as a consequence of her 3 childhood, she has terrible issues trusting people and, 4 as a consequence, has found her relationships break 5 down. 6 She also suffers from regular flashbacks, both to 7 the abuse and in relation to her sister dying. These 8 incidents can lead to periods of depression and she has 9 also been diagnosed with PTSD. She does not describe 10 any aftercare at all. LA-A303 is very conscious, she 11 says, of what could have been. Time in care is like 12 a spider's web with all the consequences and problems it 13 has caused. 14 Her recommendations are that professionals should 15 not be too quick to write off what a looked-after child 16 has said. Too many allegations coming from children are 17 explained away as a child being emotionally damaged. 18 There should be more supervision of children in care, 19 monthly reviews and, if the child becomes withdrawn, 20 specific questions should be asked regarding abuse, not 21 just general questions about how the child is getting 22 on. 23 Statement of WITNESS LA-A115 (read) 24 MS NICE: LA-A115 was fostered by his grandmother and then 25 placed at various children's homes. In his first</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 placement, he recalls feeling scared and anxious all the 2 time: 3 "I was shuttled about between different people." 4 He then describes physical abuse, emotional abuse 5 and the neglect he experienced in the next home and says 6 he felt very alone. He was in this placement for what 7 he says was a long time. He remembers horrible 8 humiliation, such as being given a box of cornflakes as 9 a Christmas present when other children were opening 10 proper presents and how everyone was laughing at him. 11 He also refers to being given medicine before going to 12 bed "which knocked me out". He recalls being locked in 13 a dark cupboard. 14 In the foster placement with his grandmother, he 15 experienced neglect, verbal, racist abuse and 16 victimisation. He says that she also fostered his 17 half-brother, who had his own bedroom, whereas he was 18 made to sleep on a sofa under a coat. 19 This preference she appeared to have was noted by 20 the social worker but nothing was done. He eventually 21 moved to yet another care home where "There was no care, 22 just more abuse", he says, and then on to other foster 23 carers. 24 LA-A115 describes indecent assaults at the nursery 25 and being inappropriately touched under his clothing on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 numerous occasions by the nursery workers. He remembers 2 that, "Someone put their hand over my mouth to keep me 3 quiet whilst this was happening". At his next care 4 home, he remembers indecent assault by the doctor on 5 numerous occasions and that the woman who ran the care 6 home, LA-B37, would watch these medical consultations 7 and could see the director inappropriately touching him. 8 He says the staff and doctor constantly used excuses 9 to touch him inappropriately. He also remembers male 10 carers touching him inappropriately at bath time, which 11 would go on for ages. He also describes female carers 12 who would undress him and humiliate him. He says that 13 LA-B37 would tie a ribbon to his penis and make him walk 14 around the bedroom while the other female staff laughed 15 at him. He also remembers waking in the night being 16 abused by a man. This man would lie to LA-A115 and tell 17 him he had wet the bed. He says: 18 "It was all lies and manipulation so he could abuse 19 me. I would be panicking thinking I had wet the bed 20 again. I was always being laughed at by the other 21 children and I dreaded this. I felt everyone else had 22 an easy ride in there. I was the dunce who was always 23 picked on and made to look stupid. I remember telling 24 the night watchman to get off me and leave me alone 25 a few times when he was abusing me."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>
<p>1 He also describes abuse by other girls at the home 2 and by a female counsellor. At a subsequent home, he 3 was abused by LA-F97, the man who ran the home, in the 4 placement and on trips and by other older girls in the 5 placement. 6 LA-A115's mother alleged that her partner interfered 7 with him sexually, which she reported to the Lambeth 8 social worker, but that no action was taken. LA-A115 9 can now see how vulnerable he was at the time. At one 10 of the placements, he says: 11 "A few of the female carers said to me that nobody 12 wanted me. I was told repeatedly. I was told no-one 13 cares. That was why they could take everything out on 14 me and use me as they pleased. There was no control of 15 the children or care in that home. We were just left to 16 get on with what we liked and the staff were at it 17 themselves, so what did they care? We were already 18 sexualised from a young age. The staff in there were 19 taking opportunities. There was no protection in the 20 home. Visitors came and went without vetting or 21 control. Visitors we did not know were always coming 22 and going from the home. Parents of another child could 23 go in or out. There was no organisation or protection." 24 He exhibited sexualised behaviour but it seems there 25 was no investigation. He tried to disclose abuse at one</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>	<p>1 of his placements by telling his social worker. He 2 says: 3 "Nothing was done about my disclosure and I do not 4 feel I was believed." 5 He notes that whilst the abuse was always 6 frightening, it meant he was being spoken to and not 7 shouted at. He said he did not fully realise what was 8 happening until later in his life. 9 He believes he was targeted and says: 10 "I had been in care so long I was desperate for 11 attention and I was vulnerable in that way." 12 There has never been an investigation into the abuse 13 he experienced and he notes in particular that he would 14 like to know whether other children who were sent to 15 counsellors were, in fact, abused as he was. 16 LA-A115 was a bright child at school but 17 underachieved, he says, due to behavioural problems. He 18 was then sent to a special school and from there sent to 19 a residential school. The lack of proper qualifications 20 has really held him back in getting a job and he feels 21 angry about some of the things he has not been able to 22 achieve because of the impact of abuse. He says: 23 "I have not grown up properly because I did not have 24 the proper support, love and care I should have had. So 25 I turned out wrong. That remains a terrible feeling to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 have about myself which I have to live with." 2 In 1980, he stayed at a hostel but ran away, then 3 stayed with his grandmother but had to leave and slept 4 rough. His social worker noted it was impossible for 5 LA-A115 to build trusting relationships. The social 6 worker closing the file noted that he should have been 7 adopted in infancy and would have been in recent times. 8 As to recommendations, he says: less trust, more 9 checks and observations, especially at bath time. 10 Carers should be video recorded. Sexualised behaviour 11 and temper tantrums should never be ignored. There 12 should be limited staff turnover. Computers, phones, 13 should be spot checked. Having an assigned worker would 14 be good because that person can observe any changes in 15 the child. Children should have increased social work 16 contact and more frequent visits where the child is 17 taken out of the home and given the opportunity to talk. 18 I will now move on to children placed in care in the 19 1970s. 20 Statement of WITNESS LA-A355 (read) 21 MS NICE: LA-A355 was placed at Shirley Oaks and another 22 care home. She recalls unpleasant, spiteful punishments 23 at Shirley Oaks. At the second care home, she was given 24 the bare minimum in terms of living essentials and 25 otherwise had to buy things she needed from her own</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 money. She then moved to another placement owned by the 2 same care home but for older girls. She had an argument 3 with the house mother one day, who slapped her, and she 4 was made to leave and returned to her own mother. This 5 did not last long and she left home aged 18. 6 At Shirley Oaks, she recalls being aged 3 and being 7 indecently touched at bedtime by the house father and 8 his son. At the subsequent care home, there were two 9 caravans on the premises occupied by other families. 10 One of the men from these caravans, LA-F240, abused her 11 on multiple occasions. She knew it was abuse but he 12 threatened her. She also refers to the sexual abuse of 13 her brother, who ultimately killed himself. 14 LA-A355 told the woman running the second placement 15 about the abuse by LA-F240, but she did not report it to 16 the police. Another girl also reported abuse. She says 17 this was also brushed under the carpet: 18 "We were treated as though nothing had happened." 19 LA-A355 notes that she has been able to use work as 20 a distraction from depression, but that this has been so 21 severe at times she once attempted to take her own life. 22 As to recommendations, she says: 23 "Local authorities should have a better vetting 24 procedure when employing individuals to work with 25 children. Local authorities should be held accountable</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>
<p>1 for employing sexual predators without doing sufficient 2 checks on them." 3 Statement of WITNESS LA-A353 (read) 4 MS NICE: LA-A353 was placed at Shirley Oaks and at 5 The Melting Pot. As to The Melting Pot, she says: 6 "There were only black children in The Melting Pot 7 and all the staff were black. It was not a care home. 8 It was simply a house with a roof over it. We had no 9 support or care. They did not send us to school, so we 10 shoplifted to obtain food and clothes. My life in 11 The Melting Pot was horrible. It was a place run by 12 F248, who had three or four men work for him, brought in 13 to keep everyone under control." 14 She then moved to another home, which was better, 15 although there were no staff. LA-A353 had no contact 16 with her social worker, who she says never helped or 17 visited. 18 One of the staff referred to the girls as "whores". 19 When LA-A353 asked LA-F248 for food, he told her to go 20 to the local street known for prostitution. She says: 21 "The Melting Pot was a black home which Lambeth 22 placed us in. They did not care for us because we were 23 black. They simply left us there and did not look after 24 us and never tried to find out what happened to us." 25 She moved to another house, which was a positive</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>	<p>1 experience, and then stayed with another woman before 2 becoming pregnant. She moved back home, but was forced 3 to leave, and after staying with a friend was eventually 4 placed in a mother and baby unit. 5 As to the abuse she describes, she says she was 6 raped by three different men and two older boys at 7 The Melting Pot. She also witnessed a man come into 8 their bedroom and rape another girl. She says: 9 "Whenever these men felt like doing something 10 sexual, we were there. That was what we were there for. 11 It was terrible. There were no offices in 12 The Melting Pot, just rooms. These men were allowed 13 onto the premises whenever they felt like it and they 14 simply came into our rooms. There were only black 15 children in The Melting Pot and all the staff were 16 black. It was not a home, it was simply a house with 17 a roof over it. We had no support or care. They did 18 not send us to school so we shoplifted. My life was 19 horrible." 20 As to disclosure, she says: 21 "We had nobody to tell and nobody to support us. We 22 were too ashamed and scared to speak to each other about 23 it. We knew the abuse was wrong because these grown men 24 were hurting us young girls. It became a part of our 25 lives."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 She says: 2 "I will never get my childhood back, and I want 3 Lambeth to acknowledge what they did to me. I feel sick 4 looking back on my experiences. I suffered in silence 5 and I could do nothing about the men who were abusing 6 me. I was a child with nobody to help me. I could not 7 confide in the other girls in the homes as they were 8 also being abused. We simply accepted it as if it was 9 normal." 10 As to recent disclosure, she says that when she 11 requested her files from Lambeth, they sent the wrong 12 ones. She says: 13 "Lambeth had no regard for us. They treated us like 14 we were nobody. I left care with no schooling, no 15 education. I try and push through life, but I never got 16 to be a child." 17 As to aftercare, she describes having inadequate 18 food whilst pregnant and having to steal for it. After 19 her baby was born, she was placed in temporary 20 accommodation. She saw her probation officer, but her 21 social worker never visited. She had no aftercare. 22 In terms of recommendations, she says social workers 23 should work more closely with the children they are 24 assigned to so that the children can build trust and 25 confide in them. Children need better monitoring,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 including ensuring that they are being properly 2 schooled, fed and clothed and that they are not being 3 abused. Councils should not put children in care and 4 forget about them. Children in care should be treated 5 like human beings because treatment as a child will 6 affect an individual's entire life. 7 Statement of WITNESS LA-A351 (read) 8 MS NICE: LA-A351 was placed with foster carers and in other 9 care homes. LA-A351 suffered sexual abuse by her 10 mother's boyfriend and was homeless for a time before 11 Social Services became involved. 12 Initially she was placed with foster carers. She 13 says they lied to Social Services about the 14 accommodation. Her room was the utility room. 15 The foster mother examined her to see if she had 16 been having sex. She gave her at least three internal 17 examinations, after which LA-A351 ran away. She stayed 18 with a friend and she then stayed with some strange men 19 in the pub until she was abused and ended up in her 20 first care home. 21 Initially, she says, it felt like paradise because 22 she had a bed to sleep in and it felt safe. However, 23 she went on to experience violent and prolonged sexual 24 abuse. She became pregnant as a result of one of 25 the rapes. At this point, she had to be transferred to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>
<p>1 another care home and then had to leave. She tried to 2 return to her parents on various occasions, but they 3 threw her out. Social Services then put her in a B&B 4 and a mother and baby unit. 5 As to the abuse, she says she was raped by 6 six different male staff at the care home during her 7 time there. When LA-F256 raped her, she says: 8 "I was crying and struggling. He told the other 9 children to be quiet and not to say anything. He did 10 this to me at every opportunity he had." 11 On another occasion, she was being raped in the 12 bathroom when another man interrupted and he was 13 attacked. "The men that raped us", she says, "were all 14 the staff who were in charge of the house. They were 15 supposed to be in charge, but they did not actually do 16 anything to run the home. They always came into my room 17 together, they moved around together. 18 "During my time at the home, I felt like I was a sex 19 slave. It was about survival. I had to make my own 20 food and get my own bedding to sleep on. I had to hide 21 my possessions." 22 She says the abuse was witnessed by other children. 23 She and other girls caught numerous STDs and were taken 24 to clinics on occasions by men. The same men, she says, 25 were raping all the girls and spreading all the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>	<p>1 diseases. However, no social worker visited, no 2 officials came to the house, nobody came to inspect it. 3 She says: 4 "I had no contact with social workers while I was at 5 the care home. I had no-one to confide in or speak to 6 about the abuse. The individuals who were supposed to 7 be protecting me were the individuals abusing me. I was 8 an unwanted, traumatised child, further traumatised by 9 my abuse. I was in care for my own protection and I was 10 not protected. I resented authority for doing this to 11 me." 12 She recently sought her files from Lambeth, and even 13 then received no support, but was sent the wrong 14 personal files. 15 As to her education, she says: 16 "My daily routine was to go out and steal food as, 17 without this, we had nothing to eat, and then steal 18 anything else we needed, such as hand cream or 19 toothpaste. This was normal for us. Nobody cared if 20 I went to school. As a result of my experiences, 21 I couldn't work because I suffered with depression, 22 suicidal thoughts and I attempted suicide." 23 As to recommendations, she says that children placed 24 in care should be properly monitored. There should be 25 regular visits to foster placements by the authorities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 Children should be encouraged to make notes in a diary 2 about their abuse and feel confident and safe to share 3 this information quickly. There should be regular 4 checks on the backgrounds of individuals taking children 5 into care and also the individuals entering the homes as 6 visitors. 7 Chair, I note the time. That concludes the gist 8 evidence that's going to be read in for today. 9 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Ms Nice. That concludes 10 our business today. We will reconvene tomorrow. Thank 11 you. 12 (3.55 pm) 13 (The hearing was adjourned to 14 Tuesday, 7 July 2020 at 10.30 am) 15 16 17 I N D E X 18 19 WITNESS LA-A138 (affirmed)1 20 Examination by MS LANGDALE1 21 WITNESS LA-A327 (affirmed)32 22 Examination by MS LANGDALE32 23 WITNESS LA-A25 (affirmed)54 24 Examination by MS LANGDALE54 25 Statement of WITNESS LA-A308 (read)75</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 Statement of WITNESS LA-A302 (read)78 2 Statement of WITNESS LA-A222 (read)82 3 Statement of WITNESS LA-A324 (read)84 4 Statement of WITNESS LA-A271 (read)87 5 Statement of WITNESS LA-A298 (read)90 6 Statement of WITNESS LA-A221 (read)92 7 Statement of WITNESS LA-A24 (read)93 8 Statement of WITNESS LA-A303 (read)97 9 Statement of WITNESS LA-A115 (read)100 10 Statement of WITNESS LA-A355 (read)105 11 Statement of WITNESS LA-A353 (read)107 12 Statement of WITNESS LA-A351 (read)110 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>A271 87:22</p> <p>abandon 81:25</p> <p>ability 24:3</p> <p>able 6:23 10:19 11:15 12:19 20:3 40:13 50:5,13,13 50:18 51:8,15 76:6,19 80:19 84:9 86:17 91:18 99:16 104:21 106:19</p> <p>abuse 7:20,21,22 8:22,25 9:19 27:11 33:5,18 48:9 61:14 72:5 74:14 75:1 76:1 76:6,10,15,16,17 77:7 78:15,20 79:20 80:5,12,17 81:22 82:25 83:2 84:2,24 85:5,14 86:2,17,18 87:3 88:12,14,25 91:4 92:2,12 93:10 94:8,18 96:1,3,16 96:19,20,23 97:2 97:23 98:2,15,18 99:4,22 100:7,20 101:4,4,15,22 102:18 103:1,25 104:5,12,22 106:11,12,15,16 108:5,23 110:9 110:24 111:5,22 112:6,9 113:2</p> <p>abused 61:2 82:13 82:20 83:8,13 84:13 86:13 90:17,23 92:17 94:5 95:2,21 98:21 102:16 103:3 104:15 106:10 109:8 110:3,19</p> <p>abusing 102:25 109:5 112:7</p> <p>abusive 33:17 40:3 40:6,9 76:5</p>	<p>87:22</p> <p>accepted 86:11 89:5 109:8</p> <p>accident 24:21</p> <p>accommodation 109:20 110:14</p> <p>account 75:3 92:12</p> <p>accountable 30:8 106:25</p> <p>accurate 2:6,8 32:19</p> <p>achieve 104:22</p> <p>acknowledge 109:3</p> <p>acres 29:12</p> <p>acted 10:6</p> <p>action 16:10 30:15 80:20 91:6,11 96:18 103:8</p> <p>actions 44:13</p> <p>activity 79:21 85:2</p> <p>acts 71:11 95:25</p> <p>actual 42:8</p> <p>adequate 78:7</p> <p>adjourned 113:13</p> <p>adjournment 54:1</p> <p>adolescence 45:8</p> <p>adopted 28:2 105:7</p> <p>adult 16:2 21:17 39:21,22 61:12 69:1 81:19,20</p> <p>adults 30:10 39:23 85:2,13</p> <p>advice 97:16</p> <p>affect 97:11 110:6</p> <p>affection 53:8</p> <p>affirmed 1:15 32:8 54:4 113:18,20 113:22</p> <p>afford 50:5</p> <p>afraid 79:3 92:19 93:3</p> <p>after-care 74:20 89:25 90:3</p> <p>aftercare 84:7 97:14 100:10 109:17,21</p>	<p>age 2:10,16 5:14 7:13 31:7 33:2,5 36:2,6 40:19 48:4,19 53:7 56:2 103:18</p> <p>aged 14:2 32:24 54:14 90:16,18 98:1 106:5,6</p> <p>agency 72:3</p> <p>agenda 28:25</p> <p>ages 43:16 102:11</p> <p>aggressively 95:6</p> <p>agitated 38:17</p> <p>ago 10:10 13:19 39:11 83:15</p> <p>ain't 52:11</p> <p>alcohol 89:11 90:5</p> <p>alive 86:23</p> <p>allegation 71:14 71:19</p> <p>allegations 74:13 74:19 75:1 100:16</p> <p>alleged 81:23 103:6</p> <p>alleges 81:22</p> <p>allowed 92:8 98:14 108:12</p> <p>Almond 81:10</p> <p>angry 26:5 86:20 92:10 93:17 104:21</p> <p>ankle 75:20</p> <p>anonymous 1:8,20 54:7,10</p> <p>answer 64:6 66:14 66:22</p> <p>answers 26:11,12</p> <p>anus 94:20</p> <p>anxiety 26:23 27:6</p> <p>anxious 101:1</p> <p>anybody 3:11 9:2 15:12 20:1,21 24:24 27:20 76:12</p> <p>anymore 88:20</p> <p>anyway 5:7 7:4 14:6 40:3 65:8</p> <p>apart 80:17 88:15</p>	<p>92:24</p> <p>apology 72:24 73:1,2</p> <p>apparently 10:12 26:7</p> <p>appeared 101:19</p> <p>application 91:19 91:20</p> <p>approach 25:17</p> <p>appropriate 31:7</p> <p>area 29:17</p> <p>argument 106:2</p> <p>arising 32:22</p> <p>arm 8:11</p> <p>arms 38:4,18</p> <p>army 22:4,13,16 22:17,19,19,20 22:20 23:1,7,10 23:15,16 25:4 55:6</p> <p>arranged 96:9</p> <p>arrested 89:1</p> <p>arriving 84:12,14</p> <p>art 37:17,23</p> <p>ascribe 39:1</p> <p>ashamed 80:18 86:18 108:22</p> <p>asides 83:7</p> <p>asked 45:22 58:25 61:5,8 64:3 67:19 70:2 81:13 85:4 99:15 100:20 107:19</p> <p>asking 12:24 24:9 24:18 30:2 48:16 63:17,25 66:5</p> <p>asks 81:19</p> <p>asleep 77:3</p> <p>assault 75:16 79:22 85:5 90:19 96:4 102:4</p> <p>assaulted 82:17 85:1 96:10</p> <p>assaults 82:21,25 88:6 95:22 101:24</p> <p>assigned 105:13 109:24</p> <p>assist 74:12</p>	<p>assistance 31:23 47:14 50:4 81:17</p> <p>associations 49:19</p> <p>assume 37:5</p> <p>assumed 17:25 18:3</p> <p>assured 13:20,25</p> <p>atmosphere 56:11</p> <p>attached 51:17</p> <p>attachment 51:23 52:20</p> <p>attacked 111:13</p> <p>attempted 79:22 85:6 88:6,11 95:1 106:21 112:22</p> <p>attend 86:11</p> <p>attended 89:9 99:15</p> <p>attention 19:20 27:20 28:21 40:4 42:17 89:23 90:10 104:11</p> <p>attraction 20:9</p> <p>aunt 82:3,23 98:25</p> <p>authorities 50:15 72:8 106:23,25 112:25</p> <p>authority 40:22 51:9 112:10</p> <p>automatically 25:20</p> <p>avoid 25:25</p> <p>avoided 8:18</p> <p>awake 6:7</p> <p>aware 8:17 39:5 39:10 40:22 47:10 73:18 84:9 87:8</p> <p>awful 73:12</p> <p>awoken 77:3</p>
				<p style="text-align: center;">B</p>
				<p>B&B 111:3</p> <p>baby 46:6,6,9,10 50:7 108:4 109:19 111:4</p> <p>back 3:19 4:1,2 17:10 22:15 25:12,16,22</p>

<p>26:21 27:9 28:10 29:19 33:12 37:15,20,21 38:5 38:7,25 39:3 41:10 43:17,22 43:23 45:5 46:1 58:8,21 63:23 65:2,12 66:20 69:7 70:5 75:19 77:4,16 78:3 80:15 87:11 104:20 108:2 109:2,4</p> <p>backgrounds 113:4</p> <p>bad 5:2,8,9 23:2 24:20 25:20 80:16</p> <p>badly 89:24 90:14</p> <p>bang 8:14 20:25 21:7</p> <p>banging 21:9,12</p> <p>bar 5:4</p> <p>bare 105:24</p> <p>barriers 74:20</p> <p>barrister 66:17</p> <p>bars 36:3</p> <p>basically 3:1 5:1 12:13 23:3 27:6 52:17 81:12 89:17</p> <p>bath 58:6,9,10 92:13 102:10 105:9</p> <p>bathroom 58:12 111:12</p> <p>baths 58:5 60:1</p> <p>bay 62:18 84:15 85:18</p> <p>beat 75:20</p> <p>beaten 79:1 88:2</p> <p>beatings 87:18</p> <p>becoming 108:2</p> <p>bed 3:14 4:1,6 35:10,10 44:20 44:25 47:20,22 60:4 65:9,10,16 77:3,4,20 92:14 101:12 102:17,19</p>	<p>110:22</p> <p>bedding 111:20</p> <p>bedroom 43:11 88:5 90:19 101:17 102:14 108:8</p> <p>bedrooms 57:13</p> <p>beds 6:19</p> <p>bedtime 106:7</p> <p>began 56:7 84:23 87:10</p> <p>begged 95:15</p> <p>behave 56:20</p> <p>behaving 13:8</p> <p>behaviour 13:13 14:18 15:24 16:3 103:24 105:10</p> <p>behavioural 104:17</p> <p>behaviours 44:13</p> <p>beings 110:5</p> <p>belief 45:22</p> <p>believe 12:17 25:8 27:18,20 59:13 59:16,16 64:16 64:21 77:19 83:19 85:23 91:9 91:17 93:16 99:17</p> <p>believed 7:4 12:20 27:13,17 30:18 64:4 73:5,9 91:15 99:9 104:4</p> <p>believes 78:12 94:25 104:9</p> <p>best 16:24</p> <p>better 24:23 25:2,6 39:4 51:10 60:11 76:3 85:23 89:12 91:22,22 106:23 107:14 109:25</p> <p>bewildering 49:21</p> <p>beyond 40:11</p> <p>big 8:2 17:20 19:5 22:11 29:10,11 29:11 40:5 55:4</p> <p>bigger 15:11 23:15</p> <p>biggest 81:5</p> <p>birthday 47:16</p>	<p>81:11 98:14</p> <p>birthdays 87:14</p> <p>bit 14:19 24:20 27:14 52:1 58:20 65:17 68:4 88:18</p> <p>black 10:15,17 23:1,13 52:16 77:15 87:5 107:6 107:7,21,23 108:14,16</p> <p>blacked-out 18:7 19:15,18</p> <p>blamed 33:12 95:18</p> <p>bled 94:21 98:4</p> <p>bleeding 85:16 95:14</p> <p>blind 29:20,23</p> <p>board 93:20</p> <p>boarding 80:21</p> <p>boat 29:25</p> <p>bodies 31:1</p> <p>boiler 79:24</p> <p>boisterous 38:11</p> <p>bond 51:17</p> <p>bonding 49:11 52:3</p> <p>booked 9:23</p> <p>books 14:12 28:6</p> <p>born 109:19</p> <p>bottle 33:16</p> <p>bottom 85:17 94:21 95:15</p> <p>bought 33:9</p> <p>box 52:4,5 101:8</p> <p>boy 16:6 33:22 34:8 39:13 79:21 79:25 90:17 91:3 94:25 99:6</p> <p>boy's 99:5</p> <p>boyfriend 88:12 110:10</p> <p>boys 5:19 19:21 79:23 86:8 98:16 98:17 99:4,23 108:6</p> <p>boys' 59:19 82:14</p> <p>brain 25:20</p> <p>break 32:2,5 37:16</p>	<p>41:2 46:18 53:22 73:23 74:2 100:4</p> <p>breakfast 34:21 37:10 43:8</p> <p>breathing 26:22 27:2 36:23</p> <p>brief 43:25</p> <p>bright 97:4 104:16</p> <p>bring 3:17 24:20 26:20</p> <p>Brockwell 33:11 33:13</p> <p>broke 61:25</p> <p>brother 28:1,5 33:4 75:6,15 76:25 84:6 90:14 106:13</p> <p>brothers 44:13</p> <p>brought 4:10 33:12 34:1 40:4 49:3 80:15 85:8 107:12</p> <p>brushed 96:13,21 106:17</p> <p>build 51:2 105:5 109:24</p> <p>building 9:25 37:14 51:12</p> <p>bullied 86:12 99:22</p> <p>bully 94:1</p> <p>bullying 87:6</p> <p>buried 86:5</p> <p>buries 25:20</p> <p>bury 25:12,16</p> <p>business 78:11 113:10</p> <p>button 81:21</p> <p>buy 105:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <hr/> <p>caesarean 47:6,10</p> <p>Calais 44:6,11,19 46:4,13,22 51:4</p> <p>call 9:25 10:1,18 54:3 75:12</p> <p>called 19:4 37:16 54:15 77:19 96:8</p> <p>calm 45:24</p> <p>cane 87:25 88:1</p>	<p>cannabis 45:3</p> <p>car 12:12 13:18 18:2,9,11,15,20 18:23 19:6,10,15 19:15,17,17,19 19:19,20,23,25 20:3,6,8,10,13,14 24:20 61:24 62:2 62:7,8,10</p> <p>caravan 59:1</p> <p>caravans 106:9,10</p> <p>care 2:9 11:7 12:6 21:22 27:18 28:7 28:10,12,13 30:4 31:9 32:23 39:24 47:11,12 48:19 48:20,21,23 49:2 49:6,13,14,15,16 50:2,9,10,23 51:10 52:10 53:1 54:13 55:12 68:11,17 69:11 69:19,22,23,25 70:5,6,11,24 74:6 74:14,18,22 76:14,20 78:23 78:23 81:5,9 83:5,8 84:12 86:6 87:3,4,19 88:24 89:7,10,14 89:17,22 90:10 90:15,18 92:3 97:21 98:21 99:23 100:11,18 101:21,21 102:3 102:5 103:15,17 104:10,24 105:18 105:22,23 106:2 106:8 107:7,9,22 108:17 109:14 110:3,4,9,20 111:1,6 112:5,9 112:24 113:5</p> <p>cared 3:8 27:21 28:15 52:7,19 53:4 70:14,16 82:23 112:19</p> <p>career 22:14</p> <p>careful 44:9 54:10</p>
---	---	---	--	--

<p>carefully 13:8 caregivers 76:18 carer 52:13 carers 49:5 52:15 91:8 101:23 102:10,11 103:11 105:10 110:8,12 cares 52:21,22 103:13 caring 54:19 carpet 28:9 96:14 96:21 106:17 carried 61:14 89:19 96:25 carry 44:4 case 3:16 76:3 83:10,20 89:3 cases 50:2 72:20 72:22 catch-up 17:7 caught 41:22 91:3 111:23 cause 26:17,25 30:1 caused 81:4,5 100:13 causes 92:23 causing 94:4 Cedar 60:2 93:25 cell 33:25 34:5,11 35:3,6,7,8,9,9,12 38:10 certain 2:20 3:21 6:17 10:3 15:10 23:3,13 25:21,23 26:7,10,13 29:8 30:9 36:16 certainly 3:13 chain 28:16 99:7 chair 1:3,5,10 2:5 24:2 31:17,19 32:1,3 48:17 53:12,13,21,24 54:3,16 70:23 73:13,15,22,25 74:4 94:15 96:11 98:4 113:7,9 chairs 33:7 chance 23:21 81:6</p>	<p>89:15,22 90:9 change 48:7 56:7 changed 21:10,19 56:14 changes 105:14 changing 77:8 chaotic 2:18 charge 44:21 56:12 64:7,9 75:9 111:14,15 charged 65:25 checked 105:13 checks 71:2,6,8 105:9 107:2 113:4 cheese 4:19,20,23 Chestnut 2:13 5:18 Chevington 65:3,8 65:19 98:13 child 14:18 24:3 28:10,11,13 36:5 44:15 48:12 49:3 49:5,13 51:12,13 52:10,10,12 59:22 61:2 71:14 75:1 76:15,17 81:19,22,22,23 81:24 82:20 87:5 90:6 93:8 94:14 94:14 97:24 100:15,17,19,21 103:22 104:16 105:15,16 109:6 109:16 110:5 112:8 child's 16:9 74:21 74:23 childhood 45:7 48:9 78:13 81:3 100:3 109:2 children 1:21 2:12 4:11 9:8 11:9 17:14 19:24 30:4 30:22,25 34:17 35:20 36:4,7 42:6,24 44:17 49:2,23 50:20,20 51:10,20 52:3,15</p>	<p>52:17 53:7 54:10 54:17,20 56:23 57:9 64:23 65:5 67:21 70:24 71:10,11,12 72:10 74:6,14,18 75:7 76:14,20 78:25 81:25 82:14 83:9 84:8 87:8,12 89:19,20 90:9 92:3,20 93:21 94:10,10 94:11 98:7 100:16,18 101:9 102:21 103:15 104:14 105:15,18 106:25 107:6 108:15 109:23,24 109:25 110:3,4 111:9,22 112:23 113:1,4 children's 18:3 41:24 44:14,22 50:2 81:21 92:23 93:20 100:25 chips 4:18 choose 24:15 chose 26:23 Christmas 44:21 44:23 55:7,9,11 87:14 101:9 Christmases 55:9 circumstances 1:8 25:15 33:21 60:4 cites 97:10 class 56:5 classed 18:5 classes 55:20 clean 37:14 85:10 cleaner 42:19 43:14,14,18 60:3 60:5,7 clear 23:11 31:21 89:18 clearly 14:15 39:2 68:25 clever 13:21 climbed 54:23 clinging 82:9</p>	<p>clinics 111:24 clip 41:20 close 3:19 closely 109:23 closer 30:16 closing 105:6 closure 89:3 clothed 110:2 clothes 3:1 33:9,14 82:19 95:24 107:10 clothing 3:2,3 97:16 101:25 coach 20:19,20 21:2 coal 90:24 95:12 coat 101:18 cold 3:10 60:1 76:24 98:6 collected 72:25 come 3:25 4:4 5:24 7:16 10:22 14:6 18:6 20:25 25:4 29:9 32:24 34:22 34:24 35:6 36:18 37:2,15 40:16 42:11 43:11 47:16,24 50:23 58:2,10 59:3 62:2,7,10,15 65:15,21 66:21 70:5 77:22 84:9 84:21 85:13 86:5 89:3 90:19 108:7 coming 5:19 6:10 6:22 14:9 19:13 28:23 33:16 41:5 51:12 52:1 56:25 100:16 103:21 command 28:16 comment 85:11 commented 14:17 comments 40:12 commissioned 23:14 committed 26:8 82:21 common 86:14 87:4</p>	<p>complain 29:4 51:15 complainant 1:7 1:12 74:5,24 complained 68:24 80:7 96:4,13,14 98:24 99:1 complaining 51:21 complaints 51:16 96:3 completing 78:7 comprehend 48:13 48:14 Computers 105:12 concerned 2:7,8 5:6 32:20 48:22 concerns 34:7 76:16 concluded 76:3 concludes 113:7,9 concreted 35:10 confide 51:25 109:7,25 112:5 confident 113:2 confirm 2:5 32:19 32:21 confused 12:17 91:14 confusing 92:15 connect 81:21 connected 92:2 conscious 100:10 consequence 100:2 100:4 consequences 29:9 100:12 consequent 74:23 considerably 98:17 considers 97:10 consisted 37:23 85:5 98:18 console 79:7 constantly 79:3 102:8 consultations 102:6 contact 105:16 107:15 112:4</p>
---	---	--	---	--

<p>contemporaneous 91:2 96:2 98:23 contents 2:6 continue 58:23,24 97:11 continued 62:1 continues 78:2 continuously 44:20 control 16:13 103:14,21 107:13 convent 78:5 conversation 39:17,19 42:19 42:22 75:14 convicted 1:23 68:6,7 90:1 cook 50:13 cooker 47:21 cope 89:12 coping 48:1 copy 94:10 core 1:7 74:5,11 74:24 cornflakes 101:8 correct 2:14 costume 82:18,19 cot 47:22 cottage 2:12,13,16 3:19 5:18 14:13 14:17,20 19:7 27:16 54:15,16 55:8 64:18 82:20 88:4 cottages 29:1 council 46:11,12 46:13,19 72:25 74:15,21 96:25 Councils 110:3 counsel 1:11 73:24 counselling 71:23 72:2 99:20 counsellor 103:2 counsellors 104:15 countries 89:16 couple 15:3 36:21 39:23 40:8 43:9 56:17 couples 84:25</p>	<p>course 1:13 37:9 47:12 court 66:2,4,8,11 67:9,14,23,24 courtroom 67:7 cover 36:19 cream 112:18 cried 57:7 79:11 88:21 criminal 66:2 71:11 93:12 cruelty 78:25 cry 57:1 crying 43:6 75:18 77:2,11,23 79:9 82:9 95:8 111:8 cubicle 8:24 20:17 21:19 cubicles 21:1 Cumberlow 34:13 43:23 45:5,13,15 45:21 51:6 cupboard 87:24 88:5 101:13 customer 68:24 cut 96:5 cutlery 8:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <hr/> <p>D 113:17 dad 33:3 82:8 daily 112:16 Daisy 54:15,16 damage 89:6 damaged 100:17 danger 44:12,12 dark 63:21 101:13 date 74:8 dated 1:25 32:18 day 1:3 4:19 35:5 35:15 37:9,15,22 42:6 48:15,15 54:24 61:17,24 63:11 65:15 78:10 79:14 84:21 106:3 days 91:4 92:21 deal 32:15 46:15 67:1,8 76:15 death 95:18</p>	<p>deep 80:22 deeply 89:20 95:17 definite 72:11 definitely 11:10 48:23 49:20,20 50:10 72:18,20 demanded 35:1 Depending 30:10 depressed 26:5 71:20 depression 45:19 86:16 100:8 106:20 112:21 describe 11:21 13:3 38:25 50:4 54:22 63:2 79:12 88:14 89:2 98:6 100:9 described 27:15 51:6 68:15 80:8 84:7 85:25 90:4 91:12 describes 75:5,10 77:14 79:3,14,20 80:5 82:24 87:3 89:25 90:5 92:7 92:12 94:2,6,12 96:2,7 97:23 98:2,12 99:7 101:4,24 102:11 103:1 108:5 109:17 describing 53:4 description 31:21 42:4 desperate 104:10 desperately 80:12 details 80:17 deterioration 78:17 developed 86:1 89:11 90:6 99:24 diagnosed 75:25 76:4 100:9 diary 113:1 die 36:3 died 79:4 86:23 95:20 98:13 different 30:4,5</p>	<p>36:4 48:10,18 56:11 57:12 67:7 76:25 83:20 89:9 93:18,25 96:15 98:15,16 101:3 108:6 111:6 differential 87:10 differently 25:2,5 25:14 difficult 73:18 83:23 86:4 digital 98:19 director 102:7 disappear 18:24 discharge 74:21 disclose 83:2 103:25 disclosed 27:10 96:17 disclosing 80:17 disclosure 27:9 74:20 78:1 86:3 88:14 89:2 91:2 92:18 96:2 98:23 104:3 108:20 109:10 disclosures 76:16 discovered 99:22 Discovering 78:15 discuss 19:22 26:24 86:18 discusses 81:1 86:15 discussing 27:1 40:11 discussion 22:11 31:12 discussions 19:21 diseases 112:1 dismissed 16:8 disruptive 79:18 80:22 distinctive 77:14 distraction 106:20 distressed 76:24 dizzy 41:21 doctor 33:25 34:5 34:10 81:4 85:19 97:5,7 99:19</p>	<p>102:4,8 doctors 45:18 doing 7:24 13:6 20:5,12 21:6 23:10,11 27:22 27:22,23 29:7,8 52:13,14,22 58:1 59:12 60:14 66:17 74:7 85:21 88:23 107:1 108:9 112:10 Donald 93:25 door 3:19 21:7,10 21:12 35:25 36:17 37:3,3,5 58:21 63:12,15 77:9 doors 20:25 dorm 34:24 76:25 97:24 dormitories 35:17 35:19 dormitory 35:18 35:20,20,22 98:1 dorms 36:8 double 14:23 44:25 downstairs 3:17 4:13 6:12 58:6 dragged 33:24 dragging 77:4 dramatic 28:20 dreaded 102:21 dream 3:9 7:6 dreaming 7:7,8 dress 58:11 drew 19:19 drive 18:9,11,22 19:2,6,17 20:3,8 driving 19:23 20:6 20:10 drop 58:11 drove 19:9 20:14 63:6 drowsy 79:15 drug 99:24 drugs 89:11 90:5 due 53:21 92:1 97:6 104:17</p>
--	---	--	---	--

<p>dunce 102:22 duration 88:9 dying 100:7</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <hr/> <p>E 113:17 ear 41:22 earlier 53:22 early 2:16 4:6 65:17 76:8 91:4 easier 40:5 69:8,10 easy 16:25 53:15 102:22 eat 4:21,22,23,24 48:3 79:2 112:17 eating 7:25 34:21 94:7 educated 31:2 education 16:16 21:23,23 22:3,14 23:2,6,12,18 37:8 37:9,17,22,22 39:12 43:11 74:22 78:4 84:1 89:8 91:16,22 99:21 109:15 112:15 effect 76:9 eight 15:21 eight/ten 34:22 either 8:3 32:14 38:8,8 embarrassing 91:21 emotional 38:16 46:18,20 101:4 emotionally 47:25 100:17 employing 106:24 107:1 employment 78:10 91:17 encounter 39:13 encouraged 113:1 ended 44:3,6 110:19 endured 8:22 9:19 enema 85:11 engage 85:1 English 22:7 37:19</p>	<p>enjoy 56:15 enjoyed 97:2 ensure 76:18 ensuring 110:1 entering 113:5 entertainment 87:7 entire 110:6 environment 42:3 51:22 67:7 76:18 84:17 Errgh 39:18 escape 38:19 89:13 97:2 escaping 99:25 escapism 90:6 especially 49:22 50:24 52:23 68:23 93:6 105:9 essentials 105:24 establishment 34:23 35:3 estimates 80:1 evening 34:20 77:22 eventually 38:11 84:6 88:20 101:20 108:3 everybody 16:25 18:13,22 19:16 30:2 67:15 evidence 1:9 32:12 53:10,14 54:9 66:1,12,12 67:15 73:16 74:4,7,9,10 74:16 113:8 evil 77:19 ex-army 87:20 exactly 35:8,8 85:21 examination 1:16 32:9 54:5 83:25 113:19,21,23 examinations 34:2 34:4 110:17 examined 85:19 110:15 example 2:21 6:24 25:3 49:8,14</p>	<p>examples 7:21 exams 23:5,5 80:24 excessively 92:13 excited 20:2 excuse 31:14 excuses 102:8 exhibited 103:24 expect 4:22 50:23 experience 20:10 34:18 39:6 44:9 48:20 53:3 71:19 74:18 80:15 108:1 110:23 experienced 30:6 30:7 72:5 101:5 101:15 104:13 experiences 23:24 24:2,11,14 25:21 27:15 28:14 44:8 53:15,17 73:18 74:23 76:5 86:4 93:11 99:25 109:4 112:20 experiencing 27:10 expertise 72:3 explain 24:2,22 26:2 72:14 explained 100:17 extent 40:24,25 74:13 extreme 79:12 extremely 85:7 eye 29:20,23 eye-opener 9:16 27:7 eyes 75:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">F</p> <hr/> <p>F145 88:6 F224 92:13,15 F226 83:16 F248 107:12 F31 97:21 F32 97:21 F64 80:7 87:25 face 77:20 91:13 94:6 facing 3:21,24</p>	<p>98:5 fact 11:2 20:13 40:1 64:12 96:8 104:15 fair 68:22 89:22 90:9 fall 92:24 false 53:9 families 49:23,24 83:11 92:23,24 106:9 family 1:21 49:4 49:11,12,15,16 60:17,17,19 78:15,17 81:6 93:1,8 far 2:6,8,16 5:5 17:9 32:20 37:6 48:21 father 79:4 84:5 87:21 88:4 90:23 90:25 94:1 106:7 fault 99:17 favours 17:12 fear 40:19 76:11 fed 110:2 feel 10:19 12:15,19 21:5 22:1,2 35:25 40:13 52:6 52:8 53:3 55:22 56:1,14 59:5 63:18 65:19 66:17 68:1,7 70:13,16 71:20 73:1 76:2,19 79:15 89:6,18 91:21 93:5,9 99:9 104:4 109:3 113:2 feeling 51:18 68:20 101:1 104:25 feelings 78:3 86:5 86:21 feels 52:4 89:4,9 89:10 104:20 feet 9:13 fell 46:4 65:1 77:3 86:7</p>	<p>felon 38:6 felt 6:23 9:13 10:16 27:17 28:3 29:11 36:20 40:12 44:1 49:17 55:12 73:3,8 84:21 89:14,24 95:18 101:6 102:21 108:9,13 110:21,22 111:18 female 102:11,14 103:2,11 fence 99:8 fend 84:5 field 18:16 19:5,5 fields 17:20 file 105:6 files 109:11 112:12 112:14 fill 91:19,20 films 59:24 final 72:23 finally 47:16 51:3 62:19 financial 46:18 50:4,8 81:12 find 19:2 21:1 51:15 55:17 57:17 67:7 69:24 71:9 81:11 83:16 90:2 107:24 finding 73:4 fine 55:3 finger 43:19 94:20 fingers 87:23 finished 21:17 63:21 Fir 64:18 fire 36:3,6,11 fired 62:21 first 1:6 26:20,21 27:16 30:23,23 34:19,20 35:4,15 36:5,7 41:9,12,14 42:6 54:14 56:19 56:23 65:14 71:2 77:1 81:8 90:15 91:9 98:13 100:25 110:20</p>
---	--	---	--	---

fish 4:18	formally 47:12	fun 94:9	giving 18:22 32:12	grandchildren
five 35:19 75:22	forms 91:19,20	functioned 89:12	53:10 66:1 67:15	49:8
flash 20:8	forward 84:9	99:24	74:7	grandmother
flashbacks 89:13	foster 46:10 49:5	funeral 98:14	glass 67:20	100:24 101:14
100:6	52:10,13 82:2	furniture 46:14	go 3:11,17 4:1,2	105:3
flasher 42:7,24,25	91:8 97:21 98:9	further 31:17,18	6:12 8:25 10:3	grant 97:16
flat 46:11,12,13,20	98:11 99:11	73:13 80:19	10:13 11:14 12:9	grass 55:4
47:16,20 50:25	101:14,22 110:8	112:8	13:11 15:8,23	grateful 31:22
84:6	110:12,15 112:25	future 45:7	18:13,14 28:1,2,4	53:17 73:17
floods 84:14	fostered 100:24		29:2 30:14 32:23	greasy 77:15
floor 35:11 59:19	101:16	G	36:7,23 37:5,14	great 67:1
75:19	found 18:4 24:1	games 55:6	37:17,20,21 38:6	green 55:4
flooring 47:21	30:23 60:13	general 100:21	38:9 44:8 46:9,9	grope 15:14
flowed 79:6,6	63:24 77:1 83:23	generally 54:9	46:24 54:9 55:1	grounds 29:10
flushed 79:1	92:15 95:12	genuine 53:8	55:10 58:23,25	55:4 79:24
focused 20:11	100:4	genuinely 52:21	60:13 63:2,3,7,23	group 79:23 86:8
21:18	four 35:4,13,19	52:21	63:24 65:2,9,10	growing 64:18
focusing 21:20	41:12,14 44:22	gesture 43:20	65:16 66:8,12	grown 104:23
follow 58:13	44:25 83:14 95:2	gestures 10:5,5	69:15 77:9 80:11	108:23
follow-ons 46:21	107:12	getting 21:18,19	87:16 96:9 98:14	guard 36:17 37:6
follow-up 91:11	four-hour 35:14	22:18,19 23:2,4	102:11 103:23	guidance 89:22
followed 95:5	four/five 35:23	23:19,20 25:17	107:19 112:16	90:10
following 74:21	fourth 1:10	38:16 39:2 46:21	goes 79:11 93:12	guidelines 30:9
food 4:14,14,16,16	freezing 3:5,10	47:14 87:10,13	going 3:9 5:16 6:2	guilt 78:2
4:25 42:4,11	frequent 14:7	97:16 100:21	13:1,22 14:8	guilty 93:6
48:3 50:5,14	105:16	104:20	18:12 19:2 21:1	
94:7 107:10,19	Friday 4:17 20:18	girl 43:13 85:7	21:20 26:11,18	H
109:18 111:20	20:18	90:16 106:16	26:19,19,20 27:9	hair 77:15
112:16	fridge 47:21	108:8	29:24 30:20,24	hairbrush 75:21
foot 75:21	friend 10:8 21:8	girls 40:11 98:2	39:1,16,16,16	half 37:15,21
football 10:4,23,24	108:3 110:18	103:1,4 106:2	45:5 46:1 49:1	half-brother
17:19,21 18:1,2,8	friends 23:25 86:7	107:18 108:24	62:18 63:4 66:11	101:17
18:9,23 19:3,7,11	frightened 80:23	109:7 111:23,25	72:17 73:24 80:4	hampered 91:18
20:5,7	93:9 98:8	girls' 82:15	83:3,24 85:4	hand 12:13 77:11
force 4:24 87:23	frightening 75:5	gist 1:12 73:24	87:11,15 94:24	102:2 112:18
90:24 94:19	104:6	113:7	101:11 103:22	handle 88:19
force-fed 75:7	front 10:12 14:23	give 4:20 7:20	113:8	handled 83:19
forced 34:2 38:11	15:15 19:7 29:16	18:19 42:3,16	golden 16:6	hands 3:23 81:13
79:21 98:20	39:25 44:24	45:23 46:25	goner 36:12	82:14 90:21
108:2	front-line 22:22	50:20 66:11,12	good 1:3,5,17,18	happen 5:5,6 8:20
forever 36:20	frustrated 26:5	69:21 70:23	17:3 22:5,14	9:5,7 16:10
59:14	86:20 92:11	71:21 83:14	23:6 68:21	26:15 31:1,1
forget 20:5 25:19	frustrating 11:5	89:15	105:14	38:15 40:21 57:9
110:4	26:12	given 4:14 31:21	gory 24:22	71:18 72:17
forgetting 99:25	frustration 9:14	33:7 44:16 47:17	gown 58:11 66:5	happened 3:15
forgot 20:3	full 61:20 86:11	68:15 78:7 79:14	grab 39:24	5:11,22 10:2
fork 94:7	full-time 61:21	79:16 81:2,3	grabbed 75:20	17:23 24:9,21
form 74:9 89:13	fully 6:7,8 48:13	84:19 87:8 89:22	95:6	26:10 39:14
90:6	48:14 104:7	90:9 101:8,11	grabbing 15:22	44:18 47:5 56:10
		105:17,23		57:14 59:6 60:8

60:12 61:17 63:1 63:10 67:18 68:1 73:11 75:22 77:17 80:2 82:15 83:9 85:4,12 88:1 89:4 91:7,9 93:7,17 96:11 97:13 106:18 107:24 happening 6:3 19:22 25:23 29:15,20,21 31:3 34:11 39:6,23 48:5 51:4,8 61:5 62:23 65:11 69:9 69:10 70:21 88:20 92:21 93:5 93:8 99:2,14 102:3 104:8 happens 30:12,13 72:17 hard 6:15 26:1 51:15 94:14 harm 77:12 harsh 42:2,3 hate 89:17 hated 4:23 head 8:4,8,12,14 33:16 34:23 41:20 65:15 80:1 94:3,4 96:5 99:7 headaches 8:6,6 heads 79:1 health 72:10 78:16 80:14 93:15 97:12 hear 6:11 25:21 36:22 43:12 52:5 62:20 67:11 75:14 77:2 90:22 heard 3:14 5:2 6:14 11:8 47:19 74:12 77:9 95:7 hearing 1:4,6,11 67:9 95:11 113:13 heavy 8:9 36:23 held 87:11 104:20 106:25	hell 35:15,16 94:16 help 40:1 46:13 48:21 51:23 53:16 55:22 60:3 60:5,7 68:14 71:22 78:8,8 81:11,21 89:3 109:6 helped 51:7 52:1 71:23,25 89:12 90:2 107:16 helpfully 1:24 helping 60:10 Hey 52:25 hide 111:20 high 55:25 56:1 94:14 96:11 98:4 highlighted 2:21 hit 8:1,3,4,8,11 29:6,7 41:17 88:1 98:4 hitting 9:4 56:22 hold 38:18 90:21 95:6 98:11 holiday 59:20 87:12 holidays 54:25 87:14 home 1:22,22 2:15 7:11 16:3 18:3 28:22 30:23 33:1 33:2,3 41:24 42:8 44:14,22 45:2 47:4 50:21 51:2 56:25 60:18 60:23 61:1,11 65:5 81:9 83:18 87:5 88:14 90:15 92:9 93:10 97:25 101:5,21 102:4,6 103:1,2,3,15,20 103:22 105:17,22 105:23 106:2,5,8 107:7,14,21 108:2,16 110:20 111:1,6,16,18 112:5 homeless 46:24 110:10	homes 78:23,23 80:24 81:21 84:12 86:21 87:3 92:23 93:20 97:22 100:25 109:7 110:9 113:5 honest 48:2 49:12 honesty 83:18 honour 20:15 hopes 84:8 89:2 97:6 horrible 101:7 107:11 108:19 Hosegood 56:11 56:20 57:17 62:4 62:11 65:25 68:6 69:25 70:2 93:25 94:3,4,17,22,23 95:1,2,5,6 96:4 Hosegoods 56:18 hospital 26:24 47:6,9 79:18 96:9 hostel 105:2 hot 67:20 hour 37:20,20 hours 35:4,13 37:21,22 57:2 63:18,19 house 2:11 6:24 7:17,23 8:23 9:1 10:3,6,6,10,10,11 10:14,15 11:12 11:18,19,23,24 12:23 13:17,20 13:21,25 14:22 14:22,23 15:1,5,6 15:8,10,12,25 16:4,6 22:10 29:16 34:22 42:4 42:8,12,20 43:10 44:23 46:11 54:17,18 56:6,9 56:10,12,13 57:19,20,21,23 58:1 60:2 65:13 65:14,14 69:16 75:9,17 77:4,6,16	77:17 79:10,22 81:10 82:4 87:20 88:4,12,13 92:13 93:25 94:1,5,6,8 94:13 95:21 96:15 98:3,25 99:5,5 106:3,7 107:8,25 108:16 111:14 112:2 houses 9:21 57:24 81:16 93:25 hug 79:7 huge 20:9 29:18 Hughes 1:14 human 110:5 humiliate 102:12 humiliated 75:9 humiliation 101:8 hungry 94:11 hurt 8:12,20 9:5 41:21 hurting 108:24 hurts 89:20 husband 22:10 <hr/> I <hr/> idea 4:8,9 ideas 70:24 identification 23:9 ifs' 97:9 ignore 12:23 ignored 96:3 105:11 ill 62:17 illogical 11:3 imagine 29:8 impact 23:25 69:4 81:1 104:22 impacted 21:24 22:2 23:12 24:4 implement 72:11 implementing 72:12,14 important 30:6,24 73:9 89:21 impossible 92:20 105:4 impression 42:16 impressions 2:15 improved 21:3	75:1 inadequate 96:22 109:17 inappropriately 101:25 102:7,9 102:10 incidence 88:11 incident 33:10 43:5 75:16 77:7 82:16 85:6,16 86:2 incidents 45:4 78:25 94:2 100:8 including 97:11,21 98:3 110:1 increased 105:15 indecent 82:21,25 85:5 95:22 101:24 102:4 indecently 82:17 88:5 106:7 independence 49:19 independent 28:23 28:24 51:11,24 76:7 indicating 3:23 individual 6:14 10:4 11:2 12:6 12:22,23 15:10 16:1,11 17:24 24:25,25 82:4 individual's 110:6 individuals 10:1 26:7,8 29:24 30:17 71:3,7 84:25 106:24 112:6,7 113:4,5 infancy 105:7 infantry 22:8,9 infertility 81:4 information 83:23 113:3 initially 7:5 110:12 110:21 injected 79:19 injunction 47:3 inquiry 1:25 53:16 74:12,12,17
---	---	--	--	---

<p>insert 94:20 inside 95:14 insisted 82:18 inspect 112:2 institution 36:14 institutional 74:19 74:25 instructions 20:21 29:17 instructor 20:16 insular 84:17 insulted 77:5 intention 32:16 interest 13:10 88:15 interested 11:25 12:3,4 14:10 16:5,15 17:12 20:4,6,12 27:24 28:3,7,17 31:15 52:7 55:13 70:17 interfered 103:6 interference 42:2 interject 33:19 internal 34:4 110:16 interpreter 67:10 67:12 interrupt 24:15 interrupted 111:12 intrusive 34:3 86:16 investigation 85:25 91:11 96:24 103:25 104:12 invite 1:14 involved 52:17 93:12 110:11 iron 35:10 isolated 49:17 65:19 83:10 99:10 isolation 84:16 issue 89:14 issues 24:1 74:17 78:12 91:25 100:3</p>	<hr/> <p>J</p> <hr/> <p>job 27:22,22,23,24 27:24 61:16,19 61:20 68:21 86:9 91:22 104:20 jobs 91:19 join 22:7 23:20,22 joined 22:16 joke 21:9 journey 42:17 judge 25:1 66:9,22 67:19,24 judo 94:17,19,22 July 1:1 113:14 jump 18:12 jury 66:8 67:11</p> <hr/> <p>K</p> <hr/> <p>keep 1:20 3:4 24:18 25:2,7 31:2 43:20 46:6 54:7 81:20 102:2 107:13 keeping 54:10 kept 23:24 46:6 62:18 70:25,25 keyhole 57:17 keyholes 58:4 kid 18:11 43:21 87:15 kids 3:13 4:8 6:17 9:17 10:17,17,22 10:24 13:12 14:24,24 15:16 15:21 16:5 17:9 17:16 18:2,9,10 18:21 20:2 21:3 30:9,10,11,17 31:4 39:18 43:9 43:10 48:6 kill 59:11 63:23 killed 26:13,14 93:6 106:13 kind 10:20 39:11 40:4 47:14 51:22 52:4,4,7 53:1 57:9 kitchen 95:5 knee 31:5</p>	<p>knew 6:9,11 8:19 13:3,20 14:24 16:1 19:16 29:24 36:2,6,8,11 40:20 43:20,21 44:11 47:7 55:1 61:25 62:5,10 68:3 80:3 81:13 106:11 108:23 knock 84:20 knocked 33:17 94:14 96:11 101:12 know 1:19 3:10,24 4:21,23,24 5:10 5:11 6:5,15,16,18 6:19 8:10 9:11 9:12 10:18,25,25 11:12,15,17 12:7 12:17 13:9,13 16:7,8,9 17:5,6 17:11 18:10,10 18:13,23,25 19:1 19:9,17,18 20:2,4 20:14,23 21:2,10 21:12,20 25:3,19 26:9,11,15,16 27:3 29:14,21,25 30:14 31:5,17 32:10,23 34:23 34:25 35:10,21 37:1,4 38:5,21 39:10,11,12,13 39:15,22,25 40:3 40:20 41:1 43:19 45:23 48:3,6,10 48:11,13,14,24 48:25 49:1,2,3,4 49:5,11,21,22,25 50:1,11,12,18,21 51:2,15,16,19,22 51:25 52:11,12 52:12,14,15,16 52:20,21,23,25 52:25 53:5,7,8,11 53:15 54:6,9,13 54:17 57:14 59:3 63:4,9,10,19,20 63:22 64:7,13,20</p>	<p>65:25 68:4,5 69:13,14,15,16 70:14 71:8,20,21 73:4,4 80:3 103:21 104:14 knowing 13:24 31:2 89:4 knowledge 86:14 known 6:15 13:25 19:13 26:8 107:20 knows 52:10,11 knuckles 8:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">L</p> <hr/> <p>LA-A115 100:23 100:24 101:24 102:16 103:8 104:16 105:5 114:9 LA-A115's 103:6 LA-A138 1:14,15 1:17 113:18 LA-A2 95:9,11,14 95:15,16,19 97:13 LA-A2's 95:17 LA-A221 92:5,6 114:6 LA-A222 82:1,2 82:13,16,21,23 83:2,25 114:2 LA-A24 93:22,23 93:24 94:7,18,21 94:22,24,25 95:4 95:6,7,8,15,16,17 95:21 96:6,6,9 97:10 114:7 LA-A24's 94:3,19 LA-A25 54:3,4,6 95:4,7 113:22 LA-A271 87:1,2 87:17 88:5,25 114:4 LA-A298 90:12,13 90:17 91:8 114:5 LA-A302 78:21,22 79:23 80:1 114:1 LA-A302's 81:8 LA-A303 97:19,20</p>	<p>98:12,14,15,17 98:19 99:4 100:10 114:8 LA-A305 76:22,23 77:16,21,22,23 LA-A308 75:2,4 75:24 76:4,9 113:24 LA-A324 84:10,11 86:15 114:3 LA-A327 32:7,8 32:10 113:20 LA-A351 110:7,8 110:9,17 114:12 LA-A353 107:3,4 107:15,19 114:11 LA-A355 105:20 105:21 106:14,19 114:10 LA-B37 102:6,13 LA-B47 82:20 LA-F145 87:20 88:4 LA-F226 82:12 LA-F240 106:10 106:15 LA-F248 107:19 LA-F256 111:7 LA-F276 75:9,12 75:17 88:3 LA-F282 94:5 LA-F285 95:21 LA-F31 98:9,10 99:12 LA-F93 96:4,5,7 LA-F97 103:3 lack 21:23 23:11 104:19 ladle 8:2,3 Lambeth 72:25 73:6,10 74:6,15 79:13 89:5 90:18 96:25 103:7 107:21 109:3,11 109:13 112:12 Lambeth's 28:6 landing 35:22 36:5 57:1,6 landings 36:4</p>
--	--	--	---	--

<p>Langdale 1:4,5,16 1:17 31:16 32:1 32:7,9,10 53:10 53:21 54:3,5,6 73:13,22 113:19 113:21,23 language 5:2,8,10 30:25 lap 18:14 19:23 38:18,23 51:7 lashing 9:14 late 42:11 58:2 75:4 laugh 68:3 laughed 39:15 102:14,20 laughing 67:16,23 68:2 101:10 lawyers 66:9 lay 77:3 lead 100:8 learn 16:20 17:2 learning 37:24 78:8 learnt 17:4,4 56:3 leave 3:24 48:21 50:2,10 68:11,21 75:14 95:17 97:6 102:24 105:3 106:4 108:3 111:1 leaving 48:20,23 49:17 50:9 68:17 99:23 led 96:5 left 17:7 21:22 22:23 30:9 35:4 43:22 46:15,22 47:12 49:6,14 50:17,21 51:21 56:13,16 60:18 60:19 78:17 79:8 80:25 81:10 82:6 82:10 83:25 84:15 86:24 88:20 89:14,20 91:1 93:13,18 94:10 95:16 96:17 97:5,15</p>	<p>103:15 106:5 107:23 109:14 leg 12:13 legs 9:4 lessons 20:19 Let's 44:8 46:18 letter 72:24 73:1,2 level 23:3 lever 8:11 lie 102:16 lied 110:13 lies 64:23 96:6 102:18 life 31:21 35:15 48:11 49:2 60:11 69:1 76:7 86:15 89:21 90:4 91:23 94:16 97:9 104:8 106:21 107:10 108:18 109:15 110:6 light 63:20 lightness 68:4 liked 78:11 103:16 liking 4:19 Lime 7:17 8:23 9:1 limited 22:13 23:3 23:18 82:4 97:25 105:12 line 31:4 linked 85:11 links 49:19 listened 77:23 literacy 78:13 literally 46:12,15 50:5 little 31:11 33:25 43:12 53:22 58:20,22 61:19 85:7 93:6 live 1:8,13 28:1 47:1 48:6 50:6 50:18 73:23 81:11 89:15 90:3 97:17 105:1 lived 15:25 22:10 33:3 48:15 68:25 84:5 lives 108:25</p>	<p>living 28:5 86:24 105:24 loads 18:18 40:15 45:3 47:5 local 72:8 86:8 88:25 106:23,25 107:20 lock 37:5 94:22 locked 33:6 35:24 35:25 38:9 59:13 63:12,15,17 101:12 locker 3:18 Lodge 34:13 43:23 45:5,13,15,21 51:6 London 100:1 long 3:25 16:12 42:22 51:1 57:11 63:8,9,19,20 76:11 89:19 95:3 101:7 104:10 106:5 long-lasting 81:7 longer 10:9 15:11 57:7 look 1:25 17:10 20:17,25 28:10 29:19 30:16 38:25 39:3 50:8 50:12 57:17,18 58:4,25 69:7 86:22 102:23 107:23 looked 13:1 18:12 20:8 25:5 35:8 35:11 43:13,17 52:18 54:19 66:4 97:15 looked-after 44:15 100:15 looking 8:13,16,17 8:23 13:8 22:25 58:6 65:12 66:22 109:4 looks 35:8 losing 68:22 loss 74:22 81:5 lost 66:23 81:6</p>	<p>lot 6:7 7:4,7 8:5 9:6 14:23,25 15:23 17:4,18 22:16 27:3 30:16 50:2 51:20,20 55:19 65:13 73:12 83:9 87:13 92:11 lots 2:12,18 15:21 17:20 18:2 19:8 love 27:22 52:19 104:24 lovely 54:17,19 55:9 loving 56:14 lower 35:22 luck 4:25 lucky 59:2 lunch 37:20 53:23 lying 59:8 62:21 64:25,25 69:14 69:24,25 70:3,6,9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <hr/> <p>magnet 18:21 mail 99:7 main 27:12 37:14 42:9 43:12 making 40:12 49:10 74:20 99:6 male 98:24 102:9 111:6 man 10:10 33:11 34:22 36:13,14 39:2,24 51:6 63:10 77:10,14 82:17 87:20 94:24 95:12 96:6 96:7 102:16,16 103:3 108:7 111:12 managed 46:6 84:6 manager 62:19,20 managing 76:2 manipulation 102:18 market 86:10 married 11:11 massive 19:5</p>	<p>29:13 masturbate 90:25 maths 22:6 matter 69:4 mattress 35:11 maybe 97:9 mean 14:5 25:15 26:7 28:12 42:3 48:23 50:4 51:3 52:9,9 56:21 64:20 68:5 71:8 71:17 72:12 means 38:3 72:14 92:24 meant 6:3 73:3 104:6 medical 102:6 medication 45:6,8 45:10,16,20 81:2 medicine 79:14,19 84:19 101:11 meet 84:25 meetings 99:15 Melting 107:5,5,6 107:11,21 108:7 108:12,15 member 6:24 11:21 17:21,22 17:25 18:4,5 38:13,14,15,17 44:24 45:2 60:17 60:19 77:21 78:15 85:9 91:3 91:5 95:13 members 1:21,22 9:7 11:8 40:13 56:17 60:17 84:24 96:22 memories 26:21 80:16 82:4 90:14 97:25 memory 5:7 78:19 men 106:10 107:12 108:6,9 108:12,23 109:5 110:18 111:13,24 111:24 mental 71:15 78:16 80:14</p>
--	---	--	--	---

<p>93:14 97:12 mentality 64:18 mentally 68:20 mention 60:1,3 mentioned 19:24 42:24 61:1,4 77:25 mentor 51:11 menu 4:19 merely 28:21 messed 93:16 met 17:13 47:4 69:23 mickey 25:6 middle 4:3,5 military 96:7 millstone 26:1 mind 25:12,16 66:20 Mini 18:7 minimal 37:9 50:10,15 minimum 48:24 49:10 105:24 minute 20:5 24:15 minutes 36:21 missing 86:10 mistake 32:14 mistrust 78:3 Mmm 64:11 70:4 molestation 47:2 moment 32:24 Monday 1:1 money 33:8 46:15 52:16 97:17 106:1 monitored 112:24 monitoring 109:25 monkey 10:5 month 88:9 monthly 100:19 months 10:9 41:25 61:10,14 96:1 morning 1:3,5,17 1:18 34:21 43:8 79:16 mother 6:24 16:4 33:5 34:6 45:22 46:9,19 75:11,12</p>	<p>75:17 77:4,6,18 79:10 84:3 88:12 92:13,16 94:6,13 95:21 98:3 99:5 103:6 106:3,4 108:4 110:15 111:4 mother's 34:7 79:22 84:13 98:21,22 110:10 mothers 82:4 mouth 5:4 43:19 77:12 90:21 102:2 move 76:20 83:22 92:3 94:19 105:18 moved 11:19 14:13,21 15:5 39:3 43:24 49:9 56:6 78:23 85:15 89:8 96:15 100:1 101:21 106:1 107:14,25 108:2 111:17 moving 27:16 49:19 multiple 106:11 mum 33:3,12,16 33:20,23 34:1 45:17 82:8 musky 77:14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <hr/> <p>N 113:17 naked 87:24 91:3 98:20 name 8:23 12:5 32:11 38:13 69:21 70:19 names 1:21 2:11 10:1,18 32:12,16 44:9 54:11 nan's 56:25 nasty 96:7 National 10:12 nature 56:23 59:24 74:13 96:16 naughty 59:9</p>	<p>near 2:3 nearly 68:2 necessary 78:12 necessities 50:11 50:12,14,21 neck 26:1 need 2:3 30:14,16 50:15,22,22 52:24,24 72:16 93:20 109:25 needed 37:3 50:9 79:7 105:25 112:18 needs 30:12 31:7 48:18 71:4,6,18 73:7 neglect 48:9 101:5 101:15 nerves 40:20 nervous 80:23 network 30:13,19 never 19:8,9,24 20:21 21:3,16 22:23 23:5 24:13 27:9 31:11 33:7 36:24 41:10 42:8 42:10,20,21,21 43:3,22 46:22 47:1,18 60:19 77:25 78:8 80:11 81:24 89:23 90:10 92:16,18 93:11 104:12 105:11 107:16,24 109:2,15,21 new 11:24 65:14 83:22 87:13 95:24 nice 1:11 18:12 40:6,9 55:4,18 73:24 74:4 75:3 76:23 78:22 82:2 84:11 85:10 86:24 87:2 90:13 92:6 93:23 97:20 100:24 105:21 107:4 110:8 113:9 night 3:14 4:3,5</p>	<p>6:6,10 7:6 35:24 36:11 58:2 77:1 90:19 102:15,24 night-time 79:16 nightly 84:19 nightmares 89:13 nine 15:21 no-one 3:6 35:14 41:1,1,3,15 49:15 59:13 63:15 66:20 78:6 79:7 80:3,10 83:3 89:1 90:21 97:15 97:17 99:17 103:12 112:5 nominated 29:3 30:14 normal 19:20 50:19 109:9 112:19 normally 9:16 nose 98:4 note 113:7 noted 76:6 101:19 105:4,6 notes 81:2 90:16 91:24 104:5,13 106:19 113:1 notice 15:17 99:18 numb-like 63:4 number 1:19 12:5 27:19 32:10 54:6 numerous 78:23 78:24 87:18 93:24 102:1,5 111:23 nurse 85:19 93:21 nursery 101:24 102:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">O</p> <hr/> <p>o'clock 4:7,7 37:12 37:17 65:9,10,16 Oaks 12:3 14:21 16:18 17:14,19 22:15 23:24 24:6 24:7,10,11 25:22 29:10 31:22 41:24 42:25 43:25 51:5 54:15</p>	<p>55:16 56:4,7 65:3 69:20 75:4 75:5 76:5,23 78:4,22,24 79:4,5 79:15,24 80:7 81:8,15 82:3,5,24 84:4,11,12,14,16 84:23 86:13 87:2 87:19,21 88:10 88:19,20 90:13 90:15 91:1 92:6 93:1,7,16,23,24 94:15 95:16,19 96:18,23 97:3,5 97:15,20 98:1,16 99:23 105:21,23 106:6 107:4 Oaks' 19:13 observations 105:9 observe 105:14 obtain 107:10 obvious 12:25 27:21 28:6 obviously 4:2 7:8 8:19 13:14 15:25 18:9 19:1,9 22:22 25:14 33:11 35:2 36:20 38:20 48:11 65:7 67:3 68:11 83:9 occasion 9:20 12:12 15:19 18:25 33:23 92:14 95:11 111:11 occasionally 24:8 occasions 15:14 88:7,11 90:20 98:16 102:1,5 106:11 111:2,24 occupied 106:9 occurred 85:14 88:9,13 95:22 offences 1:23 66:1 Offended 71:11 offered 45:3 office 42:13 officer 63:16 64:10</p>
--	--	---	--	---

<p>64:12,15,21 79:5 109:20 officers 63:25 offices 46:25 108:11 officials 112:2 oh 36:11 54:21 59:2 64:24 65:17 70:8 71:9 okay 4:16 32:13 44:3 49:1 71:22 99:15 old 12:1 14:14 30:10 46:3 76:1 92:8 older 5:19 33:4,18 47:8 52:23 55:19 65:7 77:15 79:23 82:20 98:17 99:23 103:4 106:2 108:6 once 21:17 22:15 36:16 38:22 41:9 42:9,21 46:22 48:11 56:13 58:25 59:7,18 69:12 88:2,9 93:18 96:17 97:15 106:21 ones 86:23 109:12 open 36:17 37:3,3 94:4 96:5 opening 101:9 openly 14:19 operation 47:9 opportunities 20:7 87:9 91:23 103:19 opportunity 18:11 74:22 97:3 105:17 111:10 option 23:19 oral 74:7 order 32:15 orders 47:2 organisation 72:3 103:23 organisations 72:8 ought 71:15 72:2</p>	<p>out-and-out 11:4 outcome 5:13 outside 2:22 3:2,2 3:4,9,11,12,13 17:16 28:22 41:4 41:5 52:21 58:14 58:19 61:25 79:9 79:13 95:12 98:6 outsider 51:11 overalls 37:11 overspeaking 13:6 39:9 45:15 69:17 owned 78:11 106:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <hr/> <p>package 49:18 paid 50:16 pain 15:23 painful 53:15 75:18,22 85:7 panel 1:5 48:17 70:23 74:4 panicking 102:19 paradise 110:21 paragraph 72:23 paramount 71:15 parent 10:6,10 42:20 65:14 94:9 98:11 parents 2:11 7:23 11:13 12:24 13:20,21,25 22:10 41:10 42:5 42:8,12 50:20 52:11,11 54:18 56:12,13 65:13 65:14 69:16 81:25 103:22 111:2 Park 33:11,13 part 9:12 23:1 108:24 part-time 61:16,19 participants 1:7 74:5,11,24 participate 10:23 particular 8:1 14:4 38:13 94:13 104:13 particularly 48:19</p>	<p>parties 55:7,9,11 partly 9:15 partner 84:13 103:6 partners 98:22 parts 15:22 18:17 24:22 57:12 party 55:11 pass 23:5 passed 10:9 95:1 pay 23:16 28:21 pedals 18:15 penetration 98:19 penis 102:13 pension 23:15 86:24 people 5:12 9:21 10:15 13:21 15:1 15:7,9,18 19:6,12 19:17,18,25 20:2 20:9,9,10 22:8,17 22:23 23:1,13,13 24:7,18 25:1,1,4 25:8,8,9,14 26:10 26:12,13 29:19 30:8,14 31:13 35:7 36:7 48:21 50:9 51:1,8,9,10 51:14 52:6 55:12 66:5 72:4,9 73:9 99:22 100:3 101:3 performing 95:25 period 9:2 35:14 41:24 43:23 47:19 49:13 75:23 90:1 periods 86:16 100:8 peripheral 8:18 permission 45:22 47:8 perpetrator 81:23 persist 90:7 person 5:21,22,23 6:10,20,20 8:23 10:16 11:24 20:19 26:16 29:4 35:16 43:1,3</p>	<p>44:21 49:18 52:19 61:8 69:12 77:23 93:18 105:14 person's 10:3 personal 112:14 personally 72:25 perspective 48:7 pestering 11:22 phone 50:1 phones 105:12 phrases 94:9 physical 7:20,21 34:2 56:22 71:15 87:17 94:2 96:3 96:4 97:11 98:2 101:4 physically 9:4 15:11 29:6,6,15 41:17 56:19,19 56:21 82:10 84:18 98:10 physiological 86:1 pick 50:1 86:9,25 picked 13:7,16,22 102:23 pieces 86:25 piggery 55:5 79:25 place 3:20 19:4 26:20,21 29:11 29:11 30:13 35:5 39:15 40:2,23,25 42:4 44:1 48:25 50:16,22,23 51:24 54:14,14 55:7 75:6 76:19 76:24 107:11 placed 2:9 28:19 35:3 75:4 76:20 76:23 78:22 82:2 84:11 87:2 88:24 90:13 92:3,6 93:23,24 97:20 97:25 100:25 105:18,21 107:4 107:22 108:4 109:19 110:8,12 112:23 placement 49:6</p>	<p>79:17 80:6 82:2 85:13,13,15 98:9 99:12 101:1,6,14 103:4,5 106:1,14 placements 103:10 104:1 112:25 places 13:11 19:3 53:2 plagued 97:12 plan 48:25 49:10 49:11 Plane 11:18 play 3:2 10:3,17 10:22 16:9 17:18 17:20 18:2,8,23 19:3,11 20:7 21:8 29:17 55:5 55:6,6 82:18 92:8 played 17:21 19:7 playing 14:25 17:7 18:1,8 pleaded 95:16 please 1:14 72:15 95:25 pleased 103:14 pleasure 39:2 pm 1:10 53:21,23 53:25 54:2 73:23 73:25 74:1,3 113:12 pocket 33:7 point 7:10,15 12:15 14:5 44:3 47:11 55:25 67:14,23 98:20 110:25 pointed 81:14 points 45:11 police 33:12,20,24 35:9 47:7 61:10 61:24 62:2,6,8,11 62:14,15,23,24 63:1,3,6,16,25 64:3,12,15,20 65:2,22,23 67:2 80:17,19 81:22 83:14,16,20 88:25 91:10</p>
---	--	---	--	---

<p>93:11 96:8,19,24 106:16 policeman 38:6 policy 72:10 polishing 37:13 pool 9:22,24 10:2 19:6 77:8 82:5 poor 84:1 popular 18:20 position 4:4 11:6 30:3 50:18 58:16 positions 3:22 positive 99:13 107:25 possessions 111:21 possible 12:11 21:11 22:9,21 possibly 83:12 Pot 107:5,5,6,11 107:21 108:7,12 108:15 potential 76:16 81:1 97:4 pottery 37:18,23 potty 43:21 power 40:22 practical 21:8 practice 72:17 94:17 predators 107:1 prefer 26:25 preference 101:19 pregnant 46:2,4 108:2 109:18 110:24 premises 106:9 108:13 prepared 12:9 prescribed 45:6,8 45:10,19 presence 15:18 34:6 present 34:10,10 101:9 presents 87:14 101:10 presume 17:13 pretext 94:17 pretty 12:25 27:21</p>	<p>prevented 75:10 Previous 45:17 previously 8:19 primary 55:16 56:4 82:12 prime 49:14 Prior 84:12 prison 90:2 93:14 private 15:22 18:17 probably 4:6 8:15 8:18 9:9,11,12,13 14:7,24 16:24 33:4 36:21 47:15 86:23 probation 109:20 problem 11:17 14:12 24:6 26:3 26:5 29:2 78:14 89:11 99:24 problems 11:15 26:17,22 27:2 28:21 30:1 55:23 86:1,17 90:5 97:10 100:12 104:17 procedure 106:24 procedures 72:11 72:13 proceeded 75:20 proceedings 93:12 process 80:15 productive 76:7 professionals 100:14 programme 48:24 49:18 progressed 86:6 prolonged 110:23 promote 22:25 23:7 promotion 23:12 promptly 45:2 proper 78:8 101:10 104:19,24 properly 55:21 91:19 104:23 110:1 112:24 prosecuted 81:25</p>	<p>prosecution 83:18 91:12 prospects 23:12 91:23 prostitution 107:20 protected 95:19 112:10 protecting 112:7 protection 103:19 103:23 112:9 protective 95:10 proven 30:19 provided 1:24 32:18 72:2 75:3 provision 74:20 psychiatrist 26:18 26:20 41:13 45:14 75:24 76:4 psychological 25:11,17 PTSD 75:25 76:4 100:9 pub 110:19 public 1:4 pull 36:19 82:11 pulled 38:5 punch 87:22 punish 98:12 punished 78:6 81:24 84:19 punishment 79:2 87:17,22,25 98:5 punishments 75:7 105:22 purportedly 94:18 purpose 60:15 74:10 purposes 1:12 pursue 76:7 push 109:15 pushed 75:19 95:6 put 2:22 3:2,8,13 3:21,22 8:11 12:13 22:8,9 25:22 33:16,24 37:11 38:8 43:19 46:11 48:25 49:6 50:22,22,24 51:7</p>	<p>60:1 62:17 63:8 67:19 68:23 75:8 76:11,25 77:11 79:25 82:14 94:22 102:2 110:3 111:3</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> <p>qualifications 104:19 qualified 16:24 question 46:17 questioned 76:17 91:6 questions 24:19 31:17,18,19 32:22 53:11,13 63:17,25 66:5,14 66:22 73:13,15 100:20,21 quick 100:15 quickly 21:11 22:21 113:3 quiet 25:7 43:20 84:17 102:3 111:9 quite 4:6 7:6 9:6 11:5,5 14:19 17:4,19 34:3 38:10 48:5 63:7 88:18 92:20 95:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">R</p> <p>racial 87:3 97:23 racist 8:22 9:19 10:11 11:4 87:6 94:8,9 101:15 radiator 94:3 radio 25:22 rambles 54:22 ran 23:8 42:23 99:7 102:5 103:3 105:2 110:17 rape 77:16 85:6,16 88:6 90:25 95:1 108:8 raped 44:19 77:9 79:23 80:1 88:10 90:20 108:6</p>	<p>111:5,7,11,13 rapes 80:18 85:6 110:25 raping 111:25 rarely 14:6 react 25:14 99:13 reacted 11:13 read 55:21 74:4 75:2 76:22 78:5 78:8,21 80:25 82:1 84:10 87:1 90:12 91:18 92:5 93:22 97:19 100:23 105:20 107:3 110:7 113:8,24 114:1,2 114:3,4,5,6,7,8,9 114:10,11,12 reading 75:3 84:1 real 9:15 20:15 27:7 44:12 realise 17:11 87:10 104:7 realised 7:8 13:9 13:12 17:6 39:19 78:6 really 2:19 7:23 8:12 9:5,5,18 10:21 11:4 12:2 12:4,6,16,25 14:4 14:10 15:3 16:4 16:5,15,19,20,23 17:2,3 18:12,20 19:16,24 21:19 21:23 23:6 26:2 26:8,12 28:25 29:14 31:2 33:17 40:3,7,9 44:8 52:6,13,19 54:19 55:23 56:14 88:22,23 93:2,4,5 94:12 96:7 104:20 reason 9:12 10:25 27:12 28:3,12 reasons 27:9 recall 5:9 14:4 24:21 53:15 85:22 99:2,14</p>
---	---	--	--	--

<p>recalls 75:16 77:7 78:24 82:5,16 84:13,19 87:17 88:11 92:10 99:6 101:1,12 105:22 106:6</p> <p>received 72:24 78:8 112:13</p> <p>recession 22:18</p> <p>recognise 77:10</p> <p>recognised 86:8 95:13</p> <p>recognising 76:15</p> <p>recommend 48:17</p> <p>recommendations 30:3 70:24 74:25 76:13 81:18 84:8 90:8 93:19 100:14 105:8 106:22 109:22 112:23</p> <p>reconvene 32:2 53:23 113:10</p> <p>recorded 105:10</p> <p>recording 80:15</p> <p>records 25:21 83:17</p> <p>redacted 9:1 17:8 22:16 23:20,22 35:16</p> <p>refer 32:16 41:17 81:2</p> <p>reference 74:16</p> <p>referred 99:20 107:18</p> <p>referring 1:19,20</p> <p>refers 75:6 101:11 106:12</p> <p>reflect 74:10</p> <p>regard 109:13</p> <p>regarding 74:25 100:20</p> <p>regular 18:24 38:10 94:8 98:2 100:6 112:25 113:3</p> <p>regularly 19:12 52:1 77:5 82:15 85:14 88:2 98:3</p>	<p>related 34:7 69:20</p> <p>relation 47:3 95:10 100:7</p> <p>relationship 51:12</p> <p>relationships 24:5 81:7 92:1 100:4 105:5</p> <p>relevant 31:14 74:17</p> <p>relief 88:21</p> <p>relieved 73:3</p> <p>religious 92:10</p> <p>reliving 76:2</p> <p>remain 1:7 78:13 89:13</p> <p>remains 95:17 97:12 104:25</p> <p>remember 2:10,12 2:16,19,20,23,24 2:25 4:13,15,16 4:19 5:8,18 6:16 6:20 7:1,13,14 8:6 9:10,22 14:2 14:14 15:4,19,22 16:4 22:6 25:21 27:25 32:25 33:5 33:6,19 36:9,13 39:7 40:7 45:21 48:8,10 55:7 60:5 63:14 64:1 66:6 67:15 70:19 82:8 83:4,20 85:3 99:14 102:23</p> <p>remembers 76:23 77:1,5 79:3,10,17 82:6 84:15,16 85:9 87:19 94:1 95:4,9,11 101:7 102:1,4,9,15</p> <p>remove 82:19</p> <p>removed 35:22 81:23</p> <p>rent 81:14</p> <p>repeat 45:9</p> <p>repeatedly 103:12</p> <p>replacing 22:22</p> <p>report 29:8 30:18 30:20 77:17</p>	<p>88:25 96:16 106:15</p> <p>reported 67:2 80:16 96:10,19 96:20,23 99:3 103:7 106:16</p> <p>reporting 51:3</p> <p>reprisal 40:19</p> <p>requested 109:11</p> <p>resented 112:10</p> <p>resentment 86:21</p> <p>residential 104:19</p> <p>resist 94:23</p> <p>respect 1:11</p> <p>respond 10:20,21</p> <p>responded 24:16</p> <p>response 80:8 96:22</p> <p>responses 74:19 74:25</p> <p>responsibility 16:2 89:5</p> <p>restrained 35:2 38:2,4,4</p> <p>restraining 38:8</p> <p>restriction 32:15</p> <p>result 76:5 86:1 110:24 112:20</p> <p>resulted 93:4</p> <p>results 83:25</p> <p>resume 73:22</p> <p>return 32:3 73:25 84:3 111:2</p> <p>returned 81:9 98:20 106:4</p> <p>returning 95:7</p> <p>revenge 86:21</p> <p>reviews 100:19</p> <p>ribbon 102:13</p> <p>rid 14:12 78:19</p> <p>ride 102:22</p> <p>right 3:3,8 8:15 13:13 17:16 27:2 27:16 32:1 37:2 38:5,7 43:18 56:18 61:6 71:10</p> <p>Righto 54:12</p> <p>risk 23:9</p> <p>road 81:15</p>	<p>robust 37:24</p> <p>rock 29:25</p> <p>roof 107:8 108:17</p> <p>room 3:18,18 5:19 5:24 6:10,13,14 6:18,18,19,21,21 6:22 15:24 36:1 36:18,25 37:6,7 38:9 42:9 43:12 44:24 58:5 59:19 63:2,8,12,13,15 63:16 67:10 77:2 77:8,22 79:8,25 85:5,8,10 91:4 95:7,8 110:14,14 111:16</p> <p>rooms 6:17 35:23 81:14 84:25 108:12,14</p> <p>rough 105:4</p> <p>roughly 12:1,1 14:14</p> <p>round 84:21</p> <p>routine 112:16</p> <p>rude 41:19</p> <p>rules 30:11</p> <p>run 27:3 87:20 89:24 92:9 107:11 111:16</p> <p>running 16:2 33:22 88:18 95:13 106:14</p> <p>rushed 9:13 47:6</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <hr/> <p>sack 79:25</p> <p>sadness 75:10</p> <p>safe 31:2 76:17 110:22 113:2</p> <p>safeguarding 72:9</p> <p>safely 51:18</p> <p>safer 70:25,25</p> <p>safety 72:10</p> <p>sat 12:12 19:23 20:20,23 34:25 59:1</p> <p>Saturday 61:16</p> <p>saw 10:23 16:10 19:8 43:3,6 62:7 62:10 109:20</p>	<p>saying 5:9 11:3 19:4 49:24 52:25 61:4 64:21 65:11 67:13 79:11 93:4 99:8</p> <p>saying?' 99:9</p> <p>says 64:13 75:17 75:25 76:9,10,13 77:10,24 78:2,11 78:18 79:5 80:2 80:9,13,18,19,21 81:9,18 82:7 83:3,15 84:1,4,8 84:20 85:6,13,17 85:20,25 86:3,6 86:11,19 87:6,9 87:25 88:7,16 89:5,8,16 90:8,20 91:2,12,16 92:9 92:15,19,22 93:19 94:8,15,22 95:23 96:12,18 97:1,8,12,14,22 98:7,23,25 99:3,7 99:21 100:2,11 101:5,7,16,22 102:8,12,17 103:10 104:2,9 104:17,22 105:8 106:16,22 107:5 107:16,20 108:5 108:8,20 109:1 109:10,12,22 110:13,21 111:5 111:7,13,22,24 112:3,15,23</p> <p>scared 11:11 51:13 60:24 66:19 80:13 84:22 93:2 93:9 98:8 99:10 101:1 108:22</p> <p>school 14:25 16:17 16:18,18 17:8,8 17:11,15,17 43:9 43:10 55:16,17 55:18,23,25 56:1 56:4 67:22 78:5 78:7 79:18 80:21 82:12,18 83:25</p>
--	---	---	--	--

<p>86:10,10,12 87:5 88:3 93:13 97:1 97:2,4,6 99:21 104:16,18,19 107:9 108:18 112:20 schooled 110:2 schooling 97:1 109:14 schools 78:24 79:13 80:24 89:9 scooped 85:17 scream 90:22 screaming 43:13 43:16 77:11 82:6 88:8 95:11 screen 40:16 scrumping 55:1 second 105:23 106:14 secondary 99:21 secret 23:24 40:5 81:20 section 47:11 security 36:13,14 36:16 37:2,5 see 8:17 9:7,16 10:4 14:6,9 15:19 16:3 22:5 24:8 26:18 28:25 29:22 32:1 35:6 35:14 40:17,18 41:1,13 42:8,8,20 46:22,23 47:20 49:23 51:14 52:1 57:9,13 58:7 71:17 76:9 90:24 102:7 103:9 110:15 seeing 33:22 63:5 94:13 seen 41:3,15 44:1 45:14 49:16 66:11 75:24 80:3 self 6:3 send 107:9 108:18 sense 12:18 30:24 73:5 sent 41:24 77:20</p>	<p>78:4 79:13 104:14,18,18 109:11 112:13 separated 92:7 93:1 separating 92:23 September 81:10 sergeant 23:4 serious 78:16 seriously 78:9 96:21 served 90:1 Services 110:11,13 111:3 session 1:10 sessions 1:6 set 4:18 setting 86:3 87:5 settle 67:24 severe 106:21 severely 91:18 sewing 37:18,23 sex 34:8 85:9 110:16 111:18 sexual 39:2,10,12 72:5 74:14 75:1 75:16 77:7 79:20 79:21 80:5 82:13 82:25 84:24 85:1 91:25 92:12 95:25 96:16 98:15,18 99:22 106:12 107:1 108:10 110:9,23 sexualised 103:18 103:24 105:10 sexually 5:25 6:1 83:13 85:14 87:21 94:4,18 103:7 shakes 39:19 shaking 38:22,22 38:23 share 6:17 44:25 76:19 113:2 She'd 60:9 shed 90:24 95:12 sheets 60:9,10 shine 36:17 37:4</p>	<p>shining 36:22 Shirley 12:3 14:21 16:18 17:14,19 19:13 22:15 23:24 24:6,7,10 24:11 25:22 29:10 31:22 41:24 42:25 43:25 51:5 54:15 55:16 56:4,7 65:3 69:20 75:4 75:5,23 76:2,5,23 78:4,22,24 79:4,5 79:15,24 80:7 81:8,15 82:3,5,24 84:4,11,12,14,16 84:23 86:13 87:2 87:19,21 88:10 88:19,20 90:13 90:15 91:1 92:6 93:1,7,16,23,24 94:15 95:16,19 96:18,23 97:3,5 97:15,20 98:1,16 99:23 105:21,23 106:6 107:4 shocked 12:16 shocking 11:5 73:17 shop 63:5 shoplifted 107:10 108:18 short 9:2,9 32:5 54:1 74:2 90:1 shortly 12:21 shorts 82:14 shout 60:14 98:12 shouted 77:5 104:7 shouting 82:7 88:8 99:8 show 30:19 58:11 59:24 showed 27:19 88:15 showing 13:10 shown 89:22,23 90:9,11 shut 77:12</p>	<p>shuttled 101:3 siblings 81:7 92:7 92:16 sick 62:17 75:8 84:15 85:18 109:3 side 14:21,22 sides 91:25 significantly 78:10 signs 76:15 silence 79:2 109:4 silly 79:11 simple 9:17 simply 83:10 107:8,23 108:14 108:16 109:8 simulate 85:9 single 14:22 35:23 35:24 38:9 40:8 82:16 sister 33:4,4,8,18 47:8 68:10 93:6 98:13 100:7 sit 4:21 11:16 18:14 38:17,19 38:20 39:18 87:24 site 16:19 17:11,13 19:14 29:14,18 85:18 sitting 34:21 94:13 situation 13:1 18:13 83:19 six 14:7 75:22 111:6 six-week 41:2 skills 49:3 78:12 skirts 82:15 slap 87:22 slapped 77:19 98:3 106:3 slave 111:19 sleep 4:2 12:14 44:20 50:12 59:19 86:17 95:4 101:18 110:22 111:20 slept 6:21 35:17 44:23 98:1 105:3</p>	<p>slipper 88:1 slowly 36:18,19 smack 9:17 smacking 9:3 small 35:10 65:5 83:5 smashing 94:3 smell 77:15 smoking 45:3 snowing 2:23,25 3:10 soap 5:4 75:8 sobbing 43:17 social 7:9,13,15 14:1,2,5,8,10 27:25,25 28:2,24 41:5,8,11,11 46:20,23,23 47:1 47:23,24 51:25 52:3 60:22 70:10 70:12,18 90:2 96:17 98:24 99:11 101:20 103:8 104:1 105:4,5,15 107:16 109:21,22 110:11,13 111:3 112:1,4 socialise 15:9 sofa 101:18 sole 75:20 somebody 11:5 13:15,19 17:25 18:1 21:9 24:10 48:19 61:1 69:19 70:2 son 79:22 106:8 soon 68:16 94:24 sorry 33:19 34:7 40:18 45:9 56:21 57:22 58:17 62:9 68:13 69:18 70:8 70:15 71:5 72:14 72:21 73:6,7 sort 2:20,23 3:3 4:17,17,24 6:8 8:11 9:16,25 10:16 11:4,10 12:7,9,16,22</p>
---	---	--	---	--

<p>13:13 14:5 15:21 16:6,9,12,12 18:24,25 19:10 20:3,3,9,11 24:19 25:19,25 27:7 28:21 59:10 63:4 64:24 66:19,20 66:20,21 73:3 sorts 10:5,18 sought 25:11 112:12 sounding 93:20 Southvale 97:20 97:23 space 58:22 speak 12:24 13:19 14:3 15:9 17:21 29:2 51:13 60:18 62:6,12,15,15 80:10,12 83:21 92:21 93:21 108:22 112:5 speakers 67:10 speaking 11:9 62:7 63:2 75:11 81:24 special 56:5 104:18 specialist 72:3 specific 29:16 81:2 100:20 speechless 12:16 spend 12:10 spider's 100:12 spiteful 77:6 98:10 105:22 split 94:4 spoke 42:21 62:19 spoken 62:11 93:11 104:6 spoon 8:2,9,10 spot 105:13 spotted 3:8 spreading 111:25 squat 97:18 stabbed 94:6 staff 1:22 2:19 6:24 9:7,10 11:8 11:21 17:21,22 17:25 18:3,4,5</p>	<p>38:13,14,15,17 39:25 40:2,3,6,9 40:13,15 41:19 44:24 56:15,17 76:14 77:21 79:13 82:10 84:24 85:9,23 86:23 87:7 88:17 89:19 91:3,5 92:21 95:13 96:22 98:25 99:1 102:8,14 103:16 103:18 105:12 107:7,15,18 108:15 111:6,14 staff's 45:2 staffed 9:10 stage 15:2 65:7 76:8 staircases 37:13 stairs 37:13 63:7 65:1 87:24 stall 86:10 stand 3:17,20 4:4 6:13 35:1,1 36:21 57:1,5,7,10 98:4,5 standard 8:10 staring 20:24 36:22,25 start 5:24 20:25 26:3 38:21 58:1 started 33:22 34:19 45:2 58:2 67:23 77:11 86:10 90:17 98:18 starting 91:4 statement 1:24 8:5 17:18 23:23 25:10 32:17,18 38:1 41:23 42:12 55:12 57:16 59:18 63:18 64:3 64:15 69:3 70:23 72:23 75:2 76:22 78:21 82:1 83:14 84:10 87:1 90:12 91:11 92:5,22</p>	<p>93:22 97:19 100:23 105:20 107:3 110:7 113:24 114:1,2,3 114:4,5,6,7,8,9 114:10,11,12 states 81:5 station 33:20,24 35:9 62:24 63:1 63:3,6 91:10 stay 23:16 stayed 23:14 81:16 85:18 95:18 105:2,3 108:1 110:17,18 staying 23:20 108:3 STDs 111:23 steal 48:3 109:18 112:16,17 steering 18:15 stemmed 78:13 stems 22:15 step 58:21 stick 87:23 stood 19:15,16 34:24 stop 10:24 36:23 67:9 stopped 12:22 23:2,4 38:23 stopping 11:1 store 50:14 straight 12:8 34:19 38:9 43:22 59:3 62:5 68:8 strange 12:8 110:18 streamed 1:13 streaming 1:9 73:23 street 44:6,11,19 46:4,13,22 51:4 107:20 stress 26:23 27:6 50:19 stressed 67:3 strict 7:23 84:17 87:20</p>	<p>strip 87:23 stronger 15:12 strongly 92:25 struggled 39:3 67:1 struggling 88:8 111:8 stubble 77:16 stuff 9:18 29:24 stupid 102:23 subject 87:6,18 97:23 subjected 84:24 subsequent 103:2 106:8 subsequently 7:10 sudden 49:22 suddenly 77:9 suffer 78:2 suffered 7:20,21 28:14 76:1 79:20 80:14 94:8 98:15 109:4 110:9 112:21 suffering 27:5 78:15 suffers 100:6 sufficient 107:1 suggest 53:22 suggesting 13:11 suicidal 112:22 suicide 26:8 112:22 summarised 74:9 74:16 summer 54:25 summoned 99:4 superintendent 80:8 supervision 100:18 supper 54:25 supplementary 92:22 support 28:15 30:12,19 46:17 46:18,20 48:21 49:19 50:8 55:22 65:21,22 68:12</p>	<p>68:14,17 71:23 80:11 81:12 89:25 90:3 104:24 107:9 108:17,21 112:13 supported 93:14 97:17 suppose 31:13 supposed 35:1 48:12 111:15 112:6 supposedly 4:11 sure 7:7 30:6 37:4 47:5,7 49:1,10,18 50:15 65:2 71:9 71:22 72:16 85:21 surface 86:5 surprised 15:24 surroundings 51:14 survival 111:19 suspected 6:9 swear 1:14 swearing 99:8 sweets 18:18,22 swept 28:8 swimming 9:20,22 10:2 19:5 20:16 20:19,19,22,22 21:2,3,17 77:8 82:5 sworn 32:7 system 17:1 89:10 89:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <hr/> <p>TA 22:11 table 1:12 4:22 7:25 73:24 74:10 tablets 45:19 tabular 74:9 take 4:1 16:10 23:5 30:15 32:2 38:11 80:19,24 84:24 85:10 90:24 91:10 96:18 99:18 103:13 106:21 taken 25:5 33:10</p>
--	--	--	--	---

<p>34:13 35:22,24 44:23 45:1 62:6 62:24 78:19 79:17 85:18 91:6 96:20 103:8 105:17 111:23 takes 51:1 talk 5:23 7:11 20:13 25:13 35:7 42:17 43:24 62:2 62:4 70:6 71:2 71:24 72:19,19 93:2 105:17 talked 61:11 70:10 talking 3:14 4:7,11 5:16 6:12 12:22 28:23 42:13 60:23 93:4 tall 95:12 tantrums 105:11 target 86:9 targeted 104:9 taught 17:5 31:4 tea 37:16 77:20 teach 16:23 22:24 teacher 17:3 37:19 80:5 82:12,18 88:3,15 teachers 16:22 79:12 88:17 team 93:15 tears 75:15 79:6 84:14 teenage 45:8 52:24 teenager 14:15 16:17 45:11 46:1 46:3 59:15 70:20 tell 2:15 5:19 6:23 8:5,22,24 9:19 11:22 12:19 14:19 17:22 20:16,17 23:23 24:25 25:10 26:22 30:17 32:25 33:1,21 34:16,17 38:2,13 40:13 41:18,23 43:5,7 51:8,8 54:15 57:16 59:5</p>	<p>59:18,21 60:24 61:8,16 62:18 64:23 66:4 67:1 67:12 69:8,12,15 70:5 72:23,25 75:12 77:21 81:20 85:2,3 91:13 93:9 95:15 99:11 102:16 108:21 telling 6:12 21:14 34:16 40:2 42:7 53:17 64:13 73:17 96:6 102:23 104:1 temper 105:11 temporary 109:19 terms 5:15 28:10 51:3 87:13 89:3 91:17 105:24 109:22 terrible 100:3 104:25 108:11 testicles 94:20 tests 22:5 23:11 27:3 thank 2:5 31:16,19 31:20,23,24 32:3 53:10,12,13,14 53:18,19,24 73:13,14,15,19 73:20,25 113:9 113:10 theft 90:1 thematic 74:17 theme 87:4 thermometer 67:20 they'd 3:21,24,25 4:3 5:4 20:13 27:3 36:7 38:6 41:19 63:21 thin 35:11 thing 2:23 16:12 23:18 24:19 49:21 51:22 53:1 57:9 79:10 89:21 things 2:20 7:11 7:24 10:5 23:23</p>	<p>24:1 25:23 29:7 29:8 30:3 32:25 33:9 37:15 39:12 40:16 41:19,21 50:19 51:19 52:22 56:13 58:23 59:12,21 60:14 64:23 69:3 69:16 71:24 84:18 87:11,13 104:21 105:25 think 2:21 3:18 6:2 6:5,9,11,13,15 7:3,4,5 8:5,15 9:9,11,12,14 11:8 11:10,10,13,23 11:23 12:12 13:6 13:9 14:6,16 15:1,2,2,20 16:5 16:6,11,14,20,24 16:24 18:5 21:7 21:9 25:8,20,24 26:2,4,10,14,17 27:5,12 28:11,14 29:5,19,22,23 30:3,5,8,10,16,24 31:4,7,14 36:12 37:18 39:3 41:11 44:15 45:17,20 48:18 49:17 50:8 50:10,15 51:9,19 52:2 54:21 61:10 62:14 64:17,22 65:11,12 67:1 68:22 69:9 71:3 71:4,6 72:16 73:22 83:7,10 86:22 92:1,2 thinking 6:3 7:5 26:3 36:9 59:2 72:13 83:5 102:19 thinks 85:11 thought 6:13 12:25 13:15 17:24 21:14 27:7 43:15 59:1 65:17 91:15 95:13 99:16</p>	<p>thoughts 86:16 92:2 112:22 threatened 63:23 77:12 106:12 threats 59:9,10 three 1:6 7:18 44:22 49:9 83:14 95:2,22 98:15 107:12 108:6 110:16 three/four 35:21 threw 111:3 throat 87:23 thumb 94:19 tick 52:4,5 tie 102:13 tied 33:6 tighter 71:2,6 time 2:11 4:8,9 6:1 6:24 7:2,5,7 9:2 12:10 13:3,14,20 13:21 14:1 15:7 16:16,19,25 20:7 20:21,24 21:5,14 21:15,16 22:4,20 22:23,25 23:4 25:23 26:1 27:10 31:8,8,15 32:1,2 33:7,23 39:5,7,21 40:14,23,24,25 41:15 43:25 44:11,19 45:1,1,5 46:2,5,23 47:2,25 51:4,8,14 52:2 55:14,16 57:11 57:16 59:5 60:16 60:22,25 61:20 64:25 66:24 67:22 68:18,20 69:8,21 70:11 75:18 78:3,19 80:10 83:2,4 84:22 85:24 86:6 86:11 87:4,19 88:10,18 90:1 92:9,11,14,19 93:16,24 94:25 96:13,14 98:24 99:1 100:11</p>	<p>101:2,7 102:10 103:9 105:9 110:10 111:7,18 113:7 times 5:15 6:7 29:5 45:7 49:9 75:22 80:2 95:2,23 102:25 105:7 106:21 tips 20:22 toast 4:20 today 1:5 32:11 49:5 52:2 73:16 74:7 90:7 113:8 113:10 toddler 43:6 96:10 toilet 43:15 toilets 79:1 82:22 told 14:8 21:13 24:10,11,13,25 26:12 29:1 30:11 39:20 43:1 45:24 59:7,18 61:9,9,12 62:16,19,22 63:22 65:9,18,22 68:8,9,10 69:19 69:20 70:2,8,8 73:8 79:5 81:19 83:6,16 84:17 85:22 86:13 87:15,16 91:8 92:16,18 96:5 97:4 99:5,19 103:12,12 106:14 107:19 111:8 tomorrow 113:10 toothpaste 112:19 top 19:4 36:8 38:5 38:7 41:20,22 torch 36:17,22 37:4 touch 58:2 88:5 102:9 touched 36:24 92:13 101:25 106:7 touching 5:25 6:1 18:16 31:5,6 82:13 83:1 98:19</p>
--	---	---	---	---

102:7,10 tough 4:25 Toughen 84:18 traces 78:3 trade 22:12,13 traditional 4:17 trained 43:21 76:14 training 20:22 43:15 tranquillisers 38:12 45:6,14,24 transferred 110:25 traumatic 71:24 traumatised 112:8 112:8 treat 56:23,24 treated 53:6 54:20 86:20 88:22 89:7 89:19 90:14 106:18 109:13 110:4 treatment 25:11 25:17 85:22 87:11 110:5 trees 54:23 trial 68:17 tried 13:4 23:21 25:12,16 60:3 77:17,21 99:11 103:25 107:24 111:1 trigger 26:21 triggered 78:16 trip 88:13 trips 103:4 trivial 29:7 trolley 34:1 trouble 93:3 99:6 truck 55:6 true 2:6,8 32:19 67:19 73:4 truly 73:17 trust 24:1,3,12,24 76:12 97:11 105:8 109:24 trusting 100:3 105:5	truth 61:9 64:14 68:3 try 4:24 25:13 58:6 59:21 60:7 69:24 82:19 83:23 89:3 94:18,20,23 109:15 trying 11:23 13:17 14:11 16:23 21:8 21:10,10 22:21 23:19 30:23 38:21 40:1 82:17 90:22 Tuesday 113:14 turn 14:9 18:1,6,7 18:20 19:1,11 39:17 91:14 turned 10:11 104:25 turning 29:20,23 43:17 turnover 105:12 TV 15:20 twice 36:16 88:2 twin 33:3,8 two 7:18 24:12 37:21,21 41:25 44:13 57:24 84:21 92:9 95:22 98:2 106:8 108:6 two-year 75:23	understanding 74:13 understands 81:4 undo 58:11 undress 102:12 unease 40:12 uneasy 21:5 unfriendly 76:24 unhappy 98:10 unit 46:10 108:4 111:4 unpack 27:14 unpleasant 105:22 unwanted 112:8 unwell 84:15 upset 24:13 38:16 56:25 57:3 79:6 95:17 upsetting 43:5 77:1 90:15 94:12 upstairs 3:17 4:1 6:12 36:4 95:8 use 5:2 9:21,22,24 44:9 54:11 87:17 103:14 106:19 usual 53:22 usually 38:7 79:16 utility 110:14	vision 8:18 72:11 72:12 visit 41:9,10,13 47:20 65:21 82:9 visited 47:23 107:17 109:21 112:1 visiting 46:21 60:17,22 visitor 28:23 41:8 60:20 visitors 28:22 103:20,21 113:6 visits 80:11 82:8 90:23 105:16 112:25 vocation 52:14 voice 66:21,23 67:2,6 68:22 74:11 volunteer 18:6 voted 10:12 vulnerable 28:11 28:13 83:8,12 103:9 104:11	wanted 9:21,22,24 10:23 11:6,7 12:10,14 13:14 15:13,13 16:14 16:25 22:7,7,9 23:7,17 28:1,4 53:1 62:20 63:10 68:2 80:12 95:24 97:5 103:12 wanting 82:6 wardrobes 33:6 warm 3:4 warning 8:13 warnings 28:18 wash 5:4 58:5 60:9 washed 60:10 81:13 washing 37:13 57:18 58:3,8 wasn't 2:13 6:18 7:6,8,10 8:10,20 9:17 10:16 11:2 11:14 13:13 18:4 18:24 20:1 21:2 23:6 30:6 37:23 37:24 39:10 40:5 41:20 43:21 46:2 48:5 56:14 60:21 61:11 63:17 68:6 68:8 91:6 waste 16:19 watch 43:1 102:6 watching 15:20 watchman 102:24 water 67:20 way 3:11 7:24 8:14 12:9 13:23 19:11 22:1,13 53:6 57:18 58:9 59:8 74:11 82:21,25 89:14,19 95:22 97:17 99:13,24 104:11 ways 28:11 we're 49:25 we've 68:15 wear 33:14 wearing 2:24 3:1,3 web 100:12
	U	U	W	
	ultimately 106:13 unable 76:12 unbelievable 17:10 uncle 82:3,23 uncomfortable 3:6 28:4 unconscious 33:17 uncontrollably 38:22 underachieved 104:17 undergo 34:2 understand 25:9 30:25 48:4,6 52:18 53:7 55:19 88:22	various 45:7,11 65:25 78:22 89:9 94:2 97:10 100:25 111:2 verbal 101:15 vetting 103:20 106:23 victimisation 101:16 video 105:10 view 29:22 violence 9:17 78:25 79:12 94:2 94:11 violent 9:3,18 75:7 75:16 84:4 87:21 88:6 94:1 98:10 110:23 violently 77:9 virtually 15:2	waist 31:6 38:18 wait 63:22 waited 63:9 waiting 22:17 58:14,19 wake 5:24 waking 102:15 walk 42:9 58:12 72:19,19 79:8 102:13 walked 46:12 66:14 walking 95:4 wall 3:21,24 98:5 want 3:22 7:1 8:20 10:14,15 11:16 19:18 21:22 24:16,19,23 26:11,24 28:2,4 29:25 33:1 43:6 45:23 48:16 59:22 60:16 69:4 109:2	

<p>week 33:15 36:16 36:16 41:9 46:25 47:15 50:5 85:19 88:2 95:2,23 weekly 85:11 weeks 14:7 35:21 41:12,15 weight 8:3 welcome 1:3 welfare 55:13 79:5 well-being 71:15 went 4:6 7:16,17 9:20 10:21 11:18 14:17 17:1,7,8,14 17:17 19:25 22:4 23:5,14 33:7 34:14 37:10 43:16,22,23 46:13 47:8 49:15 54:13,14,22,24 54:24 55:10,16 55:25 56:1,5,10 57:20,23 61:17 61:20,22 63:20 65:3,8 66:12,20 66:23 67:6 68:11 77:2,16 82:24 84:22 90:25 95:3 95:14 96:1 97:17 103:20 110:23 112:20 weren't 3:1 5:14 8:16 9:24 14:10 15:1 16:22,23 17:12 27:21,24 28:7,24 29:10 34:13 47:10 56:2 62:4 66:2 67:3 73:9 80:3,19 89:1 wet 60:4 102:17,19 whilst 79:4 86:5 102:3 104:5 109:18 whisper 66:24 67:6 white 10:17 52:16 87:8,12,15 97:24 whores 107:18</p>	<p>wife 11:12 76:9 wig 66:5 window 57:18 58:7 58:9 windows 18:7 19:15,18 36:3 winter 2:22 withdrawn 86:7 97:22 100:19 withdrew 31:25 53:20 73:21 witness 1:15 31:20 31:25 32:8 53:20 53:21 54:4 73:16 73:21 75:2 76:22 78:21 82:1 84:10 87:1 90:12 92:5 93:22 97:19 100:23 105:20 107:3 110:7 113:18,20,22,24 114:1,2,3,4,5,6,7 114:8,9,10,11,12 witnessed 39:22 40:15 42:23 51:5 94:11 108:7 111:22 woke 37:10 woken 6:6 7:6 woman 9:1 24:7 42:9,20 47:24 92:17 98:6 102:5 106:14 108:1 women 92:10 wondering 63:5 wooden-backed 75:21 word 71:10 words 56:3 work 3:12 12:8,11 37:11,12 55:20 61:17,21,23 62:1 78:7 100:1 105:15 106:19,24 107:12 109:23 112:21 worked 31:13 83:17 90:4 worker 7:9,13,15</p>	<p>14:1,3,8 27:25 28:1,2 41:5,8,11 41:11 46:20,23 47:1,23,24 51:25 52:3 60:22 69:19 69:22,23,25 70:5 70:6,10,18 96:17 98:24 101:20 103:8 104:1 105:4,6,13 107:16 109:21 112:1 workers 14:5,10 28:24 46:24 61:22 70:12 83:21 90:2 99:11 102:1 109:22 112:4 working 50:24 71:3 72:4,8 works 30:17 62:16 worried 16:22 29:3 36:9 52:6 worry 5:22 23:10 50:17 51:20 worrying 51:19 worse 59:7,9,11 84:2 worthless 98:7 wouldn't 3:3,11,13 4:5,21,23 11:14 12:20,24 14:9 16:10 18:1,1 20:12 25:9 26:9 26:16 27:17 31:15 62:18 91:15 write 78:5,9 80:25 91:18 100:15 writing 84:1 wrong 5:5 9:3 13:4 27:4 43:14 45:18 58:9 62:16 63:6 88:23 94:24 104:25 108:23 109:11 112:13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <p>yeah 3:7 8:7,7,7,9 8:9 10:8 11:10 11:25 13:19 17:16 36:11 40:10 50:7 52:9 52:9,9 year 17:2 41:3,3 49:9 years 2:10 7:18 13:19 39:11 49:16 52:24 76:1 83:15 92:8 young 5:14 6:5,9 7:14 30:22 36:2 46:19 51:10 53:7 65:8 72:4,9 79:21 94:25 98:8 103:18 108:24 younger 6:3 40:19 55:18 70:18 95:9</p>	<p>15 33:23 46:4 93:13 16 60:25 16/17 48:14 17 66:1 90:18 18 47:12,18 49:21 68:11,13,16 106:5 18th 47:16 81:11 1930s 75:5 1950s 76:21 1960s 92:4 1970s 105:19 1980 105:2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>2-year-old 94:13 2.21 74:1 20 1:25 46:25 50:5 2019 89:18 2020 1:1,25 32:18 113:14 27 32:18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>3 2:10 43:13 54:14 106:6 3.00 1:10 73:23,25 74:3 3.55 113:12 32 98:9 99:12 113:20,21</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>4 33:5 40 39:11</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>5 83:4 500 80:2 54 113:22,23 55 23:16</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>6 1:1,3 83:4 92:8 98:1,18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>7 33:13 113:14 75 113:24</p>
			<p style="text-align: center;">Z</p>	
			<p style="text-align: center;">0</p>	
			<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	
			<p>1 113:18,19 1.45 53:21,23 54:2 10 90:20 10.00 4:7 10.30 1:2 113:14 100 114:9 105 114:10 107 114:11 11 37:15 45:17 11.00 4:7 11.19 32:4 11.30 37:12 11.45 32:2,3,6 110 114:12 12 12:2 14:2,24 32:24 33:2,20 39:10 90:20 12-month 48:24 48:25 49:10 12.00 37:17 12.21 53:25 13 12:2 14:2,16,24 14 49:16</p>	
			<p style="text-align: center;">X</p>	
			<p>X 113:17</p>	

78 29:12 114:1

8

8 90:17

8.00 65:9,10,16

82 114:2

84 114:3

87 114:4

9

9.00 37:12

90 76:1 114:5

92 114:6

93 114:7

97 114:8